



# The Brickfields Trust

## Physical Intervention Policy

### Kings Road Primary & Lawford Mead Primary & Nursery Schools

*Recommended to the Board of Trustees by the Local Governing Committee: Autumn 2021*

*Next review date: Autumn 2024*

*The Brickfields Multi Academy Trust is a company registered in England and Wales.  
Company Number: 10538130*

# Physical Intervention Policy

## Relationship to other policies

- Positive Behaviour Management
- Equality plan & Scheme
- Child Protection & Safeguarding
- Attendance
- SEND policy
- Health, Safety & Wellbeing

## Introduction

Physical intervention is the positive use of force in order to avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action, or by removing the physical object which could be used to harm themselves or others.

## The Legal Framework

The Use of Reasonable Force to Control or Restrain Pupils Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 came into force on 1 September 1998 and applies to all schools. This section sought to clarify the powers of teachers, and other staff who have lawful control over pupils, to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing a crime, causing injury or damage or causing disruptions. DfEE Circular 10/98 provides guidance on the way in which the legislation should be interpreted in schools. The 1996 Act (section 548-550) makes it clear that corporal punishment by way of sanction is forbidden.

In the DFE document "Use of reasonable force (July 2013)" it states:

"Schools can use reasonable force to:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow instruction to do so
- Prevent a pupil from behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom, where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviours of others
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

**Schools cannot:**

- Use force as a punishment – **it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.**

**Staff are not expected to restrain a child if by doing so they will put themselves at significant risk.**

### **Preventing the need to use physical intervention**

The school's behaviour management policy sets out the way in which good behaviour is promoted throughout the school and children are aware that good behaviour is the minimum expectation. They are included in decisions which affect their lives through class and whole school discussions and circle time. Their rights are respected, and appropriate and effective communication is used to convey important information to them. The following techniques are used to reduce the risk of escalation.

- The appropriate use of language, positive tone of voice and non-threatening body stance.
- Attempt to calm the heat of the moment by 'talking down' the problem.
- Listening and counselling.
- Negotiating with all parties.
- Asking onlookers to leave the scene.
- Respecting the dignity of all concerned.
- Taking the problem seriously.

### **Physical restraint is only used as a method of last resort**

Physical restraint is only used where there has been potential for significant harm or risk to the child or other people or substantial damage to property.

**When the need for physical intervention arises due to challenging/unsafe behaviour staff MUST observe the following principles:**

- Any form of restraint should only be applied by staff specifically trained to do so
- Take account of the pupils age, gender, stage of development and cultural background
- Do not threaten or inflict pain
- Do not apply pressure that works against joints
- Where possible, the pupil should be moved to a seated position
- Minimise movement, particularly the risk of toppling over
- Continue to talk to the pupil as you restrain or control them

- Approach the pupil from the side, not face to face
- Apply techniques which phase down the hold or restraint as the pupil regains control
- Do not apply inappropriate techniques which could escalate the situation
- Continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident and make it as clear as possible, in any appropriate form, that physical intervention will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary
- Acknowledgement should always be given to the pupil's rights and dignity.

Where the need for physical intervention with a particular child has been assessed as being a frequent requirement, the SENCO will ensure that this is included in their One Plan. This is devised to ensure that the child's needs are being met in the best possible way.

### **Reasonable Force:**

There is **no** legal definition of 'reasonable force'. The degree of force that may be used depends on all the particular circumstances and the following points need to be taken into consideration:

- The use of force can be regarded as reasonable **only** if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it
- It should be possible to show that, unless immediate action had been taken, there were strong indicators that injury or damage to property would follow
- The use of any degree of force is unlawful, if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of such physical force, and therefore should be in proportion to the incident
- Force can be used to **control** pupils i.e. passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path
- Force can be used to **physically restrain** a pupil to bring them under control. It should only employ a **minimum amount of force** - i.e. the minimum force needed to avoid injury, damage to property or to prevent a breakdown in discipline - for the shortest period of time.

The situations where it is considered reasonable to use force are:

- a) Where action is necessary in self defence or because there is imminent risk of injury.
- b) Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property.

Staff must issue children with verbal warnings that physical intervention or restraint will be used unless challenging behaviour ceases. The tone of voice needs to be firm and decisive, and statements must be unambiguous and clear. Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff:

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Holding
- Leading a pupil by the hand
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- (In extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds

Staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. For example:

- Holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in a way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe.
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint.
- Tripping a pupil.
- Holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear.
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground.

All incidents that involve physical restraint including violence towards a member of staff, must be reported to the headteacher (or deputy in the absence) and a written record kept on file. The member of staff involved should also keep their own record of any report that has been written.

The child's parent/carer must be informed when physical restraint has been necessary by the end of the working day or where possible at the end of the morning or afternoon session in which the incident occurred.

Staff need to ensure that a child or others do not misinterpret any physical contact.

- The level and type of physical contact should reflect the educational and social needs of the child. Physical contact is likely to occur in some PE and drama activities, or aspects of personal care, for example toileting. Issues in relation to privacy and personal care situations need to be given particular thought, in order that the children and staff are not placed in potentially vulnerable situations without full consideration of the circumstances being assessed and appropriate plans being devised and agreed.
- Physical contact should not respond nor lead to expectations or anxieties of any form. It should not become habitual. Specific consideration should be given to the needs of children who may have suffered abuse and/or neglect.
- Children asking a member of staff for physical comfort are responded to in line with this policy. However staff should ensure that their response is not translated as rejection.

- There is no general expectation of privacy for the physical expression of affection or comfort. All staff should endeavour, wherever possible, not to be alone with a child in such a situation.

### **During an incident of restraint:**

- Appropriate techniques are used.
- The minimum necessary force is used.
- The child is continually offered the opportunity to regain self control.
- Gender and cultural differences are taken into account.
- Children are never restrained by being tied up or bound.

### **Parental written agreements**

Schools do not require parental consent to use force to control or restrain a pupil. However, children in school who have special needs who require complex or repeated physical management will have a prescribed, written, handling policy which has been agreed with the parents/guardians and pupil.

### **Risk Assessments**

Whenever it is reasonably foreseeable that a pupil might require the use of a physical intervention i.e. controlled force or physical restraint; **a risk assessment** should be carried out, which identifies the benefits and risks associated with different intervention strategies and ways of supporting the pupil. The use of physical interventions should be minimised by the use of preventative strategies whenever it is foreseeable that a young person might require these types of intervention. The risk assessment must clarify the threshold for intervention and the interventions likely to be required.

Risk assessments and management plans for physical intervention should be the product of an assessment made collaboratively by those professionally involved with the young person and their parents/carers, thus indicating that a broad range of views has been taken into account in its completion. Wherever possible, pupils should be involved in this process. This risk assessment should form part of the individual's behaviour management plan.

The decision to use a physical intervention must take account of the circumstances and be based on an assessment of the risks associated with the intervention compared with the risks of not employing a physical intervention. The resulting

risk management strategy should be compatible with a positive behaviour management approach.

In such instances no more than minimum necessary force should be used, taking into account all of the circumstances. Such interventions should only be made when they are likely to succeed. Except in emergencies, more than one adult should be present.

### Record of Physical Restraint

<b>Name of Pupil(s) involved:</b>	
<b>Name of Staff Member(s) involved:</b>	
<b>Name of witnesses (staff, pupils, others):</b>	
<b>Date and time restraint occurred</b>	
<b>Why restraint was necessary</b>	
<b>How restraint was carried out</b>	
<b>Who restrained the child</b>	
<b>How long the restraint lasted</b>	
<b>Who was present during the period of restraint</b>	
<b>Any marks or injuries on child as a result of the restraint and how they occurred</b>	
<b>Any marks or injuries on others as a result of the incident and how they occurred</b>	

<b>Action taken as treatment in relation to marks or injuries recorded above</b>	
<b>Child's response and the outcome of the incident</b>	
<b>Details of any damage to property and how it occurred</b>	
<b>Meeting with parent arranged: Date:</b>	

**Completed by:.....(position)**

**Signed: ..... Print name: .....Date: .....**

**Review Date: Autumn 2024**