



## Monkfrith School

# Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy

### Introduction

We believe that it is important to establish a safe, secure and stable environment to enable pupils to grow, develop and learn. In order to achieve this, the school recognises that, in certain circumstances, managing violence through control and restraint may be necessary.

This policy acknowledges that situations will arise in which staff members will be required to use positive handling, and in some cases reasonable force, in order to manage conflict when other measures have failed to do so

The aim of this policy is to ensure that actions such as positive handling and reasonable force are used in a correct and safe manner, which is in accordance with the relevant legislation and national guidance.

### Framework

This policy provides a framework for the use of Physical Intervention within Monkfrith School and should be read in conjunction with the school's behaviour policy. This policy takes into account information provided in DfE guidance: Use of Reasonable Force – Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies (2012), as well as the DOH and DFES "Guidance for Restrictive Physical Interventions. How to provide safe services for people with Learning Disabilities and Autistic Spectrum Disorder." (July 2002).

Central to our policy is the understanding that any Physical Intervention used by staff must be in accord with the idea of "Reasonable Force", and that it will usually only be used as a last resort once all other strategies have been exhausted. The use of force will only be regarded by the school as "reasonable" if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it, and the degree of force employed is proportionate to the level of challenging behaviour presented, or the consequences it is intended to prevent.

It is essential that any discussion of Physical Intervention (PI) is set in the wider context of education and behaviour management; it should not be seen as an isolated technique. For most children in the school, there will be no need for any Physical Intervention at all, except in exceptional circumstances. However, for a few children with more complex needs, including some children with autism, there may be more frequent occasions when staff will need to use a Physical Intervention.

## Objectives

Our key objective when considering the use of a Physical Intervention is the safety of pupils and staff, and actions will be taken in accordance with the idea of the best interests of the pupil in question insofar as this is possible, whilst maintaining the safety of others, e.g. if a child is attacking other people, the child may have to be held until he stops doing so.

Staff may also consider using a Physical Intervention to prevent **serious** breaches of school discipline, e.g. a child who is seriously disrupting a lesson and refuses to leave the class may be escorted from the room after a verbal warning.

In some circumstances, staff may also have to use a Physical Intervention to prevent **serious** damage to property, e.g. a child who is trying to damage equipment may need to be escorted away from the situation, particularly if there is any health and safety risk.

## Positive Handling

For the purpose of this policy, 'positive handling' is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting pupils and limiting damage to property. The legal framework and national guidance often refers to the 'use of force'. For the purpose of this policy, we use the term 'positive handling' whenever possible.

Positive handling is used in the school in order to:

- Restrain a pupil who has lost emotional self-control until the situation is diffused.
- Limit the amount of harm that the pupil involved can do to their self or others.
- Demonstrate to pupils that they are within a safe environment in which adults can contain pupils' anger and other erratic emotions.
- Protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.

Positive handling will be limited to emergency situations and used only as a measure of last resort. Where positive handling is required, the school will abide to the following guidance:

- Initial intervention will always be without force.
- Any physical intervention will follow other appropriate actions.
- Staff will take a calm and measured approach in all situations.

Failure to positively handle a pupil who subsequently gets injured, or injures another pupil, could lead to an accusation of negligence. Positive handling will never be invasive or humiliating in nature or take a form which could be seen as punishment. Positive handling will be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control.

## Deciding Whether to Use Physical Intervention

Staff should avoid using Physical Intervention whenever possible. However, they should be aware that, as employees of the school, they have a duty of care in respect of the children, and that a failure to take reasonable action may be a breach of that duty of care. Staff will need to assess the potential risk of intervening physically with the potential risk of not intervening. Other factors to be considered include the seriousness of the potential consequences of not intervening, and the chances of success of using a method that does not involve Physical Intervention. The school

recognises that staff are asked to make difficult decisions, with little time for reflection, and will support staff who act in good faith, and with the best interests of the pupils and staff in mind.

### **Using reasonable force**

Physical Intervention should only be used when it is reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary. If force is used, it should be the minimum necessary for the shortest period of time. Reasonable force is only acceptable to use in order to control pupils or restrain them. 'Control' is in regards to either passive physical contacts, such as blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm. Restraint refers to physically bringing a pupil under control, such as holding them back. This is typically used in more extreme circumstances. The degree of force which is used will depend on the age, gender and understanding of the pupil. Staff members will always use actions which are appropriate and in proportion to the circumstances of the incidents. All incidents which involve the use of reasonable force will be reported to the headteacher, recorded in writing and communicated to the pupil's parents/carers. The least restrictive Physical Interventions, such as guiding by the arm, should be considered before more restrictive ones such as holds.

Staff should ensure that they do the following when using a restrictive Physical Intervention:

- If possible, ensure another responsible adult is present to support, observe or call for assistance. The red class triangle should be sent if the member of staff thinks a Physical Intervention will need to be used.
- Continue using de-escalation strategies throughout.
- Give a clear oral warning to the pupil that force may have to be used.
- Continue calmly communicating to the pupil throughout.
- ensure children understand that staff are not acting out of anger or punishing the pupil
- Make it clear to the pupil that you are keeping them safe, and will release them as soon as they can be safe.
- Ensure that the pupil has a get out with dignity.
- Accept help from other members of staff.

### **Authorisation of Staff**

#### Permanent Authorisation

All staff authorised by the Headteacher to have control or charge of pupils automatically have the statutory power to use force, this includes: all teaching staff, teaching assistants, early years practitioners, learning support assistants, learning mentors and school meals supervisory assistants.

#### Temporary Authorisation

There will be occasions when the Headteacher may temporarily authorise other staff or volunteers to have control or charge of pupils (e.g. when parents help with school trips), the statutory power to use force also applies to individuals for the period they are temporarily authorised.

## Staff Training

The school recognises that staff who need to use Physical Intervention should be able to do so safely, and with proper support. All staff who have an increased risk of having to use Physical Intervention, i.e. all staff working with specific children in the school, should take the two day Team Teach course in Positive Handling Strategies. Team Teach is fully accredited by the British Institute for Learning Disabilities (BILD), under a government sponsored scheme, to deliver courses in Physical Intervention.

## Team Teach Trained Staff - Accepted Physical Interventions Used

All staff who have successfully completed the Team Teach training are authorised to use Team Teach techniques. A list of staff who have completed this training is held by the Headteacher. Once staff have received their full training, top up training will take place as necessary.

Team Teach holds have been fully risk-assessed, and are deemed safe to use if executed properly. However, there is always a potential for injury to both staff and pupils when a Physical Intervention is used, particularly if holds are not used correctly. For this reason, it is a condition of the Team Teach training that staff can only be trained to use the Team Teach techniques by certified Team Teach tutors. No other staff should attempt to show anyone else how to perform a Team Teach technique. However, staff who have completed the training are encouraged to support one another in using the correct techniques.

Any Physical Interventions used will need to take account of the age, cultural background, gender, stature and medical history of the pupil involved.

**Note:** *“Team-Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of ensuring that the service user remains safe”. (George Matthews – Director of Team Teach)*

The following are accepted Team Teach strategies that have been taught to staff.

**Note:** *Only Team Teach trained staff are authorised to use these techniques, and they are only authorised to use the specific techniques they have been taught:*

### Personal Safety – Safe Disengagements for Staff

- wrist grabs
- neck grabs
- hair and clothing grabs
- bites
- punches and kicks

Staff should disengage from, the above as shown during training.

### Re-directing or Disengaging Children Safely

- ‘Caring C’ guides
- Steering away

A Range of Escorts and Holds Ranging from Least Intrusive to Most Intrusive

The following table shows a list of graded and gradual responses aimed at Physical Intervention with the appropriate use of “reasonable force”. Restraints where 2 people are used will be deemed as more restrictive holds, but in some cases they may be much safer than a single person response. The more restrictive the hold, the greater the risk; staff need to make a risk assessment based on the situation to decide at what level they should intervene. Whenever possible, 2 staff should be present when a Physical Intervention is used.

Staff should always follow the “Help Script” whenever they see a colleague involved in a Physical Intervention. All Team Teach trained staff should be acting as “critical friends” to ensure that holds are used correctly and safely – they should be prepared to take over a situation if necessary, even if help is declined, by using the code words “More help...” from the Help Script. However, after the incident, they should be ready to explain to their colleague why they had to take over.

Any difficulties using any Team Teach techniques should be brought to the attention of the SENCo or Headteacher, who will monitor, provide advice and support, and make risk assessments as necessary.

Increase in Level of Intrusion → → → → →	<u>1 Person Standing/Walking</u> Friendly Hold Single Elbow Figure of Four Double Elbow                      T-Wrap		Associated Increase in Level of Risk → → → → →
	<u>2 Person Standing/Walking</u> Friendly Hold Single Elbow Figure of Four Double Elbow	<u>1 Person to Chairs</u> Friendly Hold Single Elbow Figure of Four Double Elbow                      T-Wrap	
	<u>2 Person to Chairs</u> Friendly Hold Single Elbow Figure of Four Double Elbow		
	<u>1 Person to Ground Recovery</u> Friendly Hold Single Elbow Figure of Four Double Elbow                      T-Wrap		
	<u>2 Person to Ground Recovery</u> Friendly Hold Single Elbow Figure of Four Double Elbow		

NB Ground recovery holds are the most restrictive and carry the highest level of risk. Staff are not taught floor holds and should avoid going to ground whenever possible. However, if the child drops to the ground during a standing/walking hold, staff have been trained in how to follow the child to the ground in a controlled way to minimise the risk of injury.

## Help Script

All staff are expected to support colleagues dealing with incidents. To ensure that everyone is clear about how to support one another, we have adopted the Team Teach help script.

On seeing a colleague dealing with an incident, all staff should use one of the following two phrases:

1. **“Help’s available”** – to offer support and to see if your help is needed.
2. **“More help”** – to indicate that you intend to take control of the situation, *even if help has been declined.* \*

The staff member dealing with the incident should respond as follows:

- To “Help’s available” – say whatever help is needed, including none.
- To “More help” – the **ONLY** response is **“What do you suggest”** – this allows the incoming team member to take over the situation in a controlled manner.

\* All staff should be confident to initiate taking over an incident by saying **“more help”** if they feel that another member of staff has become too involved in the incident, and is unknowingly contributing to it. However, any staff member who says “more help” should be able to give their reasons for doing so after the incident to the staff member they have taken over from.

It is an expectation that all staff will request and accept help when dealing with a difficult situation.

## Placing Physical Intervention in Context – Minimising the Need to Use Force

Physical Intervention is never seen in isolation at Monkfrith School. It is just one strategy available to staff and should generally be seen as a last resort when all other strategies have failed. Physical interventions can be placed in 2 broad categories:

### Emergency Interventions:

Emergency interventions will involve staff using a Physical Intervention to respond to an unforeseen incident. This will occur when all other strategies have been exhausted, or immediately if the incident requires a rapid physical response (for example a child running on to a busy road).

### Planned Interventions:

Planned interventions involve staff employing an agreed response to an identified behaviour. This will be documented in a risk assessment and will be reviewed termly. The risk assessment will also be completed identifying the risks involved in using the specific Team Teach hold/s, as well as the risks involved if a planned Physical Intervention is not used. Parents/carers should be made aware of this as part of regular review meetings.

Physical Intervention should be seen in an environmental context. By creating calm learning environments appropriate to the needs of the children, the need to use Physical Intervention will be reduced. Where possible, staff will adapt their classrooms and their communication styles for specific pupils in their class.

For example, for children with autism, classrooms should be arranged so that they are visually clear, i.e. children understand what is expected of them in each part of the room. The furniture should be arranged to support on-task behaviour, e.g. work-stations should be as free from distraction as possible. Staff should ensure instructions are understood by using short sentences, and visual cues as necessary. Children should be given sufficient time to process instructions. Tone of voice can also make a difference. Staff should adopt a calm, neutral tone to deliver instructions and when directing children.

Behaviour management strategies should be aimed at reducing the need for Physical Intervention. Strategies used can be divided into those that are preventative and those that are reactive.

Preventative Strategies need to be:

- Clear and understood by all those who come into contact with the individual
- Based on thoughts/discussion about possible reasons for challenging behaviour

Reactive Strategies need to be:

- Clear and understood by all those who come into contact with the individual
- Manageable
- Focused on the behaviour, not the child
- Flexible
- Aimed at de-escalation

### **Risk Assessment**

In the case of emergency interventions, staff will make a dynamic risk assessment at the time of the incident, comparing the risks associated with intervention against the risks of not intervening. Sometimes this assessment may have to be made in a split second.

Risk assessments will be carried out for specific children with the advice of Barnet's High Incident Support Team.

### **Reporting and Monitoring of Incidents**

Reporting and monitoring is of paramount importance for a number of reasons, including:

- Protection for staff and pupils
- Providing information about individual children's behaviours
- Providing information about changes in children's behaviour (positive or negative which may point at something else)
- Keeping a record of the number of incidents so that times/areas in which most incidents occur can be tracked, and children's needs can be met

Recording and reporting at Monkfrith Primary School can be split into 2 categories:

- Pre-incident
- Post-incident

The table below details the systems for Recording/Reporting within the school and their purpose.

	Document	Purpose
Pre-Incident / Event	Behaviour Strategies	A list of suggested strategies that will work with a particular pupil. Drawn up by teachers or the SENCo with input from other colleagues and professionals as appropriate.
	Behaviour Plans	Aimed at providing specific strategies for a specific behaviour. A review date is set and behaviour is monitored and recorded. Parents/Carers to be consulted and sought – they need to sign the Behaviour Plan.
	Risk Assessment	Particular pupils will have a regularly updated risk assessment which includes information about effective de-escalation strategies.

	Document	Purpose
Post-Incident / Event	Incident Form	To be filled out in the event of an incident involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• risk of harm: e.g. child running off site</li> <li>• injury: to self or others</li> <li>• physical intervention: emergency or planned</li> </ul>
	Notifying Parents	Parents/carers will be notified in the event of an Emergency Physical Intervention, either by telephone, or in person at the end of the school day.

### Post Physical Intervention Procedures

Immediately following an incident, the member(s) of staff involved will verbally report the incident to the headteacher and provide a comprehensive written record of the situation as soon as possible.

As soon as is reasonably possible after an incident, staff need to fill out an Incident Form the same day if possible, otherwise within 24 hours). Completed forms are kept in the Headteacher's Office

When both the staff member and the child involved have had time to calm down after the incident, then a debrief needs to take place between them, insofar as the child is able to understand. This should include, if appropriate, a discussion about strategies that the child could use in the future.

The Headteacher and SENCo will review each incident and update the risk assessment and see support from outside agencies/professionals.

## **Child Protection**

All staff should be aware that they have a duty of care towards the pupils. Physical Intervention should only be used as outlined in this policy. All instances of suspected misuse of Physical Intervention by a member of staff, or anyone else, should be reported immediately to a member of staff responsible for Child Protection.

Force cannot be used as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as punishment.

Any allegations against staff will be dealt with as a matter of urgency, and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the school's Allegations Against Staff Policy.

## **Supporting Staff and Pupils**

The school recognizes that incidents which result in the use of Physical Intervention may be upsetting for both staff and pupils. We will ensure that everyone involved is properly supported. Part of the debrief will be to check on the welfare of staff and pupils involved.

## **Policy Monitoring and Review Date**

This Policy is effective from September 2019. It will be reviewed in September 2021.

7th Draft