



STOKES WOOD
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Physical Intervention Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- First Aid Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Suspensions and Exclusions Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy

Approved by: Rob Osborn

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1. School Vision

Stokes Wood Primary School is an ambitious place. We aim to help every child become a global ambassador, ready to explore and understand the world around them. We encourage our children to be curious, ask questions and seek answers as they learn. Our children are confident in sharing their ideas and opinions. They know how to listen and communicate with kindness and respect. We believe in a community where there are no outsiders– everyone belongs and every voice is heard. Above all, we nurture their well-being, ensuring they grow into healthy, balanced individuals committed to lifelong learning and positive change. Together, we create a caring and supportive environment where everyone can grow and succeed, ready to make a positive difference in Leicester and beyond!

2. Introduction

All behaviour is a form of communication. At Stokes Wood Primary School all staff have a duty to understand what the children's behaviour communicates, while responding in ways that help everyone to stay safe and nurture trauma informed care for all.

All staff work positively and confidently with pupils and find the least intrusive way possible to support and empower them and keep them safe through:

- protecting and promoting children's rights;
- understanding children's needs;
- building relationships of trust and understanding;
- understanding triggers and finding solutions; and if incidents do occur
- knowing enough about the child and positive behaviour support techniques to defuse the situation and/or distract the child wherever possible, minimizing the intensity of the incident.

There are times when pupil's behaviour presents particular challenges that may require restrictive physical intervention. This policy sets out our expectations for the use of such intervention. It is not intended to refer to the general use of physical contact which might be appropriate in a range of situations, such as:

- giving physical guidance to children (for example in practical activities and PE);
- providing emotional support when a child is distressed;
- providing physical care (such as first aid or toileting).

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

4. Reasonable Force

All staff are aware of the distinction between physical contact or touch (used appropriately in everyday situations to support, encourage, guide or comfort a pupil) and the use of force to restrict movement or to disengage from pupils whose behaviour presents a clear risk of injury.

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows members of the school's staff to use reasonable force in order to:

- Prevent a pupil from hurting themselves or others
- Prevent a pupil from causing serious damage to property
- Remove a disruptive pupil from a classroom
- Prevent a pupil from leaving a classroom where there is a risk to their safety or the safety of others.

There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force, it depends on the precise circumstances of individual cases. To be judged lawful, the force used needs to be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent. The degree of force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Reasonable force is used either to control or restrain. 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.

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.

Guiding children by the hand or supportive touch do not include an element of force, therefore it is not restraint. When we need to use restrictive physical intervention, it is applied as an act of care and control within the principle of reasonable force (using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time necessary), with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control and help them find a better way to deal with the situation.

5. Principles for the Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention

Restraint of any kind can have a negative impact on a child's mental health and damage relationships between children and those who care for them. Therefore, de-escalation techniques are used in the first instance, staff will:

- Make the pupil and others present aware that the staff member is taking control of the situation
- Offer the pupil the option of going to a calm, quiet space
- Ask other pupils to leave in order to calm the situation
- Ask for a familiar member of staff to come and support the pupil
- Send for assistance from another staff member (particularly if restraint is likely to be needed)
- Remain calm and respectful and speak slowly and clearly to the pupil to give reassurance and instructions
- Be aware of their tone of voice and body language
- Be aware of their own emotions
- If the pupil is pacing, staff will remain still and avoid mirroring their anxiety
- Keep respectful distance and avoid encroaching on the pupil's personal space
- Give the pupils options so that they have an opportunity to resolve the situation in a dignified manner
- Be specific to a pupil's SEND

Stokes Wood Primary School recognises that preventative measures will not always work, there are numerous steps that will be taken in order to help reduce the likelihood of situations arising where the power to use force may need to be exercised. We endeavor to:

- Create a calm, orderly and supportive school environment that minimises the risk of violence of any kind
- Develop effective relationships between pupils and staff
- Adopt a whole-school approach to developing social and emotional skills
- Take a structured approach to staff development that help staff to develop the skills of positive behaviour management; managing conflict and also support each other during and after an incident

- Recognise that challenging behaviours are often foreseeable
- Wherever practical, warn a pupil that force may have to be used before using force

6. Staff Authorised to Use Reasonable Force

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. It can also be used by anyone who's been put in charge of pupils temporarily by your headteacher, such as:

- Unpaid volunteers
- Parents accompanying students on a school trip

7. When Reasonable Force is Used

Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.

The decision on whether to use restrictive physical intervention is down to the professional judgement of the member of staff concerned and is judged on a case-by-case basis, depending on the circumstances.

Restrictive physical intervention is only used where the risks involved in using force are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force. The use of restrictive physical intervention may be justified where a pupil is:

- Committing an offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what is deemed at the level of a criminal offence).
- Causing personal injury to any person (including the pupil themselves)
- Causing damage to property
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

The decision on whether to use restrictive physical intervention is down to the professional judgement of the member of staff concerned and is judged on a case-by-case basis, depending on the circumstances. However, incidents of physical restraint must:

- Always be used as a last resort
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Never be used in anger or as a form of punishment
- Be recorded on school systems and reported to parents

8. Staff Training

The majority of staff at Stokes Wood are Team Teach trained. Team Teach is an accredited provider of behaviour management training, equipping staff to deal with challenging situations and behaviours which lead to describable outcomes and positive relationships.

Team Teach provides a gradual, graded system of response proportionate to the situation and individuals involved. There is an emphasis on appropriate and targeted verbal and non-verbal communication as well as de-escalation strategies.

Team Teach training for staff at Stokes Wood is carried out by the Leicester City SEMH Team.

Advice and support in completing risk assessments/behaviour plans in connection with pupil behaviour will be given by the SENDC/Pastoral team and/or other statutory agencies (SEMH team) working with the pupil.

9. Physical Intervention Procedures

The use of restrictive physical interventions will always be considered within the wider context of other measures. These include establishing and maintaining good relationships with children and using diversion, diffusion and negotiation to respond to difficult situations.

Before intervening physically, the member of staff will, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is in crisis stop and what will happen if they do not. If a member of staff has decided to intervene physically in order to prevent injury occurring to any person, or serious damage to property, then they will:

- Communicate with the pupil throughout the incident.
- Make it clear to the pupil that physical restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
- Apply minimum physical force necessary for the minimum period needed to restrain the pupil.
- Use a calm and measured approach and will continue to reassure the pupil.

Use of physical force that is unwarranted, excessive or punitive is not acceptable.

10. Good Practice for Physical Intervention

Whenever possible, at least two members of staff will be present. The importance of having another colleague is twofold:

- Another member of staff may be able to reduce the risk of the member of staff or another pupil suffering harm – a solitary person is in a very exposed position if, for example, a fight is in progress.
- There is a witness if allegations of assault are subsequently made by a pupil or parents.

We understand there are some children for whom physical contact would be inappropriate (such as those with a history of physical or sexual abuse, or those from certain cultural/religious groups). Staff are made aware of these pupils, and we pay careful attention to issues of gender and privacy, and to any specific requirements of certain cultural/religious groups.

Staff will ensure a calm and measured approach to the situation. During restrictive physical intervention staff will always try to maintain the dignity and self-respect of the pupil both during and after the restraining process. Where possible, onlookers

and observers who are not essential to defuse the situation will be removed from the area.

Staff will reassure the pupil throughout the incident repeating that the restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary (unless an individual protocol is in place). The pupil's release from restraint should be planned, agreed and gentle. Close supervision of the pupil will be necessary. A teacher (or senior member of staff) will explain the reasons for the use of restraint and the pupil's views on the incident should be sought.

11. Post-Incident Support

Incidents that require the use of restrictive physical interventions can be upsetting to all concerned and result in injuries to the child or member of staff.

After incidents have subsided, staff and children will be given emotional support by the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher or Pastoral Team and basic first aid treatment for any injuries by the school's first aider or appointed persons.

All injuries will be reported and recorded. An SO2 online form will be completed in accordance with RIDDOR and LA procedures.

12. Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions in Unforeseen and Emergency Situations

Stokes Wood Primary School acknowledges that, on occasion, staff may find themselves in unforeseen or emergency situations when they have no option but to use reasonable force to manage a crisis. It is recommended that:

- Before using force – staff attempt to use diversion or defusion to manage the situation.
- When using restricted physical intervention – staff must use techniques and methods (Team Teach) with which they are familiar, confident and are permitted by the setting.
- In exceptional circumstances (where permitted techniques are ineffective or staff are unfamiliar with the action they should take) staff shall manage the situation as best they can to comply with [Section 550A of the Education Act 1996](#).
- Staff must always report and record use of physical force that occurs in unforeseen or emergency situations using the school's reporting procedures described below.

13. Positive Behaviour Management

All staff should adopt a positive approach to improving behaviour in order to reward effort and application and to build self-esteem. The school, in partnership with those who know the child, to help those concerned:

- Understand the factors that influence the child's behaviour.
- Identify early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours are developing.

This approach will help to ensure that early and preventative intervention is the norm. It should reduce the incidences of extreme behaviour and make sure that the use of physical force is rare.

14. Safety and Support Plans

Where specified in a risk assessment or after any incidence of restrictive physical intervention a Safety Support Plans (SSP) is drawn up by the SENDCo, class teacher and other relevant staff, using the agreed school proforma on Provision Mapping.

An SSP is the agreed strategies (non-verbal, verbal and physical) that aim to support the pupil, providing them with a sense of security, safety and acceptance, allowing for recovery and repair, facilitating learning and growth.

SSP's are working documents and are reviewed termly by the SENDCo/Pastoral Teacher, class teacher and other relevant staff regularly to ensure that they are still effective and consider the relevant needs of the child.

Schools do not require parental consent to use force on a pupil but makes policies available to parents. All SSP's will be shared with the child (where appropriate), parents, and class team involved with the child and then made available for all on Provision Mapping.

SSPs will be shared with new staff when a pupil transfers between classes and when they transfer to a new school. Consistency of practice will be a focus during transitions.

15. Recording the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions

Incidents of restrictive physical intervention are recorded by staff using the [Leicester City Physical Intervention Record](#). A copy of each form will be added to CPOMS under the Team Teach category, ensuring all relevant staff are alerted.

The form must be completed within 24 hours of the incident however; it is preferable that this is fully completed by the end of the day that the incident takes place.

The school will also inform the parents or those with parental responsibility and the child's social worker (if applicable), as soon as is practicable, to inform them that a restrictive physical intervention has taken place. The following information must be provided:

- When and where the incident took place
- Why physical intervention was used
- What physical intervention was used (disengagements, holds, transitions)
- Whether there were any injuries
- What follow up action (support and /or disciplinary) was being taken in relation to their child

Details of the conversation will be recorded on CPOMs.

16. Withdrawal/Time Away

Children are encouraged to take themselves to calm area when they are displaying crisis behaviours and need some time away from their peers. On occasion staff will direct pupils to calm areas using language and/or visual communication aids.

There are some occasions where a small number of pupils display crisis behaviour before choosing or being directed to the safe place. On these occasions staff may choose to make the environment safe by asking other pupils and staff to go to an alternative room. Alternatively, staff may choose to physically escort the pupil to the safe place in order to manage the crisis behaviour and make the situation safe following our Physical Intervention Procedures.

Pupils who are struggling, being disruptive or behaving dangerously towards others or themselves, may be supported or supervised away from other staff and pupils in a quiet area. At Stokes Wood children are not secluded (that is, in a room behind a closed door in a room on their own without supervision).

17. Responding to Complaints

The use of restrictive intervention can lead to allegations of inappropriate or excessive use.

If a child or parent/carer has a concern about the way restrictive physical intervention has been used, complaints will be managed following the school's complaints procedure.

Where there is an allegation of assault or abusive behaviour, the headteacher will be immediately informed and follow our child protection procedures.

18. Monitoring Arrangements

Use of physical interventions will be monitored in order to help staff learn from experience, promote the well-being of children and provide a basis for appropriate support. Monitoring can help to determine what specialist help is needed for children and to assess the appropriateness of the child's placement at the school.

Information on trends and emerging problems will be shared with the staff at staff and team meetings. The number of Restrictive Physical Interventions will be reported to the Governors in the Headteacher's Report to the Governors.