

Fairisle Infant and Nursery School



Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy

Date policy reviewed: January 2024

To be reviewed again: ~~January 2026~~

SIGNATURE STAMP

These are confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting that took place on:
[24.1.24 POLICY](#)

Signed:

Rick Allan
Chair of Governors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Rick Allan", is written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

Approved Date: [24.1.24](#)

Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

“Everyone has a right to feel safe” Article 19

“Discipline in schools must respect children’s dignity” Article 28

**“No child should be punished in a way that humiliates them or hurts them”
Article 37**

Fairisle Infant and Nursery School operates a positive Behaviour Policy in school. Our aim is to establish good behaviour from our children in a caring and supportive environment where the welfare of the child is paramount. The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures to be followed in the rare case of a restrictive physical intervention being used by a member of staff towards a pupil.

This policy should be read alongside the schools’ Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Inclusion Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Health and Safety Policy. The policy follows all relevant legislation as outlined in: **Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006** and **DFE “Use of Reasonable Force” July 2013.**

Definition:

Physical Intervention is any method of physically intervening to resolve a difficult or dangerous situation, and is not necessarily physical restraint. **Physical Restraint** is defined as when a member of staff uses force with the intention of restricting a young person’s movement against their will.

Physical Intervention and Restraint should be used as a last resort to support children and young people in times of crisis. Restraint should be avoided wherever possible. It is never a substitute for good behaviour management. Other methods (such as defusing conflict, non physical calming, etc) of managing the situation should always be tried first, unless this is impractical.

What the law says:

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing a criminal offence (or for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil).
- Where there is a risk of injury to others or to the pupil.
- Where there is a risk of significant damage to property.
- Where good order and discipline is compromised.

(See Appendix A for examples of situations)

The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Physical restraint 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 young person
- not intervening is likely to result in more dangerous consequences than intervening.

In an emergency or a case of self-defence everyone has the right to use reasonable force to defend themselves or others against attack. Force should only be used if the situation warrants it, and that such force must be in proportion to the circumstances and consistent with the age and understanding of the young person.

DFE guidance (2013) defines 'reasonable force' as:

- 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 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.
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control.
- School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury.

Planning around an individual and risk assessment

Our school aims to identify, in consultation with parents/carers, any child whose behaviour is potentially thought to require a physical intervention response, and to consider the needs of those children in relation to:

- Any individual medical, social, behavioural, learning or cultural factors
- Any Individual Education Plans, Pastoral Support Programmes or Personal Education Plans which support the children.

In most situations, our use of restrictive physical intervention is in the context of a prior risk assessment which considers:

- a) What the risks are
- b) Who is at risk and how
- c) What staff can do to manage the risk (this may include the possible use of restrictive physical intervention)

Staff will use risk assessments to inform the individual behaviour plan (IBP) and positive handling plan if required. Positive handling plans will include a restrictive physical intervention however it will be just one part of a whole approach to supporting the child's behaviour. The behaviour plan outlines:

- Our understanding of what the child is trying to achieve or communicate through their behaviour.
- How we adapt our environment to better meet the child's needs.
- How we teach and encourage the child to use new, more appropriate behaviours.
- How we reward the child when they make progress.
- How we respond when the child's behaviour is challenging (responsive strategies).

Arrange of approaches (including humour, distraction, relocation, and offering choices) are used as direct alternatives to using restrictive physical intervention to deescalate when possible.

Where a child does not have an existing behaviour plan or risk assessment – i.e., in an emergency, staff do their best, using reasonable force within their duty of care. A positive handling plan will be written for any child for whom it has been necessary to carry out a physical intervention for the first time.

Staff authorised to use restrictive physical intervention

The staff to which this power applies are defined in section 95 of the Education Act. They are:

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

Using force

Before using force staff should, wherever practicable, have tried other de-escalation strategies, communicating in a calm and measured manner throughout the incident. Staff should not give the impression of acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish a pupil, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

The types of force could include:

- a. 'bubbling' passive physical contact resulting from standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path;
- b. active physical contact such as:
 - i) leading a pupil by the hand or arm;
 - ii) ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
 - iii) in more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds, which may require specific expertise or training.

All staff must be 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. It is acknowledged that with some disengagement techniques pupils may encounter some minimal discomfort when appropriate release techniques are used. However, this is very brief, transient and poses less of a risk than the behaviour they are used in response to, e.g. biting. Any response deemed necessary to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate.

Emergency use of physical interventions may be required when pupils behave in unforeseen ways. Research evidence shows that injuries to staff and to pupils are more likely to occur when physical interventions are used in an emergency. Even in an emergency, the force used must be "reasonable", that is, it should be proportionate to the risk posed by the situation. The staff member or members concerned should be confident that the potential adverse outcomes associated with the intervention (for example, injury or distress) will be less severe than the adverse consequences which would have occurred without the use of a physical intervention.

Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff would be justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principle of seeking to use the minimum force required to achieve the desired result). Such situations could include preventing a pupil running off the pavement onto a busy road or preventing a pupil from hitting someone with a dangerous object such as a glass bottle or hammer. In the case of a pupil wielding a dangerous weapon the police should be contacted immediately.

Using physical contact to "punish a pupil or cause pain, injury or humiliation" is explicitly forbidden (Education Act 1996). Examples of such force would be:-

- holding around the neck
- any hold that may restrict breathing
- kicking, slapping, punching
- forcing limbs against their joints
- tripping
- holding by hair
- holding pupil face down on ground

Practice Regarding Specific Incidents:

- If it is felt a physical intervention may be needed then a radio call should be made to alert of 'possible PI' and to request SLT to attend
- Staff intervening with pupils will seek assistance from other members of staff as early as possible, since single-handed intervention increases the risks of injury to both parties and does not provide a witness.
- All staff who become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a pupil will have responsibility to provide a presence and to offer support and assistance should this be required.

- Before intervening in a non-emergency, consideration will be given to whether or not other staff are available to assist.
- Where possible, staff who have not been involved in the initial confrontation leading up to an incident may be in a better position to intervene or restrain and a 'change of face' considered.
- A pupil's behaviour may be adversely affected by the presence of an audience. Wherever possible, the audience will be removed, or if this is not possible, the pupil will be removed from the audience. The pupil and member(s) of staff will withdraw to a quiet, but not completely private, place (eg two members of staff should be present or a door left open so that others are aware of the situation).
- Staff will be aware of the need to tell the pupil being restrained, in a calm and gentle manner, that the reason for the intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe. Staff will explain that as soon as the pupil calms down, he/she will be released.
- All staff should be supported by a back-up system to enable staff to call for help in emergencies e.g the use of phones or walkie talkies.
- Holding techniques should take account of the following
 - Airway – no obstruction of airway.
 - Breathing – no restriction of chest area.
 - Circulation – no pressure on arterial pressure points.
 - Good body alignment.
 - Avoid pressure on joints.

Reporting and Recording

In all incidents where physical restraint has been used, the following actions must be taken:

- The Headteacher must be informed as soon as possible.
- The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that parents/carers are informed as soon as possible. Parents/carers will be contacted by the school when their child has been involved in physical intervention. This may be by telephone, direct contact or by letter on the day the incident occurred. This contact should be recorded on the SPIG form.
- If the Headteacher is not available the Deputy Headteacher will undertake the above duties. In her absence this duty will fall to the allocated Senior teacher.
- The staff involved must complete a written record as soon as possible, and always within 12 hours of the incident.
- Incidents of restrictive physical intervention should be recorded using the **SPIG form**. A copy of this should be attached to the incident record on CPOMs and a paper copy added to the SPIG folder which will be stored in a locked cupboard (see Appendix B)

The Principle of Last Resort

Staff/employees should only use physical restraint when there is no other realistic alternative. This does not mean that we always expect people to methodically work their way through a series of failing strategies before attempting an intervention in which they have some confidence. Nor does it mean always

waiting until the danger is acute and imminent, by which time the prospect of safely managing it may be significantly reduced. It does mean that staff should conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest alternative available. This includes thinking creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective. National guidance is clear on this point.

“If necessary, staff have the authority to take immediate action to prevent harm occurring even if the harm is expected to happen some time in the predicted future.” Para 10 Page 4 Department of Health – 1997 – “The Control of Children in the Public Care: Interpretation of the Children Act 1989” - London: HMSO
Reasonable interventions under these circumstances would be the choice of the least invasive but effective strategy that could be used.

Health and Safety:

Risk Management

Any child who has needed to be restrained or who has challenging behaviour which might make this necessary should have a behaviour plan (IBP) and positive handling plan as outline above agreed with parents/carers and communicated to all staff who work with the pupil. The risk assessment and behaviour plan must be reviewed every half term.

Children

When using physical restraint, the young person’s health and safety must always be considered and monitored. The hold must be stopped immediately if significant signs of physical distress are seen, i.e. sudden change in colour, difficulties in breathing, vomiting.

Physical restraint should not be used where there are any medical concerns.

After holding, a member of staff should verbally check the young person for evidence of injury and should further medical intervention be needed, this should be recorded on the form. Medical advice should be sought if there are any concerns. Post incident support should be offered for pupil and staff and appropriate follow up action, e.g. opportunities to repair relationship and make reparation, formal post incident interview and review of the behaviour plan to consider any changes.

Staff

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 pupils and any possible weapons, retire to a safe distance and call for another member of staff to help. Where possible all members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident wherever necessary.

Injuries

All injuries must be recorded and reported to the LA using the Injury/Accident form located in the school office. If there are concerns regarding Health and Safety regulations regarding violent incidents this will be recorded on the relevant health and safety form as well as the SPIG form. "Preventing Workplace Harassment and Violence" Safe Working Procedure Version 7.01 (see Appendix C).

Monitoring use of Restrictive Physical Interventions

The use of physical intervention in our school will be monitored in order to help our staff learn from experience, promote the well being of pupils in our care and provide a basis for appropriate support and school organisation. Monitoring will help us to determine what specialist help is needed for pupils. Monitoring information will be reported on a regular basis to school governors by the Headteacher. Physical Intervention Records will be available for monitoring by Local Authority officers and Ofsted.

Complaints

If a child and his/her parents/carers wish to make a complaint about physical restraint used by a teacher or other authorised person, they will complain to the Headteacher in the first instance (or to the Chair of Governors if the Headteacher is the subject of complaint). The Headteacher will then seek advice from Human Resources and the matter will be investigated under the relevant disciplinary procedure.

Appendix A

Examples of situations:

- a. A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil.
- b. Pupils are fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others.
- c. A pupil is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate damage to property.
- d. A pupil is causing, or at the risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or object.
- e. A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school other than at an unauthorised time. Refusal of a pupil to remain in a particular place is not enough on its own to justify use of force. It would be justifiable where allowing a pupil to leave would:
 - i) entail serious risks to the pupil's safety (taking into account age and understanding), to the safety of other pupils or staff, or of damage to property; or
 - ii) lead to behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline, such as disrupting his/her own class or other classes.
- f. A pupil persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave a classroom.
- g. A pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson; or
- h. a pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school sporting event or school visit.

In these examples use of force would be reasonable (and therefore lawful) if it was clear that the behaviour was sufficiently dangerous or disruptive to warrant physical intervention of the degree applied and could not realistically be dealt with by any other means.

Appendix B

SPIG form

Appendix C

Safe Working Procedure: 'Preventing Workplace Harassment and Violence'

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