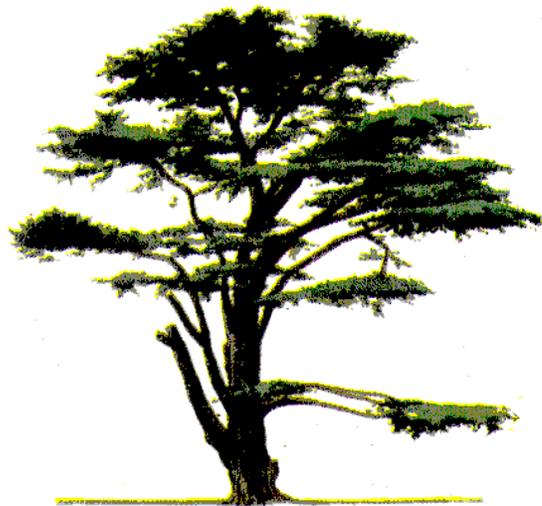


The Cedars Primary School



Policy for the Use of Physical Intervention

This policy was reviewed in:	September 2018
This policy will be reviewed in:	September 2020

The Use of Restraint / Physical Interventions

Introduction

At The Cedars we have children with severe social, emotional and mental health difficulties who present behaviour that may necessitate the use of restraint or physical intervention to prevent injury, damage to property, or the breakdown of discipline.

Physical interventions or restraints as they are often called, are a safeguard, not a sanction. The purpose of any physical contact, including restraint, is to safeguard and promote the welfare of the person being held, along with anybody else whose welfare is threatened.

This policy has been written with reference to the following documents:

- DfE Use of Reasonable Force, Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies - 2013
- Positive environments where children can flourish - A guide for inspectors about physical intervention and restrictions of liberty - March 2018 No. 180006
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory Guidance September 2018

Deciding whether to use a physical intervention

We start from the premise that staff should work positively and confidently with children and find the least intrusive way possible to support, empower and keep children safe. The foundation of good practice in working with children should be:

- building relationships of trust and understanding
- understanding triggers and finding solutions
- if incidents do occur, defusing the situation and / or distracting the child wherever possible.

Restraint should only be used as a **last resort**.

School staff are able to use **such force as is reasonable in the circumstances** to prevent a child from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing any offence (or for a child under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil)
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself)
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any children receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

In school this translates as:

- To protect people or property
- To move children to a safer place
- To prevent children from behaving in such a way that seriously disrupts school activities
- To require a child to comply with a reasonable instruction

Examples of situations that fall within these categories are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils are fighting
- a pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- a pupil is running in a corridor in a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others
- a pupil absconds from class or tries to leave school (N.B. this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

Who can restrain?

The staff to which this power applies are defined in section 95 of the Act. As defined in the Act, this power may be used where the pupil is on school premises or elsewhere in the lawful control or charge of the staff member (for example on a school visit)

They are:

- Any teacher who works at the school, and
- Any other person whom the Head has authorised to have control or charge of pupils. At The Cedars this includes support staff such as teaching assistants, SMSAs and office staff
- At The Cedars the following staff are **not** authorised to hold children - catering staff, premises staff, unpaid volunteers and students.

All staff and volunteers will have the Behaviour Policy and Physical Intervention Policy explained to them on their first day as part of induction. Staff will be required to sign to say they have understood the policy.

The Last Resort Principle

Holding should only be used when all the other reasonable methods of managing the above situations have been tried. This does not mean that we always expect people to methodically work their way through a series of failing strategies, before attempting an intervention in which they have some confidence. Nor does it mean always waiting until the danger is imminent, by which time the prospect of safely managing it may be significantly reduced. National guidance is clear on this point.

“If necessary staff have the authority to take immediate action to prevent harm occurring even if the harm is expected to happen sometime in the predicted future”

Para 10 Page 4 Department of Health - 1997- “The Control Of Children In The Public Care : Interpretation Of The Children Act 1989” – London HMSO

It does mean that we expect staff to conduct a dynamic risk assessment and choose the safest alternative. It also means that we expect staff to think creatively about any alternatives to physical intervention which may be effective.

Help Protocols

The expectation at The Cedars is that all staff will support each other. This means that staff always offer help and always accept it. Help does not always mean taking over. It may mean just staying around in case you are needed, getting somebody else or looking after somebody else’s group. Supporting a colleague does not only mean agreeing with their suggestions and offering sympathy when things go wrong. Real support sometimes means acting as a critical friend to help colleagues become aware of possible alternative strategies.

At The Cedars we will say “Help’s available” when offering support.

A member of staff may also say “More help’s available” when they feel that a change of adult is necessary. The member of staff will then take over and explain their actions later – away from the child.

Well Chosen Words

A well-chosen word can sometimes avert an escalating crisis. When pupils are becoming angry there is no point in getting into an argument. Telling people to calm down can actually wind them up. Pointing out what they have done wrong can make things worse. The only purpose in communicating with an angry person is to prevent escalation. It is better to say nothing and take time to choose your words carefully than to say the wrong thing and provoke a further escalation.

Proactive Physical Interventions

It is sometimes reasonable to use physical controls to prevent extreme behaviour from becoming dangerous provided that it is an agreed part of a Physical Intervention Plan. Examples of this are where a pupil has shown ritual patterns of behaviour, which in the past have led to the child becoming more distressed and violent. In such circumstances it may be reasonable to withdraw the child to a safer place when the pattern of behaviour begins, rather than wait until the child is distressed and out of control. The paramount consideration is that the action is taken in the **best interest of the child** and that it reduces, rather than increases risk.

Reasonable and Proportionate

Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate. 'Reasonable' is the minimum force needed to avert injury or damage to property or to prevent a breakdown of discipline, applied for the shortest period of time.

Staff must not react in anger. If they feel they are becoming angry they should consider withdrawing to allow someone else to deal with the situation. Where staff act in good faith, and their actions are reasonable and proportionate they will be supported.

When physical controls are considered staff should think about the answers to the following questions:

- How is this in the best interest of the pupil?
- Why is a less intrusive intervention not preferable?
- Why do we have to act now?
- Why am I the best person to be doing this?
- Why is this absolutely necessary?

If staff can answer these questions it is more likely that a physical intervention will be judged to be reasonable and proportionate.

Unreasonable use of force

It is not reasonable to use force simply to enforce compliance in circumstances where there is no risk. Nor is it reasonable to use any more force than is necessary to achieve a reduction in risk. Under no circumstances should pain be deliberately inflicted or should pupils be deliberately subjected to undignified or humiliating treatment (this should not be confused with the unavoidable discomfort associated with some approved techniques for disengaging from assaults such as bites and grabs).

Seclusion

Force should never be used to keep a pupil secluded (locked in a room on their own). Seclusion is only lawful by specific court order and cannot become part of a planned strategy at this school.

Children are not allowed to be put in a room with an adult on the outside. Whenever children need time away from class they will always be supervised by adults in the same room.

Health and Safety

If dangerous behaviour presents a significant risk of injury to people, there is a legal Health and Safety issue to be addressed. Dangerous occurrences should be reported to the Headteacher (as the person responsible for Health and Safety in the school). We all have a shared responsibility to identify risk, communicate potential risks and take active steps to reduce risk wherever possible. We recognise that it is not possible to entirely remove risk.

As a minimum requirement, in order to comply with Health and Safety legislation, each employee has a responsibility to ensure that they are conversant with school policy and guidance, and to cooperate to make the school safer. It is also a requirement that they participate in training if they are directed to do so.

Risk Assessment

Informal risk assessment should be a routine part of life for staff working with pupils who may exhibit extreme behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong. If a proposed activity or course of action involves unacceptable risk the correct decision is to do something else.

Factors which might influence a more immediate risk assessment, and therefore a decision about how to intervene, might include the state of health and fitness of the staff member, their physical stature, competence, confidence and relationships with the pupils concerned. Other than in an emergency, staff should only attempt physical controls when they are confident that such action will result in a reduction of risk.

Where children require strategies beyond the usual scope of the school a separate risk assessment will be devised and this will be sent to the Local Authority. e.g. if a child requires ground holds or holds not taught in Team-Teach.

Getting Help

At The Cedars there is a Support Team consisting of teachers and teaching assistants. Meetings and activities will be timetabled to ensure their availability. Staff available to support are identified on the daily notice board.

The support team helps to reduce risk by providing additional support or withdrawal before the need to restrain. It also ensures that there are enough adults to ensure that restraint can be used safely.

In an emergency a message sent to the School Business Manager will alert office staff to locate a member of the support team.

Physical Intervention Plans

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All children who have been identified as presenting a risk (i.e. have been restrained) must have a Physical Intervention Plan. The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any 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 not proved effective or which caused problems in the past. The plans should be considered alongside the EHCP and other documents which relate to the pupil. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special needs and social context.

It is important to take account of developmental changes, such as the onset of puberty and menstruation. Gradual changes, such as the child getting bigger, can happen so slowly that staff fail to notice that long-standing practices are becoming inappropriate. These changes should be noted on the Physical Intervention Plan.

Older children should be encouraged to contribute to their PIP where appropriate.

Physical Intervention Plans will be shared with Parents / Carers at the child's Annual Review.

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.

Whenever a physical intervention has to be made there should be a verbal warning if appropriate. Where possible staff should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference to physical interventions.

The Post Incident Support Structure for Pupils and Staff

Following a serious incident, it is the policy of this school to offer support for all involved. People take time to recover from a serious incident. Until the incident has subsided the

only priority is to reduce risk and calm the situation down. Staff should avoid saying or doing anything which could inflame the situation during the recovery phase.

Immediate action should be taken to ensure medical help is sought if there any injuries which require more than basic first aid. Any injuries should be reported – children in the incident and illness register, kept in the medical room and staff in the injuries to staff log and on the Local Authority Incident Form, both of which are kept in the office. It is important to note that injury in itself is not evidence of malpractice.

Time needs to be taken to repair relationships. When careful steps are taken to repair relationships a serious incident does not necessarily result in long term damage.

Time needs to be given to following up incidents so that children have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective.

Both adults and children may need time to recover and rest or regain composure before returning to class.

Prohibited forms of Restraint or Holding

Corporal punishment (or the threat of it), any act or threat of an act, such as hitting, kicking, slapping, punching, prodding, poking, throwing an object, rough handling etc. which causes or threatens harm or the expectation of harm to a pupil is forbidden and could lead to disciplinary action against staff.

Children should never be held face down and supine holds (a hold where the child is held on their back on the floor) should only be used in an emergency situation where it is the **only safe way** to hold the child. A dynamic risk assessment will need to be made at the time by staff involved and a senior member of staff and a TeamTeach trainer will be told to come and observe.

Complaints

It is not uncommon for pupils to make allegations of inappropriate or excessive use of force following an incident. Any marks of injury on a child should be noted in the restraint book and any such allegations should be noted in debrief.

The school has a formal complaints procedure. The complaints policy applies equally to staff. We are an open school and promote transparent policy and practice in order to protect the interests of pupils and staff alike. Any staff concerns regarding the welfare of children should be taken to the designated person for Child Protection or Health and Safety (Gavin Winters).

Training

Staff should only use the techniques and methods approved for use in this school (Team Teach methods).

Teachers and anyone authorised by the Headteacher who are expected to use planned physical techniques will be trained. This school has adopted the Team Teach method for Restrictive Physical Interventions. All training courses have been fully accredited by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) in accordance with DfES and Department of Health guidance. Positive handling training is always provided by qualified instructors within rigorous guidelines.

The level of training recommended is related to the level of risk faced by the member of staff. Our preferred approach is for whole staff training. The level of training required is kept under review and may change in response to the needs of our children.

Currently all staff who may need to restrain are trained initially for 12 hours, over 2 days and thereafter for 6 hours refresher every 2 years. The Behaviour Support Lead has completed the Intermediate trainer's accreditation and this is updated every 18 months. This ensures that restraint is used safely and appropriately.

New staff will be trained in basic holds by the in - house trainer as soon as is practical after starting but will not be accredited until trained within the cycle of training.

The next training will be April 2019.

Recording

Whenever restraint is used the incident must be recorded in the restraint book. **The school is moving to an electronic system of recording from January 2019.**

The restraint book is kept in the Support Room. All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the record which should be completed within 24 hours. Names should be completed in full and all records should be signed and dated. These records will be retained and cannot be altered. They will be kept for 70 years. A copy of the current Restraint / Physical Intervention Policy is archived alongside the individual records each year. These records are kept in school.

All serious incidents should be noted at the daily debrief meeting and a note of who was held, by whom, length of restraint and time of day noted in the debrief book.

Parents/carers **must** always be notified if their child has been held either by the home/school diary or by phone. If a member of staff feels that a child's welfare will be compromised they should seek advice from the Headteacher.

It is a working reality that children and adults may get hurt in restraint. Any known injuries, including scratches and marks, should be reported both in debrief and in the restraint

book. Injuries to children should also be reported to parents where known. Staff should check visually and/or verbally with the child after a restraint to ascertain if any injuries have occurred.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Incidents

The Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required. The restraint book is open to external monitoring and evaluation.

The method of monitoring may be subject to change on the introduction of the new electronic system.

The clerical assistant will collate all the information on restraint providing clear data on the amount of restraints for each child and any trends. This data may be used to decide on whole school issues, to provide an indication of individual improved or deteriorating behaviour and to provide evidence when involving outside agencies.

The information gathered is monitored by the Senior Management Team and by the named Governor for behaviour at least termly (or as required). Physical Intervention Plans are also monitored by the Leadership team.

Parents

The policy on restraint will be explained to all new parents and carers and they will be given the opportunity to raise any questions or concerns at the initial interview.

Thereafter every time their child is held they will be informed either through the home / school book or a phone call home.

The Physical Intervention Plans are discussed at every Annual Review.

Where there are concerns raised by either school or home a meeting will be held to discuss further.