



Positive Handling Policy

Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available through our website and paper copies can be obtained from the school office. When children join this school parents and carers are provided with a list of all available policies and documents, including this one.

Approved by:	Full Governing Body	Date:	March 2021
Last reviewed on:	March 2021		
Next review due by:	March 2023		

This policy is prepared with regard to non-statutory guidance issued by the DfE and superseding DfES Circular 10/98. To be read in conjunction with the Whole School Policy for Safeguarding Children incorporating Child Protection. Reference is also made to the Behaviour Policy.

Statement

At St Michael's Primary and Nursery School we are committed to ensuring that all our pupils and staff are able to live and work in a supportive and caring environment. Teaching and learning takes place in an atmosphere of mutual respect and children's potential and achievement are thus maximised.

In the rare circumstances that it becomes appropriate to use physical intervention, it will be used as an act of care, not punishment, and staff will follow the guidelines outlined below. Staff are required while taking any of the action detailed in this policy to ensure that the child understands that this is as a last resort and that their security and safety are not compromised.

Objectives

- To maintain the safety of pupils and staff
- To prevent serious breaches of school discipline
- To prevent serious damage to property

Minimising the need to use force



- All members of staff are required to help to create a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents that require using force arising.
- As a whole-school initiative we use the PHSE curriculum and RSHE curriculum to teach children how to manage conflict and strong feelings
- All staff know to work hard to de-escalate incidents if they do arise
- Any physical contact with pupils is undertaken in a way so the child or the adult is not at risk: sideways hug and sideways lap sitting (Younger Children)
- We will have risk assessments and positive handling plans in place for individual pupils whose SEN and/or disability is associated with extreme behaviour, and for those whose SEN and/or disabilities are associated with:
 1. communication impairments;
 2. physical disabilities and/or sensory impairments;
 3. conditions that make them fragile, such as haemophilia, brittle bone syndrome or epilepsy; or
 4. dependence on equipment such as wheelchairs, breathing or feeding tubes.

Staff authorised to use force

As defined in Section 95 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 all teachers, teaching assistants, midday supervisors employed at St Michael's are authorised to use force if necessary. If a volunteer or other person employed in the school sees an urgent need for force to be used they should normally call for an authorised person immediately. In exceptional circumstances the Headteacher may give temporary authorisation to use force to a member of staff whose job does not normally involve supervising pupils and she must inform all other staff members of this fact. *(The Head Teacher should identify clearly the staff authorised to use physical intervention, bearing in mind that any member of staff is legally entitled to intervene in an emergency.)*

Deciding whether to use force

The judgement on whether or not to use force and what force to use should always depend upon the circumstances of each case and must take full account of all information about the individual child concerned (their SEN, disability etc). The decision made must be reasonable and be made when:

- the potential consequences of not intervening are serious enough to justify using force;



- the chances of achieving the desired result by other means are low; and
- the risk associated with not using force outweigh those of using force.

Information about individual children identified as presenting the possibility of force being needed to restrain or control them will be shared at staff meetings and passed on to all other members of staff with whom they are likely to come into contact.

Examples of situations where force may be appropriate

1. a child attacks a member of staff or another pupil
2. children are fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others
3. a child is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate damage to property
4. a child is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or object
5. a child absconds from a class or tries to leave the school on their own at any time
6. a child persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave a classroom
7. a child is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson
8. a child is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school event or school visit

Using force

Before using force staff will, wherever practicable, tell the child to stop misbehaving and communicate in a calm and measured manner throughout. As already mentioned, staff will make it clear that they are not acting out of anger or frustration or to punish a child, and that the physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. Staff are also advised that they should make sure that another responsible adult is present to support, observe and call for help if necessary.

The types of force that may be used include:

1. passive physical contact, standing between children or blocking a child's path
2. active contact such as:
 - Guided walking – in line with Steps Training

Whole staff training (Norfolk Steps) has been undertaken and staff know that more restrictive holds should not be used unless the circumstances



are extreme and there is no viable alternative. Step On and Step Up training is provided as necessary for new staff. However, where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, such as a child running into a busy road, or on the verge of hitting out with a bottle or hammer, then staff are justified in taking any necessary action. Staff should avoid causing injury through their actions and make sure that any physical contact could never be interpreted as sexually inappropriate.

Staff training

Any future training will involve understanding ways of avoiding and defusing situations in which physical intervention might become necessary as well as methods of physical intervention. The decision to carry out whole school training will depend on perceived need at any one time. Staff who work particularly closely with children who have some kinds of special needs may need individual training.

Recording and reporting incidents

Our Behaviour Policy sets out the sanctions used to deal with most inappropriate behaviour. If force has had to be used an Incident Record will need to be completed. Note will be made of any injury or distress caused to a child or member of staff, whether any restrictive holds were used, whether other agencies, such as police, were involved. This record can be used to help identify and analyse patterns of pupil behaviour and determine any staff training needs.

Post-incident support

Our school keeps a record of all incidents where physical intervention has been necessary. The Head Teacher will be informed at the earliest possible time after an incident. She will also decide how and when to report the incident to the child's parent/carer; this should not be left beyond the end of the day of the incident. The written record will be completed and discussed within one working day. The teacher/adult involved may seek guidance from a senior colleague and/or their Trade Union representative before filling in their report.

We will discuss the incident with any other staff that were present and, where appropriate, collect a written account from them. In line with our commitment to working with parents, we aim to maintain an open dialogue for the duration of any relevant process which may follow an incident. We will review regularly the number and type of incidents in which force has been deemed necessary. This will be used to ensure that there is adherence to this policy and to identify improvement needed in other policies and procedures of the school.

Complaints and allegations



Complaints following a dispute about the use of force by an adult should, in the first instance, be referred to the Head Teacher or the school's nominated person. This will generally result in an investigation, which will take account of the written or verbal reports which have been collected. Where disputes cannot be resolved informally within school, complaints should be pursued in accordance with the school's complaints procedures.

Further information

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf