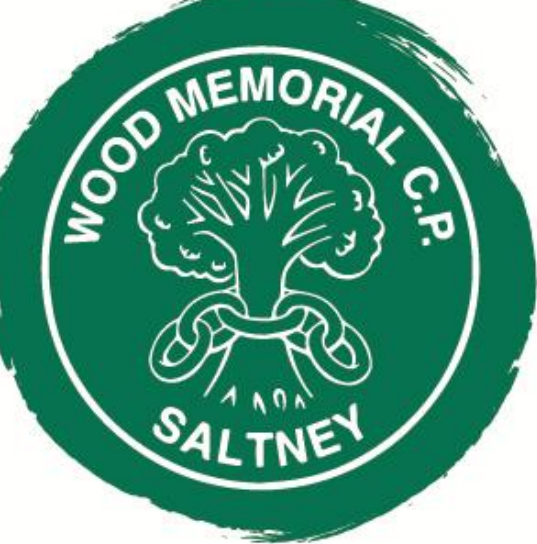




Ysgol Gynradd Wood Memorial Wood Memorial C.P. School

'From little acorns, mighty Oaks grow'

Positive Handling & Physical Intervention Policy September 2025

Date of last revision	N/A
Author	A Johnson
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Kindness



Determination



Nurture



Respect



Integrity

Policy status

This policy will be formally reviewed on a bi-annual basis or in the event of any relevant changes to the law or Welsh Government Guidance.

Purpose

This document will give all members of our school community clear guidance, so that any physical intervention that is undertaken is carried out in a way that supports our values and principles. In particular, this policy aims to describe the circumstances in which restrictive physical intervention is an appropriate response and how school staff will fulfil their responsibilities in those circumstances.

The policy has been developed using the “Reducing Restrictive Practices Framework”

[consultation-document-reducing-restrictive-practices-framework.pdf \(gov.wales\)](#)

and the “Safe and effective intervention – use of reasonable force and searching for weapons”

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/safe-and-effective-intervention-use-of-reasonable-force-and-searching-for-weapons.pdf>

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that staff and the wider school community are aware of the policy. The policy will be shared with staff, training and development will form a core part of the approach to ensure safe and effective interventions. The Headteacher will ensure that any necessary training and awareness-raising takes place so that staff know their responsibilities and are able to act in accordance. This process of monitoring and audit of staff training needs will be detailed later in this policy.

Physical Contact/Touch

At Wood Memorial CP School, physical contact is sometimes necessary. In school, adults may well use touch to prompt, give reassurance or to provide support in PE lessons. To use physical contact/support successfully, staff will adhere to the following principles. It must:

- be non-abusive, with no intention to cause pain or injury
- be in the best interest of the child or others
- have a clear educational purpose (eg; to access the curriculum or to improve social relationships)
- take account of gender issues

The Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team, supported by the school ALNCo, are responsible for ensuring that relevant staff are made aware of any pupil who finds physical touch unwelcome. Such sensitivity may arise from the pupil’s cultural background, personal history, age, etc.

What is meant by “physical intervention”?

It is helpful to distinguish between the two areas of physical intervention that can occur:

- Non-restrictive physical interventions and restrictive physical interventions

And

- Emergency/unplanned interventions and planned interventions

Definitions of physical intervention

[1] Non-restrictive physical interventions

Where the child's movement is not restricted or where the child is held supportively but such that they will be released immediately should they so wish.

Examples

- Guiding/shepherding a child from A to B
- Removal of a cause of distress

[2] Restrictive physical interventions

Prevent, impede or restrict movement or mobility of a learner. There will be a use force to direct:

- Isolating a child in a room
- Holding a pupil
- Blocking a person's path
- Physically interposing between pupils

[3] Emergency/unplanned interventions

These occur in response to unforeseen events in which staff use (where necessary) interventions that prevent, impede or restrict movement or mobility of a learner.

[4] Planned interventions

In some cases, pre-arranged strategies and methods of interventions will be used. These methods of intervention are used in line with the arranged risk assessments around a learner. Only those members of staff that have been trained to do so, shall use pre-planned interventions to restrict the movement of learners.

When is restrictive physical intervention permissible at Wood Memorial?

Restrictive physical intervention is rarely used at Wood Memorial. However, it will be necessary when it's aim is to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility)
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property (including the pupil's own property)
- engaging in behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at school or among any of it's pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere (*Section 550A, DFES Circular 10/98*)

As professionals working with young people, we have an obligation to safeguard their welfare. Under certain conditions this duty over-rides a young person's right to be touched. There are a variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate or necessary, to control or restrain a pupil. These will fall into three broad categories:

- where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is imminent risk or injury
- where there is a developing risk of injury or significantly damage to property
- where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline

Using physical restraint must be the last resort in any intervention. It is important to ensure (and to be able to demonstrate) that staff have exhausted all other means in attempting to avert danger to people or property.

Staff are authorised to physically intervene under the circumstances above and may be deemed negligent if they fail to do so.

The DFES Circular 10/98 on “The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils” outlines the following examples of situations that fall within one of the first two categories above:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil
- pupils are fighting
- a pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- a pupil is causing, or is at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him/herself or others
- 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 third category are:

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

In such cases, as in all others where the need for physical intervention might arise, staff need to employ non-physical behaviour management techniques first before any intervention is considered. All staff need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and steps which they can take to diffuse 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

It may also be necessary to employ physical intervention:

- To break away or disengage from dangerous or harmful physical contact, for example if a pupil has grabbed your arm in a threatening manner
- To separate a person from a “trigger”, for example by removing one pupil who responds to another with physical aggression
- To protect a pupil from a dangerous situation, for example the hazards of a busy road or from injuring themselves or others

All of the above are intended outcomes that would be deemed to be “in the child’s best interests” (The Children Act 1989).

Who may use restrictive physical interventions at Wood Memorial?

- Everyone has a personal right to use reasonable force to prevent an attack against themselves or others whether they are formally authorised or not. In such circumstances, an individual should be clear that there is an immediate risk and that other options have been exhausted.
- At Wood Memorial, all staff are authorised. In addition, a record will be kept of staff who have had access to training from the accredited RPI Learning. The Headteacher will ensure that those on this list are aware and understand what is involved. The Headteacher will review this list, to ensure that it is up to date.

Parents and volunteers in the school are not given authorisation. Staff from the local authority may

have their own policies about the care and control of pupils. However, whilst on Wood Memorial CP premises, they will be expected to be aware of and operate within the policy of our school. This means that visiting staff will need to ask the Headteacher for authorisation.

How staff at Wood Memorial CP might intervene

When a restrictive physical intervention is justified, staff will use “reasonable force”. This is the degree of force “warranted by the situation”. It will “be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident and the consequences it is intended to prevent”. Any force used will be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result and for the shortest amount of time

Staff will:

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

In other circumstances staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe
- slapping, punching or kicking a pupil
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- tripping up a pupil
- holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear
- holding a pupil face down on the ground

Any restrictive physical intervention must be consistent with the concept of reasonable force. As noted above, this will be context specific. Key points are that:

- the circumstances must warrant the use of force
- the degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the minimum to achieve the desired result

During an incident, communication with the pupil is vital. Ongoing monitoring of the child and maintaining communication with the child throughout an incident should ensure that risks of injury to the child are minimised.

Usually these principles will be sufficient. However, there may be circumstances where more specific training or guidance on interventions may be required. These include:

- when planning for pupils with known needs whose management may require the use of restrictive physical interventions
- where key staff take responsibility for any necessary physical interventions and therefore require a higher level of expertise
- where staff are concerned for their own safety and require guidance on self-protection or disengagement techniques

Through regular planning and monitoring meeting, the school Senior Leadership Team and the ALNCo will audit, address and monitor the training needs of any individual staff member. In an emergency, staff must, at the earliest opportunity, summon assistance by asking another member of staff to go to the nearest senior member of staff and inform them of what is happening.

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

If appropriate, an individual management plan will then be drawn up for that pupil. This plan will aim to reduce the likelihood of the need for restrictive physical intervention as well as describing how such intervention will be carried out. This plan will be discussed with parents/carers. Before the plan is implemented, any necessary training or guidance will be provided for the staff involved. The Headteacher will be responsible for establishing staff needs and for organising necessary training.

Training, Staff Development & Monitoring

Our school approach is to safely support people in crisis, understanding why behaviour is occurring, helping to defuse situations before they escalate and keep everyone safe. The emphasis is on the needs of the individual being supported. This is done by using a positive behavioural support model and an individualised approach to supporting people in crisis. Appropriate training is sourced when needed.

The Headteacher, SLT and ALNCo will monitor the training needs of the staff cohort. The monitoring process will happen on an annual basis. Physical Intervention training will be undertaken by key relevant staff depending on the needs of the school cohort. It will only be these members of staff able to carry out "Planned Physical Interventions" with learners.

What to do after the use of a restrictive physical intervention

After the use of an unplanned restrictive physical intervention, the following steps will be taken:

- details of the incident will be recorded by all adults involved immediately, recorded on CPOMS.
- Staff will be offered the opportunity to seek advice from a senior colleague or professional representative when compiling their report.
- Any injuries suffered by those involved will be recorded following normal school procedures.
- The Headteacher will check that there is no cause for concern regarding the actions of the adults involved. If it is felt that an action has "caused or put a child at risk of significant harm", the Headteacher will follow the school's Safeguarding procedures and also inform parents/carers.
- Parents/carers will be informed by the child's class teacher or member of the Senior leadership Team, on the day of the incident. Parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they may have regarding the incident.
- Support/debriefing will be available for adults and pupils who have been involved in any incident involving restrictive physical interventions. This will be provided by the Headteacher or other member of the school's Senior Leadership Team.

Following the use of a planned restrictive physical intervention, the above steps should be taken but with the modifications below:

- Recording arrangements will have been agreed as part of the planning process. Recording must still be done, if possible, within 12 hours of the incident. Serious incidents should still be recorded on CPOMS.

- Parents/carers must be informed in line with the arrangements agreed during planning. For pupils who may be requiring physical support on a more regular basis, it may be appropriate to have an on-going system of feedback to parents/carers. This could take the form of a home-school diary or weekly contact. All incidents should still be clearly recorded (within 12 hours) and where appropriate (if a more serious incident has occurred), immediate feedback should be given to parents/carers.
- Recording systems (CPOMS) should be used to analyse patterns in behaviour. These will, in turn inform whether responses are effective in managing and improving behaviour and that the best interests of pupils and staff are being served.
- The Headteacher should report on this information to staff as appropriate

Complaints Procedure

- Any complaint will first be considered in the light of the school's Safeguarding procedures, following guidance. If Safeguarding procedures are not appropriate, the school's Complaints Procedure will be followed.
- This policy must be complied with by all staff to ensure conformity to current legislation and good practice.