

# Five Ways Primary School



# Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy

September 2024

## **School Values and Policies**

One of the school aims at Five Ways is to create and maintain a safe, comfortable and stimulating learning environment which encourages high achievement for pupils and staff. This requires a commitment to the values of Health and Safety, a bright, stimulating, comfortable environment and development of the full potential of staff and pupils.

The school behaviour policy outlines how staff at Five Ways Primary School 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.

### **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 supports 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. He/she will ensure that any necessary training/awareness-raising takes place so that staff know their responsibilities.

### **Physical touch**

The staff at Five Ways Primary School 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, registration teachers are responsible for ensuring that relevant staff are aware of any pupil in their class, who finds physical touch unwelcome. Such sensitivity may arise from the pupil's cultural background, personal history, age etc.

## What is reasonable force?

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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 student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 3) 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- 4) As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. 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.
- 5) 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.
- 6) 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.

It is helpful to distinguish between:

Definition	Example	
Non-restrictive physical interventions. (As already stated touch/physical contact is a small but important and natural part of teacher-pupil relationships in our school).	Either where the child's movement is not restricted or where the child is held supportively but such that they will be released immediately should they so wish	For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guiding/shepherding a person from A to B</li> <li>• use of a protective helmet to prevent self-injury</li> <li>• removal of a cause of distress</li> </ul>
Restrictive physical interventions	Prevent, impede or restrict movement or mobility. Restraint. To use force to direct.	For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• isolating a child in a room</li> <li>• holding a pupil</li> <li>• blocking a person's path</li> <li>• interpositioning</li> <li>• pushing/pulling</li> </ul>

and between:

Emergency/unplanned interventions	Occur in response to unforeseen events
Planned interventions	In which staff employ, where necessary, pre-arranged strategies and methods which are based on a risk assessment and recorded in an individual plan for the management of a pupil

## **When is restrictive physical intervention permissible at Five Ways Primary School?**

Restrictive physical intervention is rarely used at Five Ways Primary School. However, it may be necessary if a pupil is:

- committing any offence (*or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil*)  
or
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (*including the pupil himself*) (Education and inspections act 2006)

The DfE 2012 Advice for Headteachers' 'Use of Reasonable Force' states that reasonable force may 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 judgment of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

Specific examples of incidents that may require restrictive physical intervention are:

- if a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil, is causing distress and refuses to stop when asked.
- pupils are fighting, are in danger of becoming injured and are unwilling to stop when asked.
- a pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property and is unwilling to stop when asked.
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others and is unwilling to stop when asked.
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school and will not return when asked. (This will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school.)
- Removing a disruptive child from the classroom where they have refused to follow repeated instructions to do so (This would be in exceptional circumstances and part of a positive behavior plan already in place.)

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 for this purpose is acceptable only in rare circumstances at Five Ways Primary School. For example, restrictive physical intervention will only be appropriate if a lesson is disrupted for a prolonged period of time, the pupil does not respond when asked to stop the disruptive behaviour and allowing the behaviour to continue is likely to affect the physical or emotional well-being of other pupils within the class. Even on these rare occasions, it may be more appropriate to move the other children away from the situation.

**It is always unlawful to use restrictive physical intervention as a punishment.**

### **Risk assessment**

Whenever it is foreseeable that a service user/pupil might require a restrictive physical intervention, then a risk assessment must be completed. It is essential that the outcomes of any assessment are made known to all relevant staff and other parties such as parents/carers. The assessment process is the same as for assessing any other form of risk and should be documented on an Individual Risk Assessment Form HSF18. (Appendix 4)

When undertaking this assessment:-

- Involve relevant agencies who may have an involvement with the individual, and their family members;
- Involve key people such as health professionals, social workers, specialist challenging behaviour nurse, psychologist etc. where necessary,
- Identify behaviours and settings that result in harm or damage from past incident reports/records;
- Determine how likely an incident needing restrictive physical intervention is to occur;
- Identify the degree of potential harm/damage resulting from not intervening;
- Document the agreed management strategies and the risk levels;
- If risks of intervening remain high risk, seek specialist advice and support;

- Agree review date and monitor that the protocols and management strategies are working effectively;
- Communicate the outcome of the risk assessment and management strategies/protocol to all relevant parties;
- Implement necessary training if training needs are identified.

When the need for restrictive physical intervention is agreed, it is important that appropriate steps are taken to minimise the risks to staff and service users/pupils. Adequate staff must be available to safely complete any holding and restraint that is undertaken as part of a planned strategy.

It is essential that following any intervention risk assessments are reviewed. It may be necessary to call a formal review meeting and revise the risk assessment and management plan. When reviewing the risk assessments it is important to review trends, personality dynamics, factors surrounding the incident, what happened in the days and hours beforehand to look for triggers or contributing factors.

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.

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?**

- 1) All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. (Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- 2) This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the head teacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

***However all members of staff and volunteers at the school must understand and be regularly reminded, that restrictive physical intervention is only to be used once all other strategies have been exhausted.***

### **How staff at Five Ways Primary School 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.

Examples of acceptable restrictive physical intervention on these rare occasions may involve a member of staff positioning themselves between a pupil and the person that it is felt may be about to be injured. In an emergency situation, where it is felt that a child will hurt another pupil or member of staff by being allowed to move freely, it may be necessary to prevent their free movement by holding them by long bones, avoiding joints for the minimum period of time to allow the other person to remove themselves from the situation.

It is never acceptable to hold a child face down, grab a child putting pressure on a joint or restrict their movement in any way when there is no immediate danger.

In an emergency, staff must summon assistance by asking another member of staff close by to support them or by sending a mature child to the office to explain that assistance is required.

### **The place of restrictive physical intervention within broader behavioural planning**

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.

### **Documenting Restrictive Physical Intervention Strategies**

If it is agreed that a child or adult will require some form of restrictive physical intervention, there must be an up to date copy of a written protocol included in the individuals plan/records. (See Standard Document HSF57 Restrictive Intervention Protocol form or Positive Behaviour Plan upon which intervention strategies can be documented – See Appendix 1.)

Documentation includes the following:-

- A description of the behaviour sequence and settings which may require intervention response;
- The results of an assessment to determine any counter reasons for the use of intervention strategies (e.g. medical conditions etc);
- A risk assessment that balances the risk of using a restrictive physical intervention against the risks of not intervening;
- A record of the views of those with parental responsibility in the case of children and family members or independent advocates in the case of adults;
- A system of recording behaviours and the use of restrictive physical interventions;
- Previous methods which have been tried without success;
- A description of the specific restrictive physical intervention strategies/techniques which are agreed and the dates on which they will be reviewed;
- The ways in which this approach will be reviewed, the frequency of review meetings and members of the review team.

### **Communication**

Information relating to intervention strategies should be discussed with the service user/pupil and their families/parents/carers prior to the implementation. All parties should be in agreement with the intervention strategy. If this is not possible, differences of opinion must be documented and recorded in the individuals care plan/records.

## **Action to be taken following an incident of Restrictive Physical Intervention.**

### **Recording, Reporting and Monitoring**

The use of restrictive physical interventions, whether planned, unplanned, or emergence interventions must always be recorded using the Restrictive Physical Intervention Record of Incident form HSF56 – See Appendix 2. The written record of the use of a restrictive physical intervention must indicate:-

- The names of the staff and service users/pupils and any other parties involved;
- The reason for using the restrictive physical intervention employed;
- The type and duration of the restrictive physical intervention;
- Whether the service user/pupil or anyone else experienced injury or distress and, if they did, what action was taken.

If the incident is also an act of violence or aggression then HSF9 Violence and Aggression Report Form (See Appendix 3) must also be completed, this form or HSF40 Accident Investigation Report Form must be completed to record any injuries that result from the use of a restrictive physical intervention. Further details of activities that should be undertaken following incidents of Restrictive Physical Intervention are provided in Restrictive Physical Intervention and Adult Service Users G15 and Restrictive Physical Intervention Schools and Children G16.

After the use of an unplanned restrictive physical intervention, the following steps will be taken.

- 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.
- 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 the Headteacher.

Procedures for recording and reporting incidents of RPI in planned situations or as part of a risk assessment already in place, will be agreed with staff and parents on an individual basis.

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 annually.

### **Debriefing**

Following an incident of Restrictive Physical Intervention all those involved should be debriefed and staff should be informed of how they may contact the confidential Staff Care Counselling Service on 01785 277400. Further information regarding debriefing is available in the guidance associated with this policy.

### **Complaints procedure**

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

*For further information regarding restrictive physical intervention see SCC Policy 'Restrictive Physical Intervention Ref: HR 119.*