

## **Physical Intervention Policy**

### **Statement of Intent**

The Kindergarten believes that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met and where there are clear, developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour.

### **Aim**

We aim to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways and to consider the feelings and needs of others.

### **Methods**

If a child is hurt or distressed adults will respond in a sympathetic and age-appropriate manner. This may include offering physical comfort in the form of a cuddle, sitting the child on the adult's knee, removing the child, with an adult, to a quiet space for the child to calm down.

It is recognised that some children when hurt or distressed dislike physical comfort. Adults will be aware of this and will not further distress a child by offering unwanted physical contact whilst ensuring they are in a safe area. In consultation with the parents and looking at the 'Getting to Know You' form, the best way of assisting the child in such a situation will be adopted.

At times, the most appropriate and effective way of teaching a child a new skill may involve 'physical prompting.' Examples of this are: placing an adult hand over a child's hand when teaching them to hold a pencil, using a guiding hand on the child's back to reinforce understanding of an instruction such as 'coat on,' 'wash hands', to indicate in which direction they need to go.

Some children may need support to enable them to explore activities within the setting, so may hold an adult's hand to go to the new activity.

### **Physical intervention intended to prevent injury to the child or other children/adult.**

DFES guidelines (circular 10/98 and considering the Education Act 1996 section 550a) identify that a physical intervention can be used as a last resort in circumstances where:

- Good classroom order is at risk.
- The child is at risk of harming/injuring themselves.
- The child is at risk of harming/injuring others.

To manage a child's behaviour distraction, redirection, ignoring negative behaviours and positive engagement will be employed before physical intervention.

**Physical intervention intended to control or restrain will only be used as a last resort and in very exceptional circumstances.**

Any physical intervention deemed essential will use the minimum of force over the shortest period of time. These may include:

- Physically interposing between two children
- Blocking a child's path if they are intent on hurting another child.
- Deflecting a hand or foot, or other body part that is intended to contact another child or adult.
- Shepherding a child away by placing a hand in the centre of their back
- Moving a child, who is refusing to leave an area, by picking them up and taking them to an appropriate place (for example from 'inside' to 'outside')
- Moving a child to a quiet area, with the support of an adult, when their behaviour is disturbing the activities of others within the room.

After each session, any incident involving control or restraint will be recorded and discussed with the parent. The written record will include:

- The name of the child/children/team member involved.
- The reason physical intervention was used.
- The date and duration of the intervention
- Whether the child or adult experienced any injury or distress and if they did, what action was taken.
- If the child is old enough, the views of the child will be recorded.
- The incident records will be reviewed every three months.

At the Team meetings strategies to be adopted to manage a child's behaviour and promote improved behaviour patterns will be discussed in detail to ensure consistency between adults.

### **Physical intervention for children with additional needs**

Occasionally children with additional needs may need help with a new skill which may involve the adult in 'physical prompting' such as placing an adult hand over a child's hand in order to introduce the PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), or a child will be supportively picked up and carried to a different area to be introduced to a new activity.

We always work with parents to agree a strategy to deal with certain behaviour issues that may arise through a child having additional needs, or ways of physically handling a child that is specific to their needs, including guidance from outside agencies e.g., occupational therapy. For example, some children need appropriate firm, physical contact to help them calm down or feel reassured.

**Policy reviewed September 2023**