

HIGH DOWN AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

Restraining Children Policy

Rationale

Our club is a safe, caring and inclusive environment for staff and children and we strive to promote positive attitudes for behaviour. Physical intervention is only ever used as a last resort. For the majority of our staff there will never be any need to use a restrictive physical intervention, however, all staff will be made aware of this policy.

Legislation

This policy should be read in conjunction with **Department for Education non statutory guidance "Use of Reasonable Force"** (Central Resource Library) and takes into account the **Education and Inspections Act 2006** which enables club staff to use reasonable force to prevent a child from:

- a. committing a criminal offence (or, for a child under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older child);
- b. causing personal injury or damage to property; or
- c. prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the club or among any children attending the club.

The staff to which this power applies are:

- any member of staff at the club, with their consent (see attached); and
- does not include any children.

The power may be used where the child (including a child from another school) is on the club premises or elsewhere in the lawful control or charge of the staff member (for example on a club outing).

Section 246 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 requires that governing bodies must ensure that a procedure is in place for recording each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a child; and reporting each such incident to each parent of the child as soon as practicable after the incident. This is to ensure that parents are kept informed of serious events at the club concerning their child. It also provides a level of transparency which means that a spurious or malicious allegation based on the incident would be less likely to succeed. The member of staff must not report the incident to a parent if it appears to that member of staff that doing so would be likely to result in significant harm to the child. If that is the case and there is no parent of the child to whom the incident could be reported, then the incident must be reported to the local authority where the child normally lives. .

Planned Intervention

All relevant staff must be informed about children and families who are vulnerable or volatile.

- Vulnerable or volatile children and families should be clearly identified in registration file. The manager will ensure that knowledge required for these children are brought to the attention of all relevant staff.

Planned Intervention – a Positive Handling Plan based on knowledge and previous experience will be carried out and written by Management and under guidance of a Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), this will include known triggers and de-escalation strategies.

Unplanned Intervention – Situations when unplanned restraint may be required

- When the child is behaving in such a way that they are presenting a risk to themselves.
- When action is necessary in self-defence e.g. when the child attacks another child or adult.
- When there is an immediate or imminent risk of injury to another child or an adult e.g. when children are fighting or there is rough play or misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
- When there is immediate risk of significant damage to property when a child is about to vandalise property.
- Where behaviour jeopardises good order and discipline.
- A child persistently refuses to leave an area.
- Behaviour which seriously disrupts a session.

Physical Intervention will be used when:

- There is clearly **no alternative approach** which would work in the circumstances i.e. there is an immediate urgency to resolve.
- **Defending or protecting.**
- For children with special needs (EBD, Aspergers, Autism etc.) special procedures may be needed appropriate to their condition. Reference will be made to Annual Registration document.
- The risk of not using force outweighs those of using force.
- The potential consequences of not intervening are sufficiently serious to justify considering the use of force.

Essential guidance for staff

Witness and support

Whenever possible staff must seek the support of another adult when they need to use reasonable force to resolve a situation they cannot deal with in any other way. Both staff will use de-escalation techniques if possible.

- The other adult will be a witness to the incident and will complete a witness report for the record.
- Staff should minimise the highest risks by calling the police if a child is suspected of having a weapon and is likely to resist a search.

Oral warning to the child

Before administering physical force a clear oral warning should be given to the child that force may have to be used.

Physical intervention can take several forms.

It might involve:

- Physically interposing between children.
- Blocking children's path.
- Holding.
- Pushing or pulling but only in extreme circumstances to avoid danger.
- Leading a child by the hand or arm.
- Shepherding a child away by placing a hand in the centre of the back.

In extreme circumstances more restrictive holds may be necessary.

In exceptional circumstances where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of reasonable force. For example, to prevent a young child from running onto a busy road or to prevent a child from hitting someone or throwing something.

Staff should not act in a way that might be expected to cause injury for example by:

- Holding a child around the neck or by the collar or in a way that might restrict the ability to breathe.
- Slapping, punching or kicking.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against the joint.
- Tripping up.
- Holding or pulling by the hair or ear.
- Holding a child face down on the ground.

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a child in a way that might be considered indecent.

Staff must always consider whether a risk is urgent and whether there is any alternative to physical intervention.

Staff should always try to deal with the situation using de-escalation strategies to calm a situation before using force.

Procedure

- Staff must be confident that restraint is the most suitable action, based on the criteria listed above.
- Staff must ensure that they are not alone and that another adult is present.
- Staff must try and determine whether weapons may be involved and whether it is necessary to call for police support.
- **Staff must give a clear oral warning that restraint is going to be administered.**
- Staff must use minimum force for maximum effect over the shortest time and use only the agreed restraint methods.
- Child safety is paramount. Staff must be aware of signs of distress such as vomiting, changes in colour, breathlessness.
- After an incident staff must complete as soon as possible the North Somerset forms: "Report of incident involving Physical Restraint" and if applicable an "Abusive Behaviour report form" – to be given to the manager.
- Parents will be informed on the same day as the incident of the circumstances which led up to the incident and the outcome. Parents must also be informed of any future action the club intends to take.
- The management and staff will evaluate any incident of physical restraint to inform future management of children in similar situations.
- Staff involved will be debriefed following an incident and kept informed of any future action which relates to it.
- The manager will make a report on the operation of the policy to the committee.
- The chair of committee will be informed on the day of any incident.

Follow up support

A meeting will be held with the members of staff concerned in any incident to review the events and to enable an action plan to be created to support both the member of staff and the child concerned.

Complaints

In the event of complaints to the club or to the Social Services in connection with the use of force by a member of staff, the manager will seek the advice and support of North Somerset Children's Services on how to respond to the complaint.

The club complaints procedure is available to parents (see notice board).

Reviewed June 2016