



## **PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND USE OF REASONABLE FORCE POLICY**

**Review Date:** April 2021

### **Statement of Intent**

All the governors and staff at Monkshouse Primary School are committed to sharing a common objective to help keep the children and staff of the school safe. We ensure that consistent effective safeguarding procedures are in place in order to support families, children and staff of the school.

Our positive behaviour management policy encourages pupils to make positive behaviour choices, but on rare occasions circumstances may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff.

### **Rationale**

We believe that the key factors that enable a child to reach their full potential are a whole school approach to behaviour, learning and teaching, a mutual respect and trust for all members of the school community within a positive, safe and caring environment. We believe that good behaviour is a necessary condition for effective teaching and learning to take place. On occasion, a pupil may behave in a way that may require reasonable, proportionate and necessary physical intervention, to prevent them from injuring themselves or others, damaging property, committing an offence and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom.

Our policy for physical intervention is based upon the following principles:

- Physical intervention should only be used as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed.
- Any physical contact should be only the minimum required.
- Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Incidents must be recorded and reported to the Headteacher as soon as possible.
- Parents must be informed of each incident.
- It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that any incidents of physical intervention comply with this policy.

### **The Legal Framework**

Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows 'teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Head Teacher who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- causing injury to his/herself or others
- committing an offence
- damaging property
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order & discipline'

## **Our approach**

At Monkshouse Primary School we aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort in a minority of situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in connection with our Behaviour Policy.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations, which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the School's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in *loco parentis* and have a 'Duty of Care' to all children they are in charge of. They must, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure **all** pupils' safety and wellbeing.

Staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

## **Definitions**

Reasonable Force- this term covers the broad range of actions used by school staff that involves 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 where a pupil needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.

Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom. Physical intervention is any method of physically intervening to resolve a difficult or dangerous situation and is not necessarily physical restraint e.g. positive handling strategies – guides and escorts.

Restrictive physical intervention (sometimes referred to as restraint) is defined as when a member of staff uses force with the intention of restricting a child's movement against their will.

Restrictive Physical Intervention should only be used as a last resort to support children at a time of crisis and should be avoided wherever possible. Other methods of managing the situation should be tried first, unless this is impossible.

Any physical intervention should only be used when there is no reasonable and less intrusive alternative.

## **Use of physical restraint**

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allows the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as punishment. Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint.

As a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below. In all circumstances, alternative de-escalation methods

should be used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint, a last resort, when not intervening is likely to result in more dangerous consequences than intervening.

### **Types of Incidents**

There are a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a pupil.

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury;
- Where there is a risk of injury to the child or to others.
- To remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so.
- To prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit.
- To 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
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
- To restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outburst
- To prevent significant damage to property
- To prevent a crime being committed.

### **When physical intervention becomes necessary:**

Teachers have a duty of care to maintain good order and safeguard children's health and safety. However, teachers are not under a duty to run risk of serious personal injury by intervening when it is not safe to do so. In this school any staff member who has charge of children is authorised to use reasonable force as set out in this policy, but only staff trained to use restrictive physical intervention techniques are authorised to use them (names on green cards on lanyards – send with a child). However, in an emergency or a case of self-defence everyone has the right under the Criminal Law ACT (1967) to use 'reasonable force' to defend themselves or others against attack.

Monkshouse School has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with SEND. The school does not require parental consent to use force on a pupil, but will always report to a parent where force has been used.

It is important to remember that restrictive physical intervention must be consistent with the concept of reasonable force and the circumstances must warrant the use of force. The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the minimum to achieve the desired result.

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff:

- Physically interposing between pupils;
- 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;
- Pulling;
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm;
- Leading a pupil with gentle pressure by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
- Blocking a pupil's path;

- Holding.

When undertaking physical intervention:

### DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Attempt to communicate throughout the incident
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Relax your restraint in response to a pupils' compliance

### DON'T

- Act in temper (involve another member of staff if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
- Put pressure on the joints
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil
- Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment

A child should always be monitored for health and safety during physical restraint.

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. Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury however it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally to either pupil or member of staff supporting them.

### Recording Incidents

Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. **The Head teacher should be informed of any incident as soon as possible** and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed. The member of staff involved should write a detailed report of the incident to help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the situation. (appendix 1)

### Risk Assessments

If the school is aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that may require physical control or restraint, it will plan how best to respond in the situation. Such planning will address:

- The use a range of strategies to diffuse the situation prior to the intervention
- The avoidance 'triggers' if these are known

- Involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school may need to take
- Briefing staff to ensure that they know exactly what action should be taken and where appropriate provide training or guidance
- Ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate.
- The school's duty of care to all pupils and staff

### **Other Physical Contact with Children**

Our school believes that some use of appropriate, positive contact with children can contribute to its development of a safe and friendly school. Some physical contact may be necessary or unavoidable when staff are working with:

- younger children who may need encouraging or guiding
- children with special needs who may need physical prompts or help
- children requiring first aid
- children receiving coaching in sport or as part of another curriculum activity
- children in distress

Our staff will make professional and sensitive judgements about the nature and extent of their physical contact with pupils. We will have particular regard for cultural sensitivities and gender differences, for the needs of adolescent pupils and for those who may be particularly vulnerable following previous trauma or abuse.

### **Complaints and Allegations**

A clear restraint policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under the complaints disciplinary or allegation management procedures.

It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The school will review this policy on a yearly basis and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with and with due regard to the school's Equal Opportunities, Behaviour Management, Safeguarding, and SEND policies.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ on behalf of the Governing Body

Date \_\_\_\_\_



**SPALDING MONKSHOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Report of Incident involving Physical Intervention  
(or Reasonable Force associated with serious incidents)**

<b>Date / Time / Location:</b>
<b>Name of pupil needing to be restrained:</b>
<b>Pupil Response / Outcome:</b>
<b>Date / Time parent/carer informed:</b>
<b>By whom:</b>
<b>Outline of response:</b>
<b>Details of any injury or damage to property:</b>
<b>Name(s) and signature(s) of staff completing report:</b>
<b>Description of any subsequent enquiry, complaint or action:</b>

**Pupils involved:**

**Witnesses:**

**Reason force was necessary:**

Defence / Self Defence	Immediate or imminent risk of injury to another child
Immediate or imminent risk of injury to an adult	Immediate or imminent risk of injury or safety to themselves
Immediate risk of significant damage to property (inc potential serious vandalism)	Pupil seriously jeopardizing good order and discipline (n.b. – make clear the 'risk' involved)
A pupil persistently refusing to leave an area (n.b. – make clear the 'risk' involved)	Serious disruption to a lesson / learning.
There is clearly no alternative approach which would work in the circumstances (and there is an immediate urgency to resolve the situation)	Defending or protecting.

Other? (explain):

**Type of force used:**

Physically interposing between pupils	Blocking pupils path
Holding / Restraining (give description of restraint)	Pushing or pulling (only in extreme circumstances to avoid danger)
Leading a pupil by the hand or arm	Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back or other

Other?

Details:

**Description of incident (how it began and progressed, steps taken to defuse or calm situation, degree of force used, how it was applied and for how long).**

