



Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy

Issued by the Governors of Milton Mount Primary School



Effective from: February 2024

Signed by: Lesley King

Next review date: February 2026

The Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy reflects the UN Convention on The Rights of the Child (CRC) by supporting these Articles:

Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority

At Milton Mount Primary School, we understand that behaviour is always a form of communication. Understanding that children are communicating through their behaviour gives adults the opportunity to respond differently. When children feel valued, respected and have their needs met, there is no longer a reason to use challenging behaviour to communicate. When adults help children find positive ways to communicate their needs to others, children learn important social and problem-solving skills that will help them throughout their life. However, we know that on sometimes, pupils may feel unable to communicate their needs and can become dysregulated. On rare occasions, this may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff if other de-escalation tactics have been used to no avail.

Our Restraint Policy is based upon the following principles:

- Physical intervention is used **only** as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed.
- Any physical contact is only the minimum required.
- Physical intervention is used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Physical intervention is to be administered or supervised by Team Teach trained staff.
- Incidents are recorded and reported to the Headteacher.
- Parents are informed of each incident.

The Legal Framework

Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows 'teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Headteacher who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- causing injury to his/herself or others
- committing an offence
- damaging property
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order & discipline
- Leaving the school grounds unaccompanied and at risk of harm

This policy has been written drawing on the [Department for Education Reasonable Force Guidance \(2013\)](#), [Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention \(2019\)](#) [Behaviour in Schools Guidance \(2022\)](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2022\)](#)

Definition of Reasonable Force and Restraint

The DFE guidance (2013) on the 'Use of Reasonable Force' defines and explains these terms in the following way:

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involves a degree of physical contact with pupils.
- Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a pupil needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.
- All members of staff who can use reasonable force in order to keep a child/ children or staff safe have a legal power to use it. This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying pupils on a school organised visit.
- The DFE Guidance 2013 on 'Use of reasonable force' states that schools can use reasonable force to:
 - remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
 - prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event, trip or a visit;
 - prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
 - prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
 - restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.
- Schools cannot:
 - use force as a punishment - it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, Headteachers and authorised staff can use such force, as is reasonable given the circumstances, to conduct a search for the following 'prohibited items': knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images and any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

Our Approach

We aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort and will only be administered in a minority of situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in connection with our Positive relationships and behaviour policy.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate. Staff exercise their own professional judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff act within our school's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour. Once

again it is stressed that physical intervention is only used when all other strategies have failed to have the desired effect on a pupil's behaviour.

NB It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary. Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:

- Holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school
- When comforting a distressed pupil
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching
- To give first aid
- When a child has Special Educational Needs and requires guidance and support

Staff are aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in loco parentis and have a 'Duty of Care' to all children they are in charge of. They therefore take reasonable action to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils. This being said staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

Use of Physical Restraint or Intervention

We use de-escalation strategies and positive behavioural support through:

Use of spaces, management of time, changes to the environment, facial expressions, voice and the PACE approach.

Physical restraint is 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. It never takes a form which could be seen as punishment.

Restraint will only be used if a child is in danger of hurting themselves or others. Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint i.e. only applying force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below. In all circumstances, alternative methods are used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint a last resort.

When might reasonable force be used at Milton Mount Primary School?

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of the school community
- To stop a fight
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves or others through physical outbursts

In the exceptional circumstances when physical restraint or intervention becomes necessary, staff:

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give the child clear warning. Offer an escape route from the situation, for example, through calming or following instructions • Tell the pupil what you are doing • Summon help / involve another member of staff if possible • Continue to talk to the pupil in a calm way • Use simple and clear language • Tell the pupil what s/he must do for them to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition) • Use the minimum force necessary • Be aware of any feelings of anger • Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow • Relax the restraint in response to the pupil's compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to manage on your own • Stop talking even if the pupil does not reply • Act in temper • Allow a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil • Involve other pupils in the restraint • Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment • Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct • Twist or force limbs back against a joint • Bend fingers or pull hair • Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck • Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil

Actions after an Incident

The child/young person and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. First aid will be administered to anyone who requires it, or medical treatment obtained. The child or young person will be given time to become calm while staff continue to supervise them. When the child regains complete composure, a senior member of staff will discuss the incident with the child and try to ascertain the reason for its occurrence. The child will be given the opportunity to explain things from their point of view. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish the relationship between the child and the member(s) of staff involved in the incident. In cases where it is not possible to speak to the pupil on the same day as the incident occurred, the debrief will take place as soon as possible after the child returns to school. All members of staff involved should be allowed a period of debrief and recovery from the incident. A senior member of staff will provide support to member(s) of staff involved.

The Head teacher will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity of any incidents where positive handling was used. The Head teacher, or member of SLT, will initiate the recording process if not already under way and review each incident to ensure that any necessary lessons are learned.

Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. The Headteacher is informed of any incident as soon as possible and takes responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff debriefs the pupil concerned: the debrief includes consideration of the circumstances that precipitated the incident and exploring ways in which future incidents can be avoided. Any other individuals involved in the incident are offered support.

All incidents are recorded immediately on a Restraint Recording Form (appendix1). All sections of the report are completed so that any patterns of behaviour can be identified and addressed. In the event of any future

complaint or allegation this record provides essential and accurate information. A copy is filed in the child's appropriate file and a central copy is kept by the Headteacher.

Arrangements for informing parents

All parents/carers will be informed immediately after an incident where positive handling is used with a child. Parents/carers will be made aware of the full circumstances and invited in to school to discuss the incident.

Well-being Plan

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning (recorded on a Well-being Plan) addresses:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention
- Specific language to use with the child as a protective factor
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate
- The school's duty of care to all pupils and staff

Strategies the school uses to reduce the need for physical intervention, including for pupils who have SEND

Children and young people with SEND, including autistic spectrum conditions and mental health difficulties, may respond with behaviour that challenges professionals and they may find it difficult to regulate their emotions. Sometimes, the likelihood of this behaviour can be anticipated by professionals working with the child. As such, where the use of reasonable force or physical intervention is more likely to occur, then staff will make arrangements to identify, assess and manage risk well, ensure high quality training for staff, involve children and young people, parents and carers, and advocates as appropriate. Staff will also make arrangements for carefully assessing the needs of children and young people and the underlying causes of their behaviour. This will be particularly important for children with vulnerabilities and SEND. In these circumstances, staff may consider a risk assessment or plan to record potential triggers and de-escalation strategies to reduce the likelihood of the need for reasonable force.

Complaints and Allegations

This clear physical intervention and restraint policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should be transparent with parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation under our Complaints Policy and Procedure for Greensand Multi Academy Trust Spring (2023). If following preliminary investigations, it is deemed necessary, the Headteacher will contact the LADO in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures (September 2023). Milton Mount Primary School will resolve all complaints of use of force as quickly as possible being mindful of the need to appropriately investigate the incident. Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action. When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably. Suspension will not be an automatic response to a member of staff being accused of using excessive force and the school will refer to statutory guidance in relation to this, liaising with the LADO where necessary. As employers, Milton Mount Primary School have a duty of care towards their employees and appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident. This will include having a named contact at the school who can provide support.

Complaints should be made in line with our Complaints Policy and Procedure for Greensand Multi Academy Trust Spring (2023).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Positive relationships and behaviour policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Appendices

Appendix 1: Restraint Recording Form

Appendix 2: Sample letter to parents following an incident



RECORD OF POSITIVE PHYSICAL HANDLING / RESTRAINT

Child's / Young Person's Name:		Date:
Time:	Location of incident:	Report compiled by:
ANTECEDENTS (Events leading up to the incident)		
BEHAVIOUR (how did the pupil respond, describe what actually happened):		
CONSEQUENCES (how did staff intervene, how did the pupil respond, how was the situation resolved):		
NAMES OF THOSE INVOLVED (staff and pupils):		
NAMES OF WITNESSES (staff and pupils):		

WHAT DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES WERE USED PRIOR TO PHYSICAL CONTROLS? (tick below):		
verbal advice and support [] reassurance [] calm talking/stance [] time out directed [] time out offered []	choices/limits/consequences [] distraction [] planned ignoring [] take up time [] negotiation []	humour [] contingent touch [] transfer adult [] success reminder [] other (please specify)
WHY WAS THE DECISION MADE TO USE RESTRAINT? To prevent child / young person from causing injury to him/herself? [] To prevent child / young person from causing injury to others? [] To prevent child / young person from causing damage to property? [] To prevent child / young person from causing serious disruption? [] To prevent child / young person from running away? [] Other? (Please specify) []		
DESCRIPTION OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT HOLDS USED: (Please include approx. time span of any holds)		
CHILD'S VIEWS Report read and discussed with child Yes [] No [] Child / young person agrees with content Yes [] No [] If no, what is the child's / young person's view? / If yes, does the pupil have any comment?		
Did the child / young person suffer any injuries as a result of this incident? Injury location and description:		
Did staff or others suffer any injuries as a result of this incident? Injury location and description:		

POST-INCIDENT INFORMATION

Was any post-incident support offered and given to the child / young person? a) De-brief with adult [] b) Other (please specify) [] c) Offer declined by child / young person []	Was any post-incident support requested by and given to member of staff / other adult? a) De-brief with colleague [] b) De-brief with Headteacher [] c) Occupational Health Counselling [] d) Not requested []
PARENT (S) VIEWS:	



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Dear

I would like to inform you that _____ was involved in an incident today and needed physical intervention to manage the situation.

I would like to invite you into school to discuss the incident. This might include writing / revising a well-being plan in case further intervention is needed in the future.

Please get in touch with me as soon as possible so that this may be arranged.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs A Holmes
Headteacher