

Physical Intervention Policy

Bournes Green Infant School do not advocate the use of physical restraint. The school has an ethos where the use of physical intervention is not normally necessary. If it became necessary in exceptional circumstances to use physical intervention, it would be an act of care, not a punishment.

Our Vision

At Bournes Green Infant School the governors, staff, children, parents and carers work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust in a community that is strengthened and enriched by a diversity of background, culture and religion. Our priority is to foster the self-confidence, self-esteem and independence of *all* in a climate of growth and opportunity that will enable us to achieve the highest standards. We actively promote a healthy environment in which children enjoy learning and develop the skills needed to become responsible members of society. We aim to bring learning to life.

'**Strength Through Wisdom**' was the original mission statement for our school. Today we nurture our children to be confident and articulate with an enjoyment of learning in the belief that this will enable them to gain strength from their developing wisdom.

See also: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy & Positive Behaviour Management Policy.

Legal Framework

Physical intervention should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Under the Children Order 1995 (NI), it is only permissible as described under the heading 'Physical Control'.

Article 4 of the Education Order 1998 (NI) clarifies powers that already exist in common law.

It enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Headteacher, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a child from:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the child him/herself) or
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its children, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Examples of possible situations are given in Appendix 1.

Definition of Physical intervention

Physical intervention is the positive application of force with the intention of controlling a child's behaviour in order to protect him/her from harming him/herself or others or seriously damaging property.

Physical intervention occurs whenever a member/s of staff, intentionally, using force, physically restricts a child's movements against his/her will. This could be removing a child from a dangerous situation.

What does it mean to restrain a child?

Physical intervention is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming him/herself or others or seriously damaging property. The proper use of physical intervention requires skill and judgement, as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of restraining.

Why use physical intervention?

Physical intervention should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action, perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him/her or others. Physical intervention skilfully applied may be eased by degrees as the child calms down in response to the physical contact. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

Objectives

The following are the objectives of a meaningful and effective handling and physical intervention policy:

- To protect every person in the school community from harm
- To protect all children against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful
- To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations
- To give full support to staff who have been assaulted or have suffered verbal abuse from children or others

Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for ensuring they act in line with this policy. The Headteacher is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that all staff are familiar with the school policy
2. Ensuring that all relevant staff have received training (and are up-dated through an on-going programme of training) in non-physical crises intervention techniques
3. Ensuring that named personnel have also received training in physical intervention techniques
4. In collaboration with the governing body of the school, monitoring the implementation of the school policy

All staff should indicate their familiarity with the policy by signing a copy of the record kept by the school.

Risk Assessment

Although most children in our school will never require any form of physical intervention, staff may have to deal with some children who exhibit disturbed, distressed and distressing behaviour. It is therefore necessary to carry out a risk assessment.

We will attempt to reduce risk by managing:

- The environment
- Body language
- The way we talk
- The way we act

Individual Risk Assessment

If we become aware that a child is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, it is our intention to plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning needs to address:

- Managing the child (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary)
- Involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate

More detailed examples of risk assessment and preventative steps can be found in Appendix 2.

Procedures

The staff of Bournes Green Infant School recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the strategies available to secure child safety/well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline.

Before resorting to physical intervention, staff will have tried all alternatives and especially those, which have been successful in the past in preventing the child's behaviour from becoming a danger.

Acceptable forms of physical intervention for use in school will be limited to the minimum force necessary to:

- Prevent the child from harming him/herself or others
- To remove children quickly from a potentially dangerous situation

Where the regular use of physical intervention is necessary with an individual, the strategies to be used will be devised and recorded in the individual's Provision Map. This should be done in conjunction with the parents and, where possible, the child.

Where it has been necessary to use physical intervention, the incident will be discussed with the child and its point of view recorded. Parents/carers will be informed when physical intervention has been used and will be given the opportunity to discuss the matter with the school.

Staff will be given the opportunity to discuss with the Headteacher and at staff meetings, incidents where physical intervention was employed and in particular, to identify whether any alternative strategy might have been equally effective.

Staff training needs will be identified and suitable information and training provided as appropriate.

In the event of physical intervention having been used it is important to consider the strategies, which are deemed acceptable, and the recording procedures that should be in place. These are detailed below.

Action Steps

A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem.

Tell the child who is misbehaving to stop and state possible consequences of failure to do so. If possible:

- Summon another adult
- Continue to communicate with the child throughout the incident
- Make it clear that physical intervention will be removed as soon as it ceases to be necessary
- Appropriate follow-up action should be taken, which may include:
 - Providing medical support
 - Providing respite for those involved

Recording

Staff should record (Appendix3) all incidents of physical intervention in accordance with School policy and report these to the Headteacher.

Details should include:

- Name of child
- Staff member(s) involved
- The date and time the physical intervention occurred
- Why physical intervention was necessary
- How physical intervention was carried out
- Who restrained the child
- How long physical intervention lasted
- Who was present during the period of physical intervention
- Any marks or injuries noted on the child or member of staff as a result of the incident
- Action taken such as treatment in relation to any marks or injuries occurring as a result of the incident

- The child's response and the outcome of the incident
- Details of any damage to property and how it occurred
- Any other action taken in the management of the incident

Parents/carers should be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. This action should also be recorded.

Where regular physical contact is required, and the child has an EHCP, records will be kept in correspondence between home and school.

Complaints

We all have a duty of care to the children in our school and cannot escape our legal responsibilities by avoiding taking appropriate and necessary action. Involving parents when an incident occurs with their child, together with a clear policy adhered to by the staff, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It will not prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the police and social services department under child protection procedures. Where an allegation is made against a member of staff of inappropriate physical contact, the school will deal with such an allegation in line with Southend Essex and Thurrock Child Protection Procedures.

Staff subjected to physical violence or assault, have the right to be supported in making a formal complaint to the police and, if necessary, taking private action against an assailant.

Monitoring the Policy

- The school will regularly review the need for staff to be trained in approved methods of positive handling
- All incidents of physical contact will be logged in line with these procedures.
- The patterns of use of physical intervention will be monitored by the Headteacher

Communicating the Policy

It is our intention to inform all staff and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Statement for Parents

A relevant statement will be included in the school prospectus.

Reviewing the Policy

Reviewed by staff and approved by Governors in Summer 2017.

It will be reviewed in accordance with our Policies and Key Documentation Review Timetable

Appendix 1

Article 4 of the Education Order 1998 (NI) enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Head Teacher, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a child from:

1. Committing an offence
2. Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the child)
3. Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintenance of good order and discipline at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

Examples of situations that fall into one of the first two categories are:

- A child attacks a member of staff, or another child
- Children fighting
- A child causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- A child is running around the school in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure herself/himself or others
- A child absconds from a class or tries to leave school (nb. this will only apply if a child could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- A child persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom
- A child is behaving in such a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

Appendix 2

All teachers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult children and steps which they can take to defuse and calm a situation. These steps include:

- Move calmly and confidently
- Make simple, clear statements
- Intervene early
- Try to maintain eye contact
- If necessary summon help before the problem escalates
- Remove audience from the immediate location

There are situations where staff should not intervene without help:

- A physically large child
- More than one child
- When the teacher believes that s/he may be at risk of injury

In those circumstances where the member of staff has decided that it is not appropriate to restrain the child they should:

- Remove other children who might be at risk
- Summon assistance from colleagues
- Where necessary, telephone the police
- Inform children that help will be arriving
- Until assistance arrives, the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

Appendix 3

RECORD OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Date of incident:	Time of incident:
Child's Name:	Date of Birth:
Member(s) of staff involved:	
Adult witness to physical intervention:	
Outline of event leading to physical intervention	
Outline of incident of physical intervention (including physical intervention method used)	
Outline of physical intervention	
Description of any injury sustained by injured child and any subsequent treatment	
Date parent/carer informed of incident	Time
By whom informed:	
Outline of Parent/carer response	
Signature of staff completing report	Date
Signature of Teacher in charge	Date
Signature of Headteacher	Date
Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action	