

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

Date: September 2021

It is the aim of Meadowpark School to establish good behaviour from our children in a caring and supportive environment where the welfare of the children is paramount.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures to be followed in the rare case of the need for restrictive physical intervention being used by a member of staff.

The use of physical intervention/restraint is avoided wherever possible. Where necessary and appropriate however, reasonable force may be used to control or restrain a child.

It is our aim to:

- Create a warm, calm and orderly atmosphere that promotes a sense of community.
- Achieve a consistent attitude by all staff that gives children a sense of security and safety whilst promoting clear expectations on acceptable behaviour.
- Ensure that all staff, children, parents / carers understand their roles and responsibility regarding behaviour management as set out in the Meadowpark Behaviour Policy.

The attitude and behaviour of all staff is essential in creating and maintaining a positive ethos within Meadowpark School. Our committed team approach will help provide a positive role model for children, where they respect themselves and others.

Physical Intervention (Restraint) - Use of Reasonable Force

Meadowpark reserves the right for staff to use reasonable force to control or restrain a child in specific circumstances.

What is Physical Intervention

Physical Intervention is the use of direct or indirect reasonable force through bodily, physical or mechanical means to limit another person's movement

What is Reasonable Force:

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
- Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or locking

a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.

- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil

(Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies - July 2013).

When can Physical Intervention/Restraint be Used?

Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. At Meadowpark School this includes:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Meadowpark School will never use Physical Intervention as a punishment.

Who can use Physical Intervention?

- Any teacher who works at the school
- Any other person whom the head teacher has authorised to have control or charge of pupils

All staff are trained in physical intervention techniques.

Where can Physical Intervention be Used?

A member of staff's right to use reasonable force applies whether on school premises or elsewhere (during a school visit), but staff are advised always to use their voices first and use the minimum force necessary to restrain a child for the shortest possible period of time.

Before Using Physical Intervention:

Physical intervention and restraint should be used as last resort to support children in times of crisis. Physical intervention should be avoided wherever possible. It is never a substitute for good behaviour management.

Other methods of managing the situation such as defusing conflict and non-physical calming should always be tried first, unless this is impractical.

The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Physical intervention should only be considered an option if:

- Calming and defusing strategies have failed to de-escalate the situation
- The response is in the paramount interests of the child
- Not intervening is likely to result in more dangerous consequences than intervening.

Risk Assessments should be carried out before a member of staff decides it is appropriate to use physical intervention.

The following should be considered:

- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means.
- The relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies.
- The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder that is likely to result if force is not used.

After a Physical Intervention has been used:

The staff involved will inform the Head immediately after it has been necessary to restrain a child physically.

The staff involved will complete a Physical Intervention Report in the Red Bound Book. This will be signed and dated by the staff and reviewed and signed by the Headteacher.

Meadowpark will always inform parents/carers when it has been necessary to use physical restraint, on the same day or as soon as is reasonably practicable, and invite them to the School, so that we can, if necessary, agree a protocol for managing their child's behaviour.

Staff will have a debrief which will be recorded by a member of the SLT. This will happen within 5 days. The debrief will be kept on the staff personal file.

The child will have a debrief with a member of staff nominated by the Headteacher. This member of staff will not have been involved in the incident. This will be recorded on the Physical Intervention Report. This debrief will happen within 2 school days of the intervention. The Physical Intervention Report will be kept on the child's file and kept in the school office.

Risk Management

Any child who has needed to be restrained or who has challenging behaviour which might make this necessary, should have a risk assessment and a behaviour plan specifying situations most likely to trigger difficult behaviour.

Any strategies such as the de-fusing techniques most likely to help, must be agreed with parents / carers and communicated to all staff who work with that child. These strategies should be reviewed every term.

Health and Safety

The child's health and safety must always be considered first, and monitored. Any restraint must be ceased immediately if significant signs of physical distress are seen, i.e. sudden changes in colour, difficulties in breathing, vomiting.

Staff are not under a duty to run the risk of personal injury, by intervening where it is not safe to do so. If the situation is assessed as being too dangerous, staff should remove other children, retire to a safe distance, and call for another member of staff to help.

If the Child or Parents/Carers Make a Complaint about the Physical Intervention

If the complaint is about the physical intervention not being appropriate or the child was hurt or had bruises then the complaint must be dealt with under Safeguarding - Please see the Safeguarding Policy on dealing with Allegations Against Staff.

If the complaint is about anything else it can be dealt with under the Complaints Policy - Please see the Complaints Policy.

Legalities, Context and Framework

Section 93 of the Education & Inspection Act 2006

Use of reasonable force Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2013

Approval and Review

The policy was approved by the Headteacher on 12th May 2021.

The renewal date is annually or earlier if there is a change in legislation.