

Policy for Physical Intervention with Pupils

1.0 Introduction:

- 1.1 This policy is based on DfES circular 10/98 and the corresponding Cambridgeshire LEA document 'Guidance on Physical Intervention for Teachers and Other Employees Working with Young People in Schools and other Educational Settings'.
- 1.2 Wheatfields Primary School recognises that there is a need, reflected in common law, to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to its pupils, staff and property.
- 1.3 Wheatfields Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for children's safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, and only use physical intervention as a last resort in line with DfES and LEA advice. If used at all it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all staff who are authorised to use physical intervention (See Section 9.00 for details).

2.0 Our approach to best practice

- 2.1 The best practice regarding physical intervention outlined below should be considered alongside other relevant policies in the school, specifically those policies involving behaviour, bullying and health and safety.
- 2.2 In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate:
 - risk to the safety of staff, pupils or visitors or
 - where there is a risk of serious damage to property or
 - where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline or
 - where a pupil is committing a criminal offence.

This judgement will take into account the circumstances of the incident. All staff should be aware that the use of physical intervention in response to a clear or developing danger of injury will always be more justifiable than the use of force to prevent damage or misbehaviour.

- 2.3 Staff will view physical intervention or restraint of pupils as a last resort to maintaining a safe environment. If pupils are behaving disruptively or anti-socially, every effort will be made to manage behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation.

2.4 Staff will understand the importance of listening to and respecting children to create an environment which is generally calm and supportive especially when dealing with pupils who may have emotional and behavioural needs which may increase their despair and aggression.

2.5 All staff will understand the importance of responding to the feelings of the child which lie beneath the behaviour as well as to the behaviour itself.

3.0 Our Practice re: specific incidents:

3.1 Staff intervening with children will seek assistance from other members of staff at as early a stage as possible since single-handed intervention increases the risks of injury to both parties and does not provide a witness.

3.2 All staff who become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a pupil will have a responsibility to provide a presence, and to offer support and assistance should this be required.

3.3 Before intervening in a non-emergency, consideration will be given to whether or not other staff are available to assist.

3.4 Where possible, staff who have not been involved in the initial confrontation leading up to an incident may be in better position to intervene or restrain the pupil if this proves necessary.

3.5 A pupil's behaviour may be adversely affected by the presence of an audience. Wherever possible, the audience will be removed, or if this is not possible, the pupil will be removed from the audience. The pupil and member(s) of staff will withdraw to a quiet, but not completely private, place (e.g. two members of staff should be present or a door left open so that others are aware of the situation).

3.6 Staff will be aware of the need to tell the pupil being restrained, in a calm and gentle manner, that the reason for the intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe. Staff will explain that as soon as the pupil calms down, she/he will be released.

3.7 All staff are aware that we operate a back-up system to enable staff to call for help in emergencies (e.g. A member of staff will give a red card with the class number on to a bystander pupil to take to the general office or staff room. The card indicates to staff that help is required urgently).

4.0 Physical Intervention/Restraint Approaches which can be regarded as reasonable in appropriate circumstances

4.1 The following approaches are regarded as reasonable in appropriate circumstances.

- a) Holding for security and to reduce anxiety where there is potential risk, even if the pupil is not yet out of control. This is best used when the pupil is anxious or confused. *Its purpose is to defuse or prevent escalation.* Staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted by the pupil as aggression.

- b) Physically interposing between pupils
- c) Blocking a pupil's path
- d) Pushing if restricted to situations where reasonable force is used to resist a pupil's movement, rather than a forceful push that might cause the pupil to fall over.
- e) Pulling
- f) Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- g) Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- h) In extreme cases using restrictive holds. (see 5.0 below).

5.0 Holds to be avoided except for the most extreme circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of 'reasonable force': for example to prevent a young pupil running off a pavement onto a busy road, or to prevent a pupil hitting someone, or throwing something.

In other circumstances, staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe;
- slapping, punching or kicking a pupil;
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- tripping up a pupil;
- holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear;
- holding a pupil face down on the ground.

6.0 Recording an incident

- 6.1 All incidents that result in non-routine interventions will be recorded in detail.
- 6.2 Contemporaneous notes (i.e. written within 24 hours of the incident's occurrence) will be made by the staff member involved in the original incident.
- 6.3 Similarly, contemporaneous notes will also be made by any other members of staff involved (i.e. as witnesses or additional providers of support). The notes will be signed and dated.
- 6.4 The notes will contain the following information:
 - The name(s) and the job title(s) of the member(s) of staff who used reasonable force
 - The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved

- When and where the incident took place
- Names of staff and pupils who witnessed the incident
- The reason that force was necessary
- The progress of the incident. Include details of:
 - ❖ behaviour of the pupil which led up to the incident
 - ❖ any attempts to resolve the situation
 - ❖ what was said by staff and pupils
 - ❖ the degree of force used
 - ❖ how it was applied
 - ❖ how long it was used for
- The pupil's response and the eventual outcome
- Details of any injuries suffered by either staff or pupils
- Details of any damage to property
- Details of any medical treatment required (an accident form will be completed).
- Details of any follow-up, including contact with the parents/carers of the pupil(s) involved).
- Any other relevant details e.g. the involvement of any other agency, e.g. the Police

6.5 Pupil witnesses may also be asked to provide a written account if appropriate.

6.6 These notes should be kept in the pupil's file and retained until the pupil reaches the age of 21.

6.7 Routine incidents of physical intervention, usually for pupils with identified needs as set out in the pupil's Individual Education Plan, Individual Behaviour Plan and/or Pastoral Support Plan will need to be recorded as follows:

- ◆ Name of child
- ◆ Date
- ◆ Name of member of staff who intervened
- ◆ Name of any witnesses
- ◆ Brief description of the reason for intervention
- ◆ Brief description of action taken
- ◆ Details of any follow up with parents

7.0 Debriefing Arrangements

7.1 The pupil and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. First aid will be administered to anyone who requires it.

7.2 The pupil will be given time to become calm while staff continue to supervise her/him. When the pupil regains complete composure, a senior member of staff (or her/his nominee) will discuss the incident with the pupil and try to ascertain the reason for its occurrence. The pupil will be given an opportunity to explain things from her/his point of view. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish the relationship between the pupil and the member(s) of staff involved in the incident.

7.3 In cases where it is not possible to speak to the pupil on the same day as the incident occurred, the debrief will take place as soon as possible after the pupil returns to school

7.4 All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff (or her/his nominee) will provide support to the member of staff involved.

7.5 The Headteacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity of any incidents where physical intervention or restraint was used. The Headteacher (or his/her nominee) will initiate the recording process if not already underway (see 6.0) and review each incident to ensure that any necessary lessons are learned.

7.6 See paragraph 10.1 about informing parents

8.0 Training Needs of Staff

8.1 In cases where it is known that a pupil will require physical intervention on occasions, appropriate training will be provided (accessed through the LEA) for relevant staff. Staff involved will identify their training needs in this area.

9.0 Authorisation of staff to use physical intervention

9.1 We recognise that most of the time physical intervention will be used infrequently, that is, as a last resort to maintaining a safe environment.

9.2 All teaching staff are, by the nature of their roles, authorised to use physical intervention as appropriate. Non-teaching staff will require specific authorisation, either temporarily or permanently. This authorisation can only be given by the headteacher or someone deputising for the headteacher when s/he is absent. Authorised staff will be notified formally. Permanent authorisations are noted in appendix 1.

9.3 Best practice will be monitored. Frequent sessions to practise the use of techniques, as well as to disseminate any revised information (including updated DFES and/or LEA policies) will be included as part of the school's normal schedule of pastoral meetings.

9.4 These meetings will be open to all staff, including non-teaching staff, who have been authorised to use physical intervention techniques (see Appendix I). will attend.]

9.5 This policy will next be reviewed and updated on _____.

9.6 Governors will be informed of the number of physical interventions annually.

10.0 Arrangements for Informing Parents* **

10.1 Parents will be informed of the school's policy regarding physical intervention in the following ways:

- A paragraph will be included in the school prospectus explaining the school's protocol in dealing with Physical Intervention.
- Parental permission will be sought if it is felt that Physical Intervention is needed to be used as a behaviour strategy.
- Thereafter, a section about the school's legal obligations to maintain a safe environment and the possible use of physical intervention (as a very last resort) with pupils will be included in the school brochure.*
- Staff who work with particular children who have learning or physical disabilities (and who have Individual Education Plans, Individual Behaviour Plans and/or Pastoral Support Plans) may need to use specific techniques routinely to manage challenging behaviour. Such arrangements will be discussed with parents/carers in advance on an individual basis. All interventions will be routinely recorded (See Appendix 2).
- All parents will be informed after a non-routine incident where physical intervention is used with a child.
- Paragraph 1.3 of this document could be used as a form of words.

Policy for Physical Intervention with Pupils has the full agreement of the Temporary Governing Body and was accepted by them on 22nd June 2006.

- **Appendix I**

Non-teaching staff who have been authorised permanently to use physical intervention with pupils

The following non-teaching staff have been authorised permanently by the Headteacher to use reasonable force to intervene with pupils (only) to respond to circumstances where staff, pupils, visitors or members of the public could be in danger.

They have been given appropriate advice by the Headteacher over the use of reasonable force.

Name	Position
Mrs Ann Fletcher	Teaching Assistant
Mrs Kathy Griffiths	Teaching Assistant
Mrs Liz Barley	Teaching Assistant
Mrs Tracey Mayes	Teaching Assistant
Mrs Liz Davies	Teaching Assistant

The following members of non-teaching staff have been authorised temporarily to use reasonable force as above (e.g. for the duration of a school trip).

Name	Position	Period of authorisation
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Appendix II – sample letter



Wheatfields Primary School
Nene Way
St. Ives
Cambs
PE27 3WF

Phone: 01480 466919
www.wheatfieldspri.cambs.sch.uk

date

Dear (parents name)

Child's name

As you know from our discussions, we have experienced problems with (child's name) when he has presented a danger to himself and to other children and adults. As we have explained to you, our approach in such circumstances is to take immediate action to safeguard the safety of all involved, perhaps by removing other children or by trying to persuade child's name) to stop whatever action is causing the problem.

I feel it is important to confirm that, in exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to physically intervene to prevent harm to (child's name) or to others. In taking this action, school staff will follow the LEA's advice over physical intervention for teachers and other employees. We will, of course, let you know of any incidents when this has proved necessary. We will continue to work with you to reduce the likelihood of such incidents.

I should be grateful if you would sign and return a copy of this letter to confirm receipt and your understanding of our approach.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Marshall
Headteacher

Signed:

(parents name)



Headteacher:
Dr. Chris Marshall
Deputy Headteachers:
Mrs Anne Howell
Mrs Helen Shevlin

