



Hazelwood School

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

This Policy includes the Nursery and Early Years Foundation Stage

Hazelwood School fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 157 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This Policy is a whole school Policy and applies to all pupils, including those in the EYFS. Care and consideration will be given to the age of the child when following the guidance in this Policy.

On some occasions, it may be necessary, in the interests of all children and for the safety of all children, to physically restrain a child who is in danger of hurting themselves or others. This Policy is in line with Government guidelines. For further advice and clarification, please refer to 'Use of Reasonable Force' (July 2013) by the Department for Education and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2024.

Physical restraint should always be the last resort, and pupils should be warned orally that physical restraint will be used unless they desist.

Knowing when to take action

All staff undertake a full induction at the start of their employment when employed by Hazelwood School, which includes expectations regarding behaviour and the supervision of children. Although it is the right of pupils in School not to be touched, it is not illegal to touch a child. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, is proper and necessary (e.g. comforting a distressed child, demonstrating a musical instrument or coaching technique or congratulating a child). The staff has a duty to safeguard the welfare of all children, and a member of staff might be deemed negligent if no action was taken, e.g. not intervening when a child runs out onto the road. Therefore, a member of staff must use their judgement, depending on individual circumstances, when deciding whether restraint is appropriate.

'Reasonable' means 'using no more force than is needed' and that the use of force may involve passive physical contact or active physical contact. KCSiE 2022 states that 'no-contact' policies leave staff unable to protect pupils and encourage schools to adopt sensible policies that allow and support staff to make appropriate physical contact. When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), mental health or with medical conditions, staff should consider the risks carefully and recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups. They should also consider their duties under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to making reasonable adjustments, nondiscrimination and their Public Sector Equality Duty. Individual behaviour plans and other forms of proactive behaviour support can reduce the need for reasonable force.

Reasonable force will be used

- In self-defence, where risk of injury is imminent.
- Where there is a developing risk of injury to the pupil or others.
- To prevent pupils from damaging property or causing disorder that is likely to lead to an increased risk of injury to persons present.
- Where physical restraint is used, staff must exercise the utmost care; prevention of physical harm should be the primary consideration.

At the point that a member of staff believes physical restraint may be required, a second member of staff should be called for immediately. If no one in vicinity or cannot be contacted, it will be at the member of staff's discretion to use physical restraint if necessary.

The pupil must be told the action being taken is for their own good; in trying to keep them safe.

The pupil must be assured that the restraint is not a punishment.

The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the risk present or behaviour of the pupil and the nature of the harm they might cause or suffer.

Other children must never be used in the restraint.

Restraint should be maintained for the minimum time necessary to calm the situation.

Staff should not act in a way that could be expected to cause injury*, for example

- 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;
- Touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

*This is particularly relevant to the Nursery and Early Years setting where the children are physically less well developed and more prone to injury from any act of restraint.

After the incident:

The person who made the restraint must inform the Head immediately.

The incident should be followed up with time for the adult and child to talk about the situation.

The circumstances must be recorded as soon as possible stating the time, duration, details of hold used, injuries, witnesses and further actions or events. A formal report will be kept on the child's file.

Parents will be informed of any incident where it has been necessary to restrain their child as soon as it is practicably possible and ideally before the child is returned to the parent.

In addition to this Policy, children with specific behavioural or education needs will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, with agreement from parents, as their unique requirements may necessitate an individual approach.