

Policy Title: Physical Intervention

Policy Folder: Pastoral

Review Date: July 2025

Next Review: July 2026

Lead By: Headteacher

Responsible Committee: FPR

Physical Intervention Policy (Use of Reasonable Force)

Objectives

At Lantern Lane Primary & Nursery School we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential.

Our CARE values (confidence, achievement, respect, enthusiasm) underpin everything that we do as a school. We all aim for our school to be a happy place where good behaviour is expected and all children enjoy their educational journey.

We take the safety of our pupils and staff very seriously. We believe that all pupils and staff have the right to be and feel safe whilst at school or on a school-run activity.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our behaviour policy and the whole school policy for child protection and to safeguard children.

Policy Development

This policy was formulated in consultation with the whole school community with input from members of staff, governors, parents/carers, children and young people, and other partners.

Minimising the Need to Use Reasonable Force

As a school we are firmly committed to creating a calm and safe environment which minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of reasonable force. We recognise that all behaviour is a means of communication and through developing strong relationships with children we try our hardest to understand this. We have a strong pastoral team including a well-being assistant, an emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA). Our PSHE curriculum aims to allow pupils to explore and strengthen emotional responses to situations.

We will only use force as a last resort and strongly believe in de-escalating any incidents as they arise to prevent them from reaching a crisis point. Staff will be skilled in promoting and rewarding positive behaviour and will utilise various appropriate techniques in the management of a class environment.

Staff will only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved by not using force.

Staff Authorised to Use Reasonable Force

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act (2006) and subsequent guidance published by the DfE in January 2016 entitled Behaviour and Discipline in Schools – Guidance for Headteachers and Staff, the head teacher of our school is empowered to authorise members of his/her staff to use reasonable force.

At Lantern Lane Primary & Nursery School the head teacher has empowered the following members of staff to use reasonable force:

- Teachers and any member of staff who has control or charge of pupils in a given lesson or circumstance have permanent authorisation.
- Other members of staff such as site management and administrative teams also have the power to use reasonable force if a circumstance should arise in which immediate action should be taken.

Deciding Whether to Use Reasonable Force

Under English law, members of staff are empowered to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from or stop them continuing:

- committing any offence;
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or,
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

All members of staff will make decisions about when, how and why to use reasonable force. To help staff in making decisions about using reasonable force the following considerations may be useful:

- whether the consequences of not intervening would have seriously endangered the wellbeing of a person;
- whether the consequences of not intervening would have caused serious and significant damage to property;
- whether the chance of achieving the desired outcome in a non-physical way was low;
- the age, size, gender, developmental maturity of the persons involved.

Staff are also expected to remember that physical intervention is only one option and for behaviours involving extreme levels of risk it may be more appropriate to gain support from other agencies, including the police.

Staff will be kept informed and have a duty to inform others about the plans around specific pupils who can present risks to themselves and others. This may include information about SEN, personal circumstance and temporary upset.

Using Reasonable Force

When using force members of staff should only use the minimum amount of force required in achieving the required outcome.

Staff should also use force within the context of existing good practice in non-physical skills and techniques, such as those laid out in our Relationships & Behaviour Policy & individual pupil regulation plans.

Staff should, where possible, avoid any type of intervention that is likely to injure a pupil, unless in the most extreme of circumstance where there was no viable alternative. Also, staff should avoid using force unless or until another member of staff is present to support, observe or call for assistance.

Staff training

Staff at Lantern Lane Primary & Nursery School, who have been identified as needing training in this area, will access physical intervention training through our Local Authority provider.

These courses provide participants with an insight into recent legislation and guidance that could impact on policy and practice, as well as a range of physical and non-physical strategies to help manage the risks posed by children and young people's behaviour.

Staff who receive this training will be expected to attend refresher training to update skills and engage with recommended practice as and when appropriate.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

The governing body will ensure that a procedure is in place, and is followed by staff, for recording and reporting, significant incidents where a member of staff has used force on a pupil, in line with the most recent safeguarding requirements issued by Governors and the latest advice given to Ofsted inspectors.

The record must be made as soon as practicable after the incident. While ultimately only a court of law could decide what is 'significant' in a particular case, in deciding whether or not an incident must be reported, staff should consider:

- an incident where unreasonable use of force is used on a pupil would always be a significant incident;
- any incident where substantial force has been used (e.g. physically pushing a pupil out of a room) would be significant;
- the use of a restraint technique is significant;
- an incident where a child was very distressed (though clearly not over reacting) would be significant.

In determining whether incidents are significant, schools should consider:

- the pupil's behaviour and the level of risk presented at the time;
- the degree of force used and whether it was proportionate in relation to the behaviour;
- the effect on the pupil or member of staff.

Staff should also bear in mind the age of the child, any special education need or disability or other social factors which might be relevant. Sometimes an incident might not be considered significant in itself, but forms part of a pattern of repeated behaviour. In this case, although there is no legal requirement to record such incidents, schools are advised to let parents know about them.

Records are important in providing evidence of defensible decision-making in case of a subsequent complaint or investigation. Staff may find it helpful to seek the advice of a senior colleague or a representative of their trade union when compiling a report. Our records are made and stored electronically via CPOMS.

Lantern Lane Primary & Nursery School will use the Nottinghamshire County Council electronic health and safety recording system 'WellWorker'. This system enables members of staff to report, using a standardised format, any significant incident where force has been used, or any incident where violence to staff has occurred or been threatened. Staff can access well worker via <https://nottscs-safety.net/upgrade/Login/Timeout.aspx>.

Post-incident support & review

Following the use of physical intervention staff and pupils will be supported, the immediate physical needs of all parties will be met and staff will ensure that positive relationships are maintained.

Incidents that require use of restrictive physical interventions can be upsetting to all concerned and could result in injuries to the child or staff. After incidents have subsided, it is important to ensure that staff and children are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action should, of course, be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded in accordance with school procedures. The school should take action to report any serious injuries to staff or students in accordance with LA guidelines (see First Aid and Medicines Policy and Practice).

We need to consider:

- thoughts, feeling, emotions,
- emotional 'first aid'

Stage 1 – Immediate 'Are you ok' This should occur before people leave to go home.

Stage 2 – De-briefing checking people have adjusted to an emotionally difficult event. This should occur within 48 hours.

Stage 3 – Counselling: formal support. Support is available when requested by a member of staff, however it is not imposed.

Focus on actions and behaviours:

- Who did what, when, why, how?
- What was the outcome?

- What does it tell us about what we already know about the young person?
- What have we learnt and what or how does this inform our practice?

Complaints and allegations

Any complaints or allegations will be managed in line with our school complaints procedure and allegations against staff policies and investigated thoroughly.

We will also make clear to pupils that they have a right, and are able, to question/complain about the use of reasonable force. We will ensure that mechanisms are in place for pupils, parents, carers and staff to voice the opinions, comments or concerns. Pupils will be given the opportunity of a de-briefing with a member of staff following any incident.

Our complaints policy is available from our website or a printed copy is available from our office upon request. An evaluation of the complaints will result in changes to practice/policy if necessary.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed annually.

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy and the H&S link governor also has responsibility in this area.

Other policies to refer to include:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints procedure
- Allegations against staff Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safe Touch Policy
- Intimate Care Policy