



# Cumnor CE Primary School

## Physical Restraint Policy

Agreed by Governors:  
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### When May a Restrictive Physical Intervention Be Used

Restrictive physical intervention is rarely used at Cumnor School. However, it may be necessary to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances in order to:

- prevent a pupil injuring themselves or others, (e.g. rough play, stopping a young person from running towards traffic),
- prevent a young person causing serious damage to property,
- prevent a pupil/young person committing an offence (or for any pupil/young person under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be considered an offence for an older pupil/young person).
- prevent a pupil prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise. ***Being mindful of:***
  - the seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder,
  - the chances of achieving the desired result by any other means,
  - the relative risks of intervening compared with using other strategies.

### Duty of Care

Staff should be aware that their employment imposes upon them a duty of care to maintain an acceptable level of safety. It is acknowledged that the behaviour of children and young people can become dangerous and physical intervention may be required. This is inevitably a high risk action. Guidelines cannot anticipate every situation and, therefore, the sound judgement of staff at all times is crucial. This may mean not getting physically involved if this would put you at direct risk, but could include summoning relevant assistance. It is not acceptable to do nothing.

### Who May Use Restrictive Physical Interventions

Only "Authorised staff" may use restrictive physical interventions within Cumnor School. The term "Authorised Staff" means any paid worker, or person who has been given lawful control or charge of children and young people by the headteacher, either on or off-site. Authorisation may be on a long or short term basis for a specific event e.g. a field trip. Under no circumstances will the school give authorisation to other pupils to be involved in the use of force.

*Authorised staff will normally include Teachers, Teaching Assistants and non teaching staff employed by the Governing Body who, with the authority of the Headteacher, have lawful control or charge of children and young people. It may include volunteers working at the school on a regular, or irregular, basis. Headteachers should explicitly authorise any volunteers who work at the school and who may be required to carry out physical intervention. This should be recorded in an appropriate manner.*

*Headteachers will also ensure that all staff working at the school are aware of and understand what authorisation entails. The Headteacher will ensure that authorised members of staff receive*

information and training. This could be done by staff attending a Law and Guidance training session with a register of attendees and a copy of the course content being kept. A risk assessment may preclude staff from being authorised to carry out Restrictive Physical Interventions owing to medical or other issues.

## **The Place of Physical Intervention in Cumnor school**

Physical interventions will only be used in exceptional circumstances. The school expects that staff will only use force in circumstances where:-

- The consequences of not intervening were sufficiently serious to justify the use of force,
- Achieving a safe outcome by other means had either been tried and exhausted,
- The risks associated with not using force outweigh those of using force.

The use of a restrictive physical intervention will be the outcome of professional judgements made according to this policy. It will be avoided when possible and not be used for the convenience of staff.

**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, the risk of not intervening against the risk of intervening. Any actions will be carried out in the best interest of the pupil.

**NB. STAFF DECIDING THAT NOT INTERVENING PHYSICALLY IS THE SAFEST COURSE OF ACTION FOR THEM SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SIMPLY DOING NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION. THE EXPECTATION IS THAT AS A MINIMUM STAFF SHOULD RAISE THE ALARM AND SUMMON APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE.**

### **a) Individual Physical Intervention Plans**

*These are essential when it is known that a young person may behave in a way that raises the likelihood of a physical intervention being necessary and appropriate, (from records from a previous setting or a history of incidents at the school).*

In these cases the headteacher will ensure that:

- A risk assessment and an individual physical intervention plan are in place, taking account of the needs of the pupil and identifying ways of addressing needs.
- Appropriate support services have been consulted and their advice sought.
- The plan and risk assessment are fully communicated to those in direct contact with the pupil.
- The plan identifies triggers and warning signs of the dangerous behaviour.
- The plan includes positive behaviour support strategies to manage the behaviour without the use of physical interventions
- The physical interventions to be used and the points at which they are to be used are specific.
- That parents/carers, staff and pupils (where appropriate) have been involved in drawing up the plan and are clear about the specific actions staff may need to take
- That the pupil's Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or disability, have been fully considered. This will include seeking medical advice regarding how restraint could affect a pupil with disability or medical condition.

Once the plan has been drawn up and agreed, the headteacher will ensure that:

- The plan and risk assessment is effectively communicated to all those authorised to use force and who may be required to use it.
- That all those who may be temporarily authorised to use force (e.g. volunteers on school trips are made aware of the plan and risk assessment as necessary).
- That appropriate training on specific restrictive physical interventions is available and it is mandatory that those who require it attend.
- That appropriate resources are available to ensure the plan is effectively implemented.
- That the plan is reviewed after every intervention, to ensure it is still appropriate.

## **b) Planned Generic Physical Interventions**

The school will attempt to identify situations where these events may predictably occur, (e.g. fights, rough play, serious disruption of teaching) and plans drawn up accordingly. These will be communicated to staff and any necessary training will be accessed.

**IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERY MEMBER OF STAFF TO ENSURE THEY ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE PLANS AND RISK ASSESSMENTS. ADDITIONALLY STAFF SHOULD MAKE THE HEADTEACHER AWARE OF ANY SHORTCOMINGS IN THESE PLANS AND ASSESSMENTS.**

## **c) Unplanned Physical Interventions**

These by their very nature are more difficult to deal with and will certainly involve staff making on the spot decisions about if and how to intervene.

In emergency or unplanned situations staff will need to carry out a dynamic risk assessment based on the circumstances at the time, professional judgement, this policy and any training received.

Staff are not expected to intervene physically against their better judgement, nor are they expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk. They must take steps to minimise risks. For example, by removing other pupils and calling for assistance.

**ALL STAFF MUST BE AWARE THAT THE SCHOOL DOES NOT CONDONE AND WILL NOT TOLERATE THE USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT TO PUNISH OR DISCIPLINE A PUPIL OR TO DELIBERATELY CAUSE PAIN TO OR HUMILIATE A PUPIL. STAFF MUST NEVER USE PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OUT OF ANGER OR FRUSTRATION.**

## **Risk Assessments**

Risk assessments will focus on the significant risks involved in carrying out a Physical Intervention and the actual circumstances, therefore, it is impossible to cover all eventualities in this policy. Risk Assessments will be carried out by competent staff, authorised by the head teacher, and may involve a Behaviour Support Teacher or other specialist staff.

There are many things to consider in both a planned and a dynamic risk assessment and the following are examples of factors which must be taken into account when evaluating the risk and in determining the strategies and if necessary control measures to be employed. The list is not exhaustive;

- Any known SEN including; social, emotional, communication, physical or medical needs,
- The age, relative physique, and known medical conditions of both the adult and the child or young person;
- The relative genders of staff and child or young person;
- The presence of a second adults available to assist, monitor and witness the physical intervention;
- The availability of a second, or other adult;
- Spectacles, hearing aids, jewellery and clothing worn by the child or young person;
- The adults capacity to act calmly and systematically;
- The location of the incident and the potential for the physical intervention to be carried out safely;
- The potential outcomes of not intervening;
- Whether other techniques not involving force have been tried,
- The presence of other pupils/bystanders who could escalate risk to staff or any child or young person.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to outline the likelihood of challenging behaviour or an incident which may require intervention and/or a significant risk of injury occurring when dealing with such a situation.

### **Methods of Restrictive Physical Intervention**

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 be the minimum degree and time needed to achieve a safe outcome. The physical intervention must;

- not involve hitting the child or young person,
- not involve “punitive” acts such as deliberately inflicting pain on the child or young person,
- not restricting the child or young person’s breathing, e.g. throat or chest holds or pressing the child or young person’s face into soft furnishings,
- avoid the genital area, buttocks or breasts of the child or young person;
- avoid the adult putting weight upon the child or young person in any way,
- avoid holding joints or pulling on joints.

During any incident of physical intervention adults must, seek to;

- Minimise the need for, or length of, any physical intervention
- Lower the child or young person’s level of anger or distress during the physical intervention by continually offering verbal re-assurance and avoid fear of injury in the child or young person;
- Cause the minimum restriction of movement of limbs consistent with the level of risk to safety and welfare,
- Take account of the potential for accidental injury during the physical intervention by using a method appropriate for the environment in which it is taking place.
- Work together as a team, with one member taking the lead,
- Exclude any other child or young person from assisting with the physical intervention;

The Governing Body recognises that there is no legal definition of reasonable force. The Governing Body acknowledges:

- The use of physical intervention is unlawful if the circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore physical intervention cannot be justified to prevent a child or young person from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that could clearly be resolved without physical intervention;
- The physical intervention must be in proportion to the incident and the seriousness of the potential risk of injury. Any physical intervention should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired outcome.

The Governing Body recommends that other strategies should be used before resorting to the use of force. These may include:

- Telling the pupil to stop or what you need them to do
- Verbal and non-verbal de-escalation techniques.

In circumstances where force is necessary and there is no alternative, the following basic points should be considered when undertaking a physical intervention;

- Stabilise or redirect as quickly and as safely as possible;
- Hold clothes instead of skin;
- Do not hold on a joint
- Avoid pressure on vulnerable areas such as neck, diaphragm and stomach;
- Avoid pressure on areas which will restrict blood flow;
- Avoiding contact with sexual areas;

- Be sensitive to the child or young person so that control can be returned to her/him as soon as possible.

**Staff who have received specific training on physical restraint must always act in accordance with that training.**

## **Induction and Training**

The Headteacher will ensure all staff know physical intervention procedures, who incidents should be reported to, and where and how they should be recorded.

All new staff appointed to work at the school will be given an explanation of the school's Policy on Positive Behaviour Support and Physical Intervention and be made aware of the ethos of the school as part of their induction programme. The Governing Body believes this is particularly important for Newly Qualified and Supply Teachers

The Headteacher will ensure that staff receive appropriate training relating to this policy and methods of physical intervention for authorised staff, if required. This will be organised via the Behaviour Support Service.

## **What to Do After the Use of a Restrictive Physical Intervention**

### **Recording Events and Actions**

The Governing Body acknowledges the importance of ensuring accurate and detailed records of incidents of physical intervention are made and kept for future reference.

### **Restrictive Physical Intervention Incident Reports**

The Governing Body and Headteacher will establish procedures to ensure that all significant incidents of physical intervention are reported and recorded by the member(s) of staff involved as soon as possible after the event. This will be before the staff leave the building at the end of the day but after they have had time to calm down following the incident. The recording will be factual include any antecedents to the incident, any proactive and active strategies used and will avoid emotive language. The incident should be recorded on CPOMs

The school considers any of the following incidents to be significant and therefore requires that staff complete a CPOMs incident record:

- a) Any incident which caused injury or distress to a pupil or member of staff (where an injury is involved the schools accident reporting guidance must also be followed);
- b) Any incident which is sufficiently serious in its own right to require an incident record to be completed (even though there was no apparent injury or distress). Any use of restrictive physical interventions will fall into this category.
- c) Any incident where a written record is needed to be able to justify the use of force. (This is relevant where the staff involved feel the judgement was finely balanced).
- d) Any incident where a record will help the school to identify and analyse patterns of pupil behaviour or will help to inform future training.
- e) Any incident which involved other agencies e.g. the police.

The record must be completed by the member(s) of staff concerned. It will include:

- The name(s) of the child(children) or young person(s) involved;
- The name(s) of the staff involved;
- When and where the incident took place;
- The name(s) of other staff or children or young people who witnessed the incident;

- The reason why physical intervention was necessary;
- How the incident began and progressed, why the physical intervention was used, details of the child's or young person's behaviour, what the member of staff said and did to defuse the situation, the physical intervention used, how it was applied and for how long;
- The child's or young person's response and the outcome of the incident;
- Details of any injury suffered by anyone and subsequent medical attention given
- Details of any damage to property;
- A description of action taken after the incident;
- Records of incidents will be reviewed regularly to identify any triggers or patterns of behaviour.

The Headteacher and DSL staff should be informed of any incident of physical intervention as soon as possible.

### **Witness Statements**

Where a physical intervention has been used statements will be taken from witnesses. This will be carried out by the Headteacher or a senior member of staff. This should be carried out as quickly as possible so that witnesses do not have the opportunity to influence each other's statement.

### **Follow Up Action**

All senior staff involved must record details of their involvement at every stage, together with details of all follow-up action.

The children or young people and staff involved in an incident of physical intervention will have an opportunity to discuss the matter with The Headteacher or an appropriate senior member of staff.

Any lessons learned as a result of this discussion will be used by the school to update behaviour and restraint plans and risk assessments.

Parents and carers of children or young people involved in an incident of physical intervention will be informed of what has happened to their child or young person and offered an opportunity to discuss this with the Headteacher or a senior member of staff.

Any member of staff involved in an incident of physical intervention may need time to recover and regain their composure. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss how the incident of physical intervention has affected them personally with an appropriate colleague, friend or Professional Association or Trade Union Representative.

For planned physical interventions the risk assessment should be reviewed. This should result in a number of actions aimed at meeting needs and reducing the risk of incidents and harm to other pupils and staff, such as:

- preparation of individual plans to address a range of needs
- avoidance of known triggers
- addressing environmental factors and teaching skills.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **STAFF CHECKLIST**

#### **DO**

- Know the procedures set out in the school's Policy and Guidelines on physical intervention.
- Discuss these with a senior member of staff if you are unsure of any point.
- Remember your professional obligations to all children or young people in your care.
- Be aware of the history of children or young people who have been physically restrained.
- Avoid being isolated with any child or young person wherever practicable.
- Send for adult help early if a situation begins to get out of hand.
- Stay calm and do not over-react. Assess the situation before acting.
- Use minimum intervention for minimum time;
- Report an incident of physical intervention to the Headteacher or a senior member of staff as soon as practicable and complete a Physical Intervention report form
- Consult your professional association or Trade Union if you have any concerns.

#### **DO NOT**

- Attempt to restrain a child or young person who obviously carries a "weapon";
- Physically restrain a child or young person in anger or when you have lost your temper;
- Allow the situation to get out of control;
- Use excessive force or use restraint as a punishment
- Place yourself at risk of false allegation.

#### **Approaches to Consider**

It is important to remember that the manner in which a situation is approached might make the use of physical intervention unnecessary.

It will help to:

- Move calmly and confidently and seek assistance.
- Relate to the age, language levels and understanding of the child or young person;
- Explain the consequences of refusing to stop, (in terms of safety, not sanctions)
- Make simple, clear statements to the child or young person in a quiet, firm, assured tone.
- Reduce physical threat by allowing the child or young person space, e.g. backing off;
- Talk to the child or young person offering reassurance, purpose and security
- Keep the child or young person in your sight at all times
- Allow the child or young person to save face;
- Judge the risk of increasing disruption as a consequence of physical intervention;
- Remove others from the situation.

It will not be helpful to:

- Give complex advice or instructions;
- Speak quickly and loudly;
- Trap a child or young person or stand too close;
- Attempt to reason by asking questions;
- Consider physical intervention to enforce compliance of an older or physically large child or young person, or when others present may be at risk of injury.

