

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

Introduction

The Governing Body of Greatstone Primary School and Nursery recognises the serious implications for all concerned when the use of physical intervention becomes necessary. In particular the Governors acknowledge the stress and very real anxiety that such actions can and do generate in children and young people, parents and staff. The production of this policy and guidance will ensure everyone at has a positive and safe way to respond to the use of physical intervention.

This policy has been formulated to ensure that children and young people, parents, staff, the Local Education Authority and other agencies are fully aware of the context for the school's response to behaviour that requires physical intervention. Further it is designed to provide detailed guidance for all concerned regarding the use of holding, escorting and restraint, including when it is appropriate to physically intervene and what strategies must be used in so doing.

Training

All staff will be trained to use appropriate methods of holding and restraint and will be expected to apply them to the best of their ability. Staff will be expected to undertake such training as provided by the school and to keep themselves up to date with the methods prescribed by that training.

Key aspects of the training will include

- Clear and unequivocal emphasis on the rights of children to be kept safe at all times
- Physical intervention should only be used when all else has been tried and the situation is likely to become dangerous for children and staff
- Staff need to keep themselves safe at all times
- Past experiences of children will affect the way they respond to physical interventions. Those with a history of physical or sexual abuse will often have painful and disturbing memories triggered by such interventions
- Children with the above experiences could also experience adverse reactions to witnessing physical interventions
- All actions must be conducted in the context of the school's policy
- Staff have a right to be trained in the use of physical interventions
- Clear and accurate records of the antecedents, behaviour and consequences must be maintained.

Context

Greatstone Primary School and Nursery is a lively and thriving community dedicated to the provision of high quality teaching. Pupils are expected to conform to high standards of behaviour and to take responsibility for their own actions. It is in this light that pupils will be appropriately involved in formulating any plans that are made to meet their individual needs. Such plans where appropriate will also detail how specific behaviours will be managed and the use of holding and restraint will be detailed as an integral element of the plan.

Principles

It is recognised that good behaviour must be acknowledged and celebrated as a matter of course and that this in itself is a primary tool in managing behaviour. Additionally the management of behaviour at Greatstone Primary School is based on the belief that children and young people have the right to learn from their experiences of life. This will at times involve testing the clearly defined boundaries established by the behaviour management system used in the school.

A fundamental issue to be considered in the use of any form of physical contact with a child or young person is their absolute right to be both "touched" and "not touched". It is clear that for some young people who may have had experiences of abuse in the past the issue of being touched in any way

must be managed sensitively. Similarly for some young people their need for emotional support and comfort may at times extend to being physically comforted and this too must be managed appropriately. In the light of these examples the judgements that all adults must make before touching any young person are as follows:

- Is the physical contact truly in the best interests of the child?
- How do I feel about this level of contact? What is in this for me?
- Is this age appropriate given my knowledge of the young person?
- What would be the consequence of not making physical contact?

Wherever possible strategies for physical contact / intervention should be detailed within a plan formulated with the young person. The actions might then be properly reviewed.

It is the responsibility of everyone at Greatstone Primary School to ensure that the environment is calm and safe for all. Children and young people have the responsibility to recognise when their behaviour is likely to compromise this situation and to have due regard for the comfort, safety and well - being of all within the school community. Parents must be encouraged to support the school in the provision of a safe calm and happy community by discussing with their son/daughter the need to be sensitive to the needs of others in the school. Home school contract will be one way that this is achieved especially as it would set clear expectations for both parents and the school from the point of admission.

Implementation

This policy will be implemented and maintained through:

- the recruitment and selection of staff which will be governed by the principles enshrined in the Warner report "Choosing With Care."
- As a minimum the selection process will ensure that references are sought and obtained from the most recent employer; appropriate police checks are conducted prior to the employee having substantial unsupervised access to children; list 99 and the DOH consultancy list are checked; interview techniques go beyond the standard formal interview and include opportunities for candidates to engage in focused debates designed to provide insights to their individual values and beliefs
- The provision to every member of staff and Governor a copy of the policy document
- Induction of all new staff will ensure that there is an opportunity for detailed study and discussion of the policy with senior staff and ongoing discussion within the staff group
- Managers have in place systems to identify individual and group training needs; ensure a consistent interpretation of policy and practice; support the formulation of personal development contracts
- Regular training activities both in - house and reinforcement by external trainers as appropriate.

Definitions

For the purposes of this document the terms holding, escorting and restraint will be defined by the outcome, which is intended when the physical intervention is applied.

- **Escorting** – the intention to move a child away from a particular area, The degree of force will determine when this becomes a restraint i.e. when the child has no choice but to move under the directions of staff.
- **Holding** – the intention is to keep the child in a particular place see above for when this becomes restraint.
- **Restraint** – the intention is to overpower the child because they have lost all control and are a danger to themselves and or others or property.

Holding & Escorting

Holding and escorting are to be used to discourage and redirect from unwanted behaviours which are likely to lead to a loss of control by the young person resulting in severe disruption to the orderly environment, damage to property, damage to self and or others.

Staff should use their judgement in using this method as to whether it is likely to lead to a full-scale restraint. Factors for consideration will be the likely reaction of the young person based on the most recent and accurate information available and the content of any plan; the environment i.e. the impact of onlookers, events immediately preceding the incident and whether the young person has been misusing alcohol or drugs.

It is important that at all times the young person is made aware of what is expected of them and that as soon as there is a genuine attempt to comply with such expectations the hold be ceased. Always the amount of force that is used should be the minimum necessary to successfully achieve the desired outcome as defined above.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint should only be used when all other strategies have been tried and found to be unsuccessful. In the first instance staff should always attempt to diffuse the situation by;

- ◇ appropriate use of voice in terms of pace volume and tone
- ◇ adjustment of body position to ensure minimum threat to the young person and maximum safety for staff generally a sideways stance
- ◇ facial expression eye contact is positive and calming
- ◇ appropriate use of humour
- ◇ making clear the expectations of all concerned in the incident and the likely consequences if behaviour deteriorates further
- ◇ seeking help from other staff to diffuse the situation

Support for Staff

All staff will be trained in the methods of holding and restraint using a recognised programme. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure the safety and well being of all members of the Greatstone Primary School community at all times. This responsibility must extend to themselves in the first instance. It is therefore essential that staff make a judgement quickly about the safety of using a hold or restraint They should only proceed if they have determined that all else has been tried and failed, that there is likely to be serious harm to persons or property if nothing is done or that the good order of the environment will be severely disrupted and that they can apply the hold or restraint safely for the young person and themselves.

In circumstances where members of staff judge that they are unable to apply restraint satisfying the above condition of safety they should quickly send for another member of staff and do what they can to contain the situation. It should be remembered that the children and young people at Greatstone Primary School are active members of the community and as such should be encouraged to go for help when the circumstance dictates it to be necessary.

Staff that have had to use physical intervention will be offered the opportunity to discuss their feelings about the incident as soon after completion of the recording pro-forma as is helpful. It is an expectation that all staff acknowledge the importance of using a senior member of staff to discuss the issues raised for them personally by using physical restraint.

The Governors of the School will support the actions of staff in the use of physical intervention provided that they have been conducted in the context of this policy and the accepted methods have been used.

AIDE-MEMOIRE FOR USE OF RESTRAINT

When restraint is used it should always be **USED WITH CARE**

- U**RGENTLY required to prevent immediate possibility of harm or damage to self, others or property.
- S**AFE using only the minimum of force necessary.
- E**FFECTIVE not if it will make the situation worse.
- D**ECENT great care must always be taken to avoid sensitive areas of the body, the risk of cultural offence or the risk of sexual arousal.
- W**ITNESSED every effort must be made to ensure the presence of another member of staff as a witness and assistant.
- I**NDEPENDENT of size the method of restraint used must depend for its efficacy on the technique and not the relative sizes of staff member and young person.
- T**IMED the restraint should only continue for the minimum time for it to be effective.
- H**ARMLESS it must always be an act of care and control never punishment.
- C**ALMING the intention is to help the young person regain their self-control, there should always be a calming dialogue to that end.
- A**PPROPRIATE to the circumstances, only when all else has failed, only for as long as necessary.
- R**ECORDED all incidents of restraint must be recorded
- E**XPLAINED reasons for the restraint and resolution of the incident should be conducted with the young person as soon after the incident as will be effective. Outcomes should be incorporated in IECP. All restraints should be discussed at the earliest opportunity by the staff concerned and a senior member of staff.

The above has been adapted from material used by the Hesley Group.