

Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy

St Mary's CE Primary School



Approved by:

Date: 17.10.22

Last reviewed on:

September 2022

Next review due by:

September 2023

Version: 3

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND RESTRAINT POLICY

Vision

We believe that *'When God created humankind, He made them in the likeness of God'* Genesis 5:1. It is our aim that each person, in all their unique difference should be able to thrive and be supported to know their intrinsic value. At St Mary's CE Primary School, we offer a community with a sense of belonging to help each pupil fulfil their potential and flourish in all aspects of their personhood: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. We seek to treat children as they might become rather than as they are and to know them well.

Shared values of love, forgiveness, friendship, truth and courage that are known understood by all, along with quality relationships are at the heart of our school and essential for success. At St Mary's CE Primary School, *'In everything, treat others as you would want them to treat you'* (Matthew 7:12) is central to our vision and we believe it is how everyone in our school community should seek to live their lives.

Aims

At St Mary's CE Primary School, we aim to:

- Protect every person in the school community from harm
- Protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention that is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful
- Provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations

This policy adheres to the principles under data protection law and the Data Protection Act 1998. For further information, please review the school's data protection policy published on the school's website.

Definition of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is a last resort physical emergency response to an individual in crisis displaying risk behaviour posing an imminent or immediate risk of harm to self or others. This may include an individual causing damage to property that may result in significant risk of harm to self or others. Physical interventions include disengagement and/or restrictive holding skills that are reasonable and proportionate to the level of risk behaviour presented.

Why Use Physical Restraint?

In very rare circumstances, despite all of the steps of the behaviour policy being followed, the only option left may be the use physical restraint. At St Mary's CE Primary School senior members of staff from across school, including the Inclusion Lead are trained in de-escalation techniques and restraint techniques.

Although it is usual for trained staff to take the lead in these rare circumstances, all members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force (section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006). Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances. Staff should always act within the school's policy on behaviour. It is only

likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour. The school will endeavour to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for those children who are either disabled and/or have special educational needs.

Key themes when deciding whether physical intervention is required include:

- Duty of care
- Acting in the best interests of each child
- Ensuring the action is reasonable and proportionate
- A last resort and least restrictive, for the minimum amount of time
- Considering the risk of doing something and the risk of doing nothing
- Human rights

Situations when physical restraint may be used include:

- Preventing 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;
- Preventing a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil;
- Restraining a pupil at risk of harming themselves

In addition to the general power of reasonable force described above, the headteacher and senior staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to search for 'prohibited items' such as knives, cigarettes, fireworks, alcohol, pornographic images or any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence.

At St Mary's CE Primary School, we never use force as a punishment as this is unlawful.

Alternative Strategies

At St Mary's CE Primary School, we will always attempt to find an alternative strategy to de-escalate situations so that physical restraint is not needed. These strategies may include:

- Repeating a direction until the pupil complies
- The use of a distracter to interrupt the behaviour
- Withdrawal of an audience
- Use of humour/other distractions which may interest the child
- The employment of other consequences following the school behaviour policy

Use of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint should only be used as an act of care and control and should be used for the least amount of time possible. As soon as is safe to do so, verbal control should be the method of de-escalating the behaviours witnessed.

Some forms of physical intervention may need little physical contact, for example a member of staff physically blocking a pupil's path, however direct physical contact may also be required.

If physical restraint becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are going to do and why
- Use simple and direct language, using as few words as possible
- Use minimum force necessary
- Ensure that another member of staff is present if possible
- Direct the pupil as to what he/she must do for you to remove the restraint

- Relax your restraint as the pupil calms/becomes more compliant

DON'T

- Involve yourself in a verbal 'battle' with a pupil
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Act in temper or through knee-jerk reaction
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which may restrict blood flow or breathing
- Slap, punch, kick or trip the pupil
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint

Disengagement

Disengagement is the use of a physical intervention to gain a release from any holding situation whilst minimising risk of pain or injury in situations in which the behaviour has been assessed as a low, medium, or high risk to self or others. It is a consistent, calm response to risk behaviour and may be used by a trained member of staff if found in a position where a pupil is maintaining physical contact without consent.

The main principles of disengagement are:

- Position – where you are in relation to others
- Posture – how you hold and move your body
- Proximity – the distance between people

The biomechanical benefits of disengagement are:

- Hold and stabilise
- Pull/Push
- Lever (Not to be used with EYFS children)

Actions Following an Incident of Physical Restraint

The Headteacher, or Assistant Headteacher in their absence, must be informed that physical restraint has been used as soon as is possible. All interventions to be recorded in the school's behaviour reporting system (see below).

The Headteacher will take responsibility for ensuring that all parties involved are offered support and parents of pupils informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing sequence of bad choices, a behaviour plan may need to be developed by the Inclusion Lead. This behaviour plan is to be shared with parents/carers, class teacher and learning assistant if applicable.

Incident Recording and Reporting

It is important that schools keep systematic records of every significant incident in which a physical intervention has been used. In accordance with national policy on the use of physical intervention and child protection requirements, records should evidence that:

- Staff have acted in accordance with their legal, professional and statutory obligations
- Staff have acted in accordance with the school policy
- There is a clear, accurate and transparent record of the event.

In order to maintain effective records, staff must:

- Complete reports of incidents as soon as reasonably possible after the event.
- All records should be dated by the person completing them.
- Records should be accurate and without falsification or speculation.
- Records should be kept securely and shared only on a need to know basis to maintain individuals' rights to confidentiality.
- If records are altered by anyone for any reason, the person making such alterations must clearly date the records and indicate why the records are being amended. Any previous entries must not be removed.
- Senior leaders should review any records.

There are essential pieces of information that need to be part of recording and reporting when restrictive physical interventions are used, given legal and statutory requirements. These include:

- The names of the staff and pupil(s) involved.
- The reason for using a physical intervention.
- The type of physical intervention, describing level of restriction used.
- The date and the duration of the physical intervention.
- Whether the pupil or anyone else experienced injury or distress as a direct result of the use of the restrictive interventions, or if any injury was sustained in a lead up to the incident.
- Any support actions taken including seeking first aid or medical treatment.
- Post crisis support and learning including the views of the pupil(s) involved.
- A record that the pupil's parents or legal guardians have been informed of the incident.

Monitoring of this policy

This policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and reviewed every year by the governing body.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy