



The Meadows

Primary School

‘Learning by Caring and Sharing’

Physical Restraint Policy



Policy for Restrictive Physical Intervention

(adapted from Staffordshire County Council Policy)

School Values and Policies

The school behaviour policy outlines how staff at the Meadows create and maintain good order and relationships through positive approaches. These approaches are successful for the vast majority of the time. This policy on the use of restrictive physical interventions supplements the main behaviour policy.

Both should be read in conjunction with the school SEN policy, the Health & Safety policy and the Safeguarding policy. Staff must also be aware of the policy for managing allegations against staff.

Purpose of this policy

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance so that any physical intervention that they undertake is carried out in a way that support the values and principles described above. In particular, it aims to describe the circumstances in which restrictive physical intervention is an appropriate response and how staff at school will fulfil their responsibilities in those circumstances.

The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that staff and parents are aware of the policy. They will ensure that any necessary training/awareness-raising takes place so that staff know their responsibilities.

Physical touch

The staff at The Meadows believe that physical touch is an essential part of human relationships. In our school, adults may well use touch to prompt, to give reassurance or to provide support in PE. To use touch/physical support successfully, staff will adhere to the following principles. It must:

- be non-abusive, with no intention to cause pain or injury
- be in the best interests of the child and others
- have a clear educational purpose (e.g. to access the curriculum or to improve social relationships)
- take account of gender issues

At our school, the Headteacher, is responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of any pupil who finds physical touch unwelcome. Such sensitivity may arise from the pupil's cultural background, personal history, age etc.

What do we mean by 'Physical Intervention'?

The definition of restrictive physical intervention adopted by Staffordshire County Council is:

"Any form of restrictive intervention, be it physical, mechanical, chemical, environmental or social/psychological intervention, which is designed and used (intentionally or unintentionally) to limit or restrict another's liberty."

Levels of restrictive physical intervention

Restrictive Physical Intervention is also categorised into non-restrictive and restrictive interventions.

Non-Restrictive Intervention

This is where the service user/pupil can move away from the physical intervention if they wish to. Non-restrictive examples include:-

- Physical presence, non-verbal prompts and directions
- Touch or prompting;
- Guiding; and
- Disengagement.

Restrictive Intervention

This is where the intervention is intended to prevent, or significantly restrict freedom of movement of an individual. Restrictive interventions generally carry a higher risk and require a greater degree of justification.

Examples of restrictive interventions include:-

- Escorting and manoeuvring;
- Temporary physical containment or holding;
- Seclusion;
- Full restraint;
- Mechanical restraint; and
- Chemical restraint.

Reasonable Force

There is no legal definition of reasonable force. The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The degree of force used must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force must always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result over the shortest possible time.

When is restrictive physical intervention permissible at The Meadows School?

Restrictive physical intervention is rarely used at The Meadows. However, it will be necessary when its aim is to prevent a pupil injuring themselves or others (For

example, pupils playing in a dangerously rough manner) or to prevent them damaging property (For example, pupils throwing a heavy object at/near to expensive computer equipment). [Section 550A, DFES Circular 10/98].

Section 550A also allows the use of force:

'to prevent a pupil from engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline....'

However, the use of restrictive physical intervention other than seclusion, for this purpose is not acceptable at The Meadows

Documenting Restrictive Physical Intervention Strategies

If it is agreed that a child will require some form of restrictive physical intervention, there must be an up to date copy of a written protocol included in the individual's Behaviour or Support Plan. (See Appendix 2 Restrictive Intervention Protocol form upon which intervention strategies can be documented.)

Risk assessment

The use of a restrictive physical intervention will be the outcome of a professional judgement made by staff on the basis of this school policy. It is avoided whenever possible and will not be used for staff convenience. Restrictive physical intervention will only be considered if other behaviour management options have proved ineffective or are judged to be inappropriate (or in an emergency situation).

Before deciding to intervene in this way, staff will weigh up whether the risk of not intervening is greater than the risk of intervening. Any actions will be carried out with the child's best interests at heart. Physical intervention will never be used to punish a pupil or cause pain, injury or humiliation. Guidance on this and more formal risk assessment is given in the CCES policy on risk assessment.

Staff are not expected to intervene physically against their better judgement nor are they expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk. In such circumstances, they must take steps to minimise risks. For example, by removing other pupils and calling for assistance.

Who may use restrictive physical interventions?

In this school all teachers are authorised. In addition, a list will be attached to this policy of non-teaching support staff who are also authorised. The Headteacher will ensure that those on this list are aware and understand what is involved. The Headteacher will review this list termly to ensure that it is up to date.

Supply staff will not be authorised to use restrictive physical interventions except if they have been specifically authorised by the Headteacher.

Parents and volunteers in the school are not given authorisation. Staff from the local education authority may have their own policies about the care and control of pupils but, whilst on the premises, they will be expected to be aware of, and operate within, the policy of this school. This means that visiting staff will need to ask the Headteacher for authorisation.

How staff at The Meadows might intervene

When a restrictive physical intervention is justified, staff will use 'reasonable force'. This is the degree of force 'warranted by the situation'. It will 'be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident and the consequences it is intended to prevent'. Any force used will always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result and for the shortest amount of time.

Staff will:

- Use the minimum amount of force for the minimum amount of time;
- Avoid causing pain or injury; avoid holding or putting pressure on joints;
- In general hold long bones.
- Never hold a pupil face down on the ground or in any position that might increase the risk of suffocation.

During an incident the member of staff involved will tell the pupil that his or her behaviour may be leading to restraint. This will not be used as a threat or said in a way that could inflame the situation. Staff will not act out of anger or frustration. They will try to adopt a calm, measured approach and maintain communication with the pupil at all times.

In an emergency, staff must summon assistance by sending a pupil to the head's office or to the staff room with the message 'red ink'.

If, through the school's special needs assessment procedures, it is determined that a restrictive physical intervention is likely to be appropriate to help a pupil make progress, a risk assessment will be carried out following the school's guidelines.

If appropriate, an individual management plan will then be drawn up for that pupil.

This plan will aim to reduce the likelihood of the need for restrictive physical intervention as well as describing how such intervention will be carried out. This plan will be discussed with parents/carers. When it involves the use of a restrictive physical intervention, medical colleagues will be consulted.

Before the plan is implemented, any necessary training or guidance will be provided for the staff involved. The Headteacher will be responsible for establishing staff needs and for organising necessary training.

What to do after the use of a restrictive physical intervention

After the use of an unplanned restrictive physical intervention (other than seclusion), the following steps will be taken.

- Details of the incident will be recorded by all adults involved immediately on the attached form. A copy will be sent to the CCEs 'Health & Safety' department (See appendix one);
- Recording will be completed within 12 hours whenever possible. Staff will be offered the opportunity to seek advice from a senior colleague or professional representative when compiling their report;
- Any injuries suffered by those involved will be recorded following normal school procedures;
- The Headteacher will check that there is no cause for concern regarding the actions of adults involved.

If it is felt that an action has 'caused or put a child at risk of significant harm' the Headteacher will follow the school's child protection procedures and also inform parents/carers.

- Parents/carers will be informed by the Headteacher on the day of the incident. If this is initially done by phone, it will be followed up in writing. Parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding an incident;
- Support/debriefing will be available for adults and pupils who have been involved in any incident involving restrictive physical interventions. This will be provided by Headteacher.

Arrangements for recording and informing parents in the case of a planned restrictive intervention will be followed as agreed beforehand but broadly will follow the same pattern as above.

The Headteacher will use the records kept to analyse patterns of behaviour and so decide whether responses are being effective. The Headteacher will report on this information to the Governing Body termly.

Complaints procedure

Any complaint will first be considered in the light of the school's child protection procedures, following ACPC guidance. If child protection procedures are not appropriate, the school's complaint procedures will be followed.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Implementation and monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher. Incidents will be recorded using appendices to the document. The Headteacher will report any use of physical intervention (other than seclusion) to the Governing body. This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or sooner if necessary.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Dissemination

The policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the school office and website.

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Approved By	G. Taylor
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