

Sunning Hill Primary School



Physical Restraint Policy

January 2024

Linked Documents: *Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.*

Review date(s): *January 2026*

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Physical Restraint Policy

1:1 Legal Framework

Physical Restraint should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the last resort. Under the Children (NI) Order 1995, it is only permissible as described under the heading "Physical Control".

Article 4 of the Education (N.I.) Order 1998 clarifies powers that already exist in common law.

It enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Headteacher, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.
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Examples of possible situations are given in Appendix 1.

1:2 What does it mean to restrain a child?

Physical restraint is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property. The proper use of physical restraint requires skill and judgement, as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of restraining.

1:3 Why use restraint

Physical restraint should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him/herself or others. Physical restraint skilfully applied may be eased by degrees as the child calms down in response to the physical contact. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

2:1 General aims

The staff at Sunning Hill Primary School recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the strategies available to secure pupil safety/well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline.

Our policy on the use of reasonable force is related to our policies on managing pupil behaviour in the Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2:2 The aims.

- To protect every person in the school community from harm.
- To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.
- To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations.
- To give full support to staff who have been assaulted or have suffered verbal abuse from pupils or others.

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3:1 Risk Assessment

Although most pupils at Sunning Hill Primary will never require any form of physical restraint, staff may have to deal with some pupils who exhibit disturbed, distressed and distressing behaviour. It is therefore necessary to carry out risk assessment.

We will attempt to reduce risk by managing:

- The environment
- Body language
- The way we talk
- The way we act

3:2 Environmental Risk Assessment

We will complete a risk analysis within the school and put in place strategies to minimise these risks in identified locations.

3:3 Individual Risk Assessment

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, it is our intention to plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning needs to address:

- Managing the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary);
- Involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take;
- Briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for additional training or guidance);
- Ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate.

More detailed examples of risk assessment and preventative steps can be found in Appendix 2.

4:1 Procedures

In the event of physical restraint having been used it is important to consider the strategies, which are deemed acceptable, and the recording procedures that should be in place.

4:2 Action Steps:

- Tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and state possible consequences of failure to do so;
- If possible summon another adult;
- Continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident;
- Make it clear that restraint will be removed as soon as it ceases to be necessary;
- Appropriate follow-up action should be taken, which may include:
 - Providing medical support
 - Providing respite for those involved

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* A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem.*

4:3 Recording

Staff should record (Appendix 3) all incidents of restraint in accordance with School Policy and report these to the Headteacher.

Details should include:

- Name of pupil(s)
- Staff member(s) involved
- Factors necessitating physical intervention
- The strategies which were employed prior to using physical intervention
- How physical intervention was effected
- Outcome of restraint
- Any other action taken in the management of the incident

Parents/carers should be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. This action should also be recorded.

5:1 Complaints

We all have a duty of care to the children in our school and cannot escape our legal responsibilities by avoiding taking appropriate and necessary action. Involving parents when an incident occurs with their child, together with a clear policy adhered to by the staff, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It will not prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and social services department under child protection procedures.

Staff, subjected to physical violence or assault, have the right to be supported in making a formal complaint to the police and, if necessary, taking private action against an assailant.

It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Adhering to the principles and procedures referred to in this policy statement, is part of effective practice and should minimise risk to young people in our care and enhance our own self-protection.

Update 2013 – Refer to Education Act 2011 and guidance in the following document:

Use of Reasonable Force – advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies

file:///W:/Assessment/2021%2022/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf

Our school aims to support all families and the wider community. Any queries or concerns regarding individual policies will be considered on an individual basis.

7.1 Appendix 1

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

Examples of situations that fall into one of the first two categories are

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- pupils fighting;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects;
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).

Examples of situations that fall into the 4th category are:

- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom.
- a pupil is behaving in such a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

Appendix 2

All teachers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and steps which they can take to defuse and calm a situation.

- Move calmly and confidently.
- Make simple, clear statements.
- Intervene early.
- Try to maintain eye contact.
- If necessary summon help before the problem escalates.
- Remove audience from the immediate location.

There are situations where staff should not intervene without help:

Assistance should be sought when dealing with:

- an older pupil,
- a physically large pupil,
- more than one pupil, or
- when the teacher believes that s/he may be at risk of injury.

In those circumstances where the member of staff has decided that it is not appropriate to restrain the pupil without help they should:

- remove other pupils who might be at risk,
- summon assistance from colleagues,
- where necessary, telephone the police,
- inform the pupil(s) that help will be arriving,
- until assistance arrives, the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

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Appendix 3

SUNNING HILL PRIMARY RECORD OF RESTRAINT

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Pupil Name:

D.o.B:

Member(s) of staff involved:

Adult witnesses to restraint:

Pupil witnesses to restraint:

Outline of event leading to restraint:

Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used):

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Outcome of restraint:

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Description of any injury(ies) sustained by injured pupil and any subsequent treatment:

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Date parent/carer informed of incident:

Time:

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By whom informed:

Outline of parent/carer response:

Signature of Parent:

Date:

Signature of staff completing report:

Date:

Signature of Teacher-in-charge:

Date:

Signature of Head/Zone Leader:

Date:

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Brief description of any subsequent action:

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Appendix 4

SUNNING HILL PRIMARY RECORD OF RESTRAINT - REVIEW SHEET

Pupil Name:

D.o.B:

Date of Review:

Outline of procedures to prevent incidents:

Outline of restraint plan if needed:

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Staff involved:

Signature(s):

Parental signature: