

Stoughton Infant and Nursery School

Northmead Junior School



**Northmead
Junior School**

Positive Handling Policy

Date Reviewed: 07/2024

Reviewed By: LGB

Next Review Due: 07/2027

Review Cycle: 3 Years

Policy statement

At Stoughton Infant School and Northmead Junior School all staff and volunteers adopt a positive approach to managing behaviour. This policy on the use of positive handling and physical interventions supplements the main behaviour policy. Both should be read in conjunction with the school Safeguarding policy. The use of physical intervention should only ever be used to secure pupil and staff safety and well-being.

At Stoughton Infant School and Northmead Junior School staff recognise that behaviour is a form of communication. Staff take a proactive approach to reducing the incidence of extreme behaviours to ensure that the use of physical intervention is rare. Staff should do this by

- Finding out why a child behaves as he or she does
- Understanding the factors that influence this child's behaviour
- Identifying early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours are developing

Aims

This policy aims to

- Define physical intervention and use of reasonable force
- Provide information on when it is appropriate to use physical intervention
- Summarise the roles and responsibilities of different people in the school community with regards to use of reasonable force

Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)

It is also based on the [special educational needs and disability \(SEND\) code of practice](#).

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils
- Sections 88-94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which require schools to regulate pupils' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate pupil' property
- [DfE guidance](#) explaining that maintained schools should publish their behaviour policy online

What is physical intervention ('reasonable force')?

The use of force is illegal if the physical circumstances do not warrant it. The force used should always be the minimum needed to regain and ensure safety and control for everyone involved or present.

Restrictive physical interventions may include:

- Bodily contact - where the physical presence of one or more people is used to control a pupil, e.g. physically interposing between pupils; blocking a pupil's path; holding or 'shepherding' a pupil; using agreed, approved restricted holds
- Environmental – where a change is applied within the environment for example shutting a door or the use of locks or key pads to prevent access to a particular area.

In what circumstances can physical intervention be used?

- To prevent a pupil causing, or being at risk of causing, injury or damage to themselves or others, whether by accident, rough behaviour or by misuse of materials or objects
- To prevent a pupil committing a criminal offence
- To prevent a pupil committing deliberate serious damage or vandalism
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil

The decision to use physical intervention will be taken in the context of the level of risk presented by the behaviour, the seriousness of the incident and the relative risks of the use of physical intervention compared with any available alternative.

The use of physical intervention will take into account the characteristics of the pupil, including their age, gender, SEN, physical needs or disability, developmental level or cultural issues.

The Last Resort Principle

At Stoughton Infant School and Northmead Junior School we foster positive relationships and only use reasonable force when there is no realistic alternative. This means that

- We expect staff to conduct a risk assessment and choose the safest alternative.
- We expect staff to think creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective.

There might be some situations in which the need for positive handling is immediate and where there are no equal effective alternatives (a child is about to run in the road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives such as the use of assertiveness skills:

- Use a distraction such as a high attention toy to interrupt the behaviour long enough for other methods of verbal control
- Withdrawal of attention(audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened

- Other techniques designed to defuse a situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour, in which case the incident could be dealt with later when emotions are running less high

If physical intervention is necessary:

Always:

- Use the least possible force for the minimum length possible
- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary and alert another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance
- Remain calm (if you fear loss of control involve another member of staff)
- Log behaviour incidents on CPOMS
- Complete a post incident review after incidents to explore more positive/effective responses to future difficult situations where appropriate.

Never:

- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck, lying face down or pulling arms across the child's chest
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil

Proactive Behaviour Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk should have a Proactive Behaviour Plan (see appendix A). The plans detail any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. If particular physical techniques have been found to be effective they should be named, along with alerts to any which have proved ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Proactive Behaviour Plans should be considered alongside any other planning documents which relate to the pupil (for example, SEND Support Plan or EHCP). They should take account of age, gender, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special need and social context.

Training

It is the policy of this school that all staff working closely with pupils are trained in the proactive and responsive positive handling strategies and, to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the School Behaviour Policy and Practice. In cases where a Positive Handling Plan is in operation, selected staff will be trained in any physical interventions to be used. These staff will be trained by the accredited provider and will be the only staff authorised to use the intervention.

Responding to Unforeseen Emergencies

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. It is not enough to thoughtlessly apply rules without thinking through the likely consequences. The key principles are that any physical intervention should be:

- In the best interest of the child
- Reasonable and proportionate Intended to reduce risk
- The least intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective.

Whenever a physical intervention has to be made there should be a verbal warning. Where possible, staff should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference to physical interventions. They should only use the techniques and methods approved for use in this school.

Recording

- Whenever overpowering force is used the incident must be recorded on CPOMS. The incident should be recorded carefully explaining what actually happened. Full names of everyone involved in the incident should be used
- All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the CPOMS incident which should be completed within 24 hours
- Parents/carers must also be notified
- Staff should: Inform a member of SLT as soon as possible

Post-Incident Support

Incidents that require use of restrictive physical interventions can be upsetting to all concerned and could result in injuries to the child or staff. After incidents have subsided, it is important to ensure that staff and children are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action should, of course, be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded in accordance with school procedures. The school should take action to report any serious injuries to staff or students in accordance with Learning Partners Academy Trust guidelines. We need to consider: - thoughts, feeling, emotions, - emotional 'first aid'

Stage 1 – Immediate 'Are you ok' This should occur before people leave to go home.

Stage 2 – De-briefing checking people have adjusted to an emotionally difficult event. This should occur within 48 hours.

Stage 3 – Counselling: formal support. Support is available when requested by a member of staff, however it is not imposed.

Post Incident Review

Focus on actions and behaviours:

Who did what, when, why, how?

What was the outcome?

What does it tell us about what we already know about the young person?

What have we learnt and what or how does this inform our practice?

Monitoring use of Restrictive Physical Interventions

Use of physical intervention in school is monitored in order to help staff learn from experience, promote the wellbeing of children in their care, and provide a basis for appropriate support. Monitoring can help the school to determine what specialist help is needed for children and to assess the appropriateness of the child's placement at the school.

- The use of physical intervention is monitored and evaluated regularly at Safeguarding meetings.
- Individual student risk assessments are reviewed annually.

Responding to Complaints

The use of restrictive physical intervention can lead to allegations of inappropriate or excessive use. In the event of a complaint being received by a school in relation to use of force by staff, the matter should be dealt with in accordance with Learning Partners Academy Trust guidelines and agreed procedures for handling allegations against members of staff.

Policy Review and Evaluation

This policy has been developed in liaison with school staff and governors. It will be reviewed annually, or when relevant national or local guidance indicates additional need.

Links with Other Policies

This behaviour policy is linked to the following policies:

- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding policy

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Proactive Plan

(Ensuring the plan is responding to the child's communication, and working towards the Alternative Behaviour)

<p>Environmental Strategies (Considerations to include: physical environment, activities/tasks, how others interact with them)</p>	<p>New Skills What specific skills do they need to help them to communicate their needs in the alternative way? (Think small steps)</p>	<p>Coping Skills Helping them to learn to cope with a stressful situation (Where we cannot change the environment)</p>
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<p>Reactive strategies (e.g. de-escalation, distraction)</p>	<p>Review</p>
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Reactive strategies are aimed at keeping people safe, here and now. Strategies must ensure they do not escalate dangerous behaviour.

Review earlier if reactive strategies are being used frequently.