

# Bill Quay Primary School



## Policy for Physical Restraint on Pupils

September 2018-2021

## Bill Quay Primary School

### Policy on Physical Restraint with Pupils

#### Rationale

Bill Quay Primary School is proud to be a welcoming, caring community with a focus on positive relationships and respect for the individual. We operate a consistent whole school approach to behaviour and attitudes which encourages good behaviour and the development of self-discipline in children. (See Behaviour policy) The use of physical restraint to control a child falls outside the scope of our day to day approach to managing behaviour. However, in certain exceptional instances, it may be appropriate to apply physical restraint to a child who is behaving in an extreme manner. This should only be used as a last resort, when all other non-physical de-escalation techniques have proven to be unsuccessful with the child.

#### Aims

- To ensure that physical restraint is avoided wherever possible, and that it is at no time used as a threat or punishment.
- To give clear guidance so that any physical restraint that we undertake is carried out in a way that supports the values and principles described above.
- To provide clarity on the circumstances in which restrictive physical restraint is an appropriate response.
- To establish how we will fulfil our duty of care in circumstances where physical control is used, and ensure that the safeguarding of the child is maintained. (See Child Protection Policy).
- To identify any children who may be at risk of requiring physical control, and plan how to respond if the situation arises.
- To fulfil the school's obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005. This means that we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled pupils. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity to enable disabled pupils to participate fully in school life.

#### Guidelines

##### **1. Physical contact**

Physical contact is an essential part of human relationships and we use touch with children in a variety of circumstances e.g. to prompt, to give reassurance, to provide physical guidance or support in PE. To use touch/physical support successfully, staff ensure that it is:

- non-abusive, with no intention to cause pain or injury;
- in the best interests of the child and others;
- with a clear educational purpose (e.g. to access the curriculum or to improve social relationships);
- sensitive to issues such as gender and the age of the child
- sensitive to the needs of the individual e.g. in the case of a child who is known to find physical touch unwelcome.

Staff are careful to avoid physical contact in circumstances that may potentially leave them in a vulnerable position e.g. if alone with a child.

## **2. Physical intervention/restraint**

We recognise a distinction between non-restrictive and restrictive interventions:

1. non-restrictive interventions include situations such as a child being held supportively for comfort, where they will be released immediately should they so wish;
2. restrictive interventions or restraint involves deliberate physical action to restrict movement or mobility such as holding a child or blocking their path.

Restrictive physical interventions may be emergency events which occur in response to unforeseen incidents. Alternatively, they may be planned interventions in response to a pre-identified risk based on an assessment of a pupil's needs.

## **3. When is physical restraint permissible?**

Physical restraint is only considered if other behaviour management options have proved ineffective, are judged to be inappropriate or in an emergency situation. It is never used for the sake of convenience.

We use a range of strategies for managing challenging behaviour to de-escalate conflict and avoid the need for physical restraint. These strategies include:

- avoiding confrontation by maintaining a calm manner and speaking quietly;
- giving a child time and space to calm down;
- avoiding physical contact as far as possible when a child is agitated or angry;
- responding in a non-violent manner if touched or grabbed by a child;
- telling the child to stop behaving inappropriately and explaining calmly and clearly what will happen if he or she does not do so.

Staff are not expected to intervene physically against their better judgement nor are they expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk. In such circumstances, they take steps to minimise risks, e.g. by removing other pupils and calling for assistance.

Circumstances in which physical restraint is appropriate are:

- to prevent a pupil causing themselves significant injury;
- to prevent a pupil harming others;
- to prevent a pupil causing significant damage to property e.g. breaking windows;
- to remove a child from a teaching session where their behaviour is seriously disrupting the learning of other pupils and they have persistently refused to leave when asked to do so.

#### **4. Approaches to restraint.**

Any restraint should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result and a central concern is to return the situation to normal as quickly as possible.

Physical restraint is likely to involve the following types of action:

- Physically interposing between children;
- Blocking a child's path;
- Holding or physically restraining a child;
- Leading a child by the arm or shepherding them by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
- Physically moving a child to an area of safety (eg, by carrying in the case of a younger child).

In these circumstances we:

- use the minimum amount of force for the minimum amount of time;
- avoid causing pain or injury;
- avoid holding or putting pressure on joints;
- never hold a pupil face down on the ground or in any position that might risk suffocation.

Any incident involving physical restraint is reported to the Head teacher or Assistant Head Teacher as soon as possible. Details of the incident are recorded on a 'record of physical restraint' form (see appendix 1) and saved onto our cpoms system. Parents are informed of what has occurred and given the opportunity to discuss the incident. The incident is also discussed with the child in an attempt to develop his or her understanding of how to deal appropriately with difficult situations.

#### **5. Physical restraint and behavioural planning**

If, through the school's special needs assessment procedures, it is determined that physical restraint is likely to be appropriate to help a pupil make progress, a risk assessment will be carried out following the Local Authority's guidelines.

If appropriate, an individual 'positive handling plan' will then be drawn up for that pupil using the Local Authority guidelines. This plan will aim to reduce the likelihood of the need for physical restraint as well as describing how such intervention will be carried out. This plan will be discussed with parents/carers.

Before the 'positive handling plan' is implemented, any necessary training or guidance will be provided for the staff involved. The Head teacher will be responsible for establishing staff needs and for organising necessary training.

This policy will be reviewed September 2021.

## Appendix 1

### Record of Physical Restraint

This form should be completed as soon as possible following use of restraint and uploaded onto cpoms. Inform the Head Teacher.

**Date:**

**Member of staff:**

**Child's name:**

**Actions that prompted the need for physical restraint:**

Actions taken by member of staff: