Northfield Primary & Nursery School

Physical Intervention Policy
(Use of Reasonable Force)

Objectives

Here at Northfield Primary and Nursery School we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential.

We take the safety of our pupils and staff very seriously. We believe that all pupils and staff have the right to be and feel safe whilst at school or on a school-run activity.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our behaviour, discipline, child protection (and the broader safeguarding agenda) policies.

Policy Development

This policy was formulated in consultation with the whole school community with input from members of staff, governors, parents/carers, children and young people, and other partners.

This policy is also written in line with all recent guidance and legislation relating to the use of reasonable force in schools, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (paragraphs 166 – 168 inclusive page 45)

Minimising the Need to Use Reasonable Force

As a school we are firmly committed to creating a calm and safe environment which minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of reasonable force. We design a curriculum which endeavours to explore and strengthen emotional responses to situations. By planning positive and proactive behaviour support, for instance drawing up individual behaviour plans for more vulnerable children, and agreeing them with parents / carers, school aims to reduce the occurrence of challenging behaviour and the need to use 'reasonable force.' (KCSiE 2024 page 46).

We will only use force as a last resort and strongly believe in de-escalating any incidents as they arise to prevent them from reaching a crisis point. Staff will be skilled in promoting and rewarding positive behaviour and will utilise various appropriate techniques in the management of a class environment.

Staff will only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved by **not** using force.

Staff Authorised to Use Reasonable Force

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act (2006) and subsequent guidance published by the DfE in January 2016 entitled 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools – Guidance for Head Teachers and Staff' the head teacher of our school is empowered to authorise those members of her staff to use reasonable force.

Here at Northfield Primary and Nursery School the head teacher has empowered the following members of staff to use reasonable force:

- Teachers and any member of staff who has control or charge of pupils in a given lesson or circumstance have permanent authorisation.
- Other members of staff such as site management and administrative teams also have the power to use reasonable force if a circumstance should arise in which immediate action should be taken.

Deciding Whether to Use Reasonable Force

Under English law, members of staff are empowered to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from or stop them continuing:

- committing any offence;
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or,
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

All members of staff will make decisions about when, how and why to use reasonable force. To help staff in making decisions about using reasonable force the following considerations may be useful:

- whether the consequences of not intervening would have seriously endangered the wellbeing of a person;
- whether the consequences of not intervening would have caused serious and significant damage to property;
- whether the chance of achieving the desired outcome in a nonphysical way was low;
- the age, size, gender, developmental maturity of the persons involved.

Staff are also expected to remember that physical intervention is only one option and for behaviours involving extreme levels of risk it may be more appropriate to gain support from other agencies, including the police.

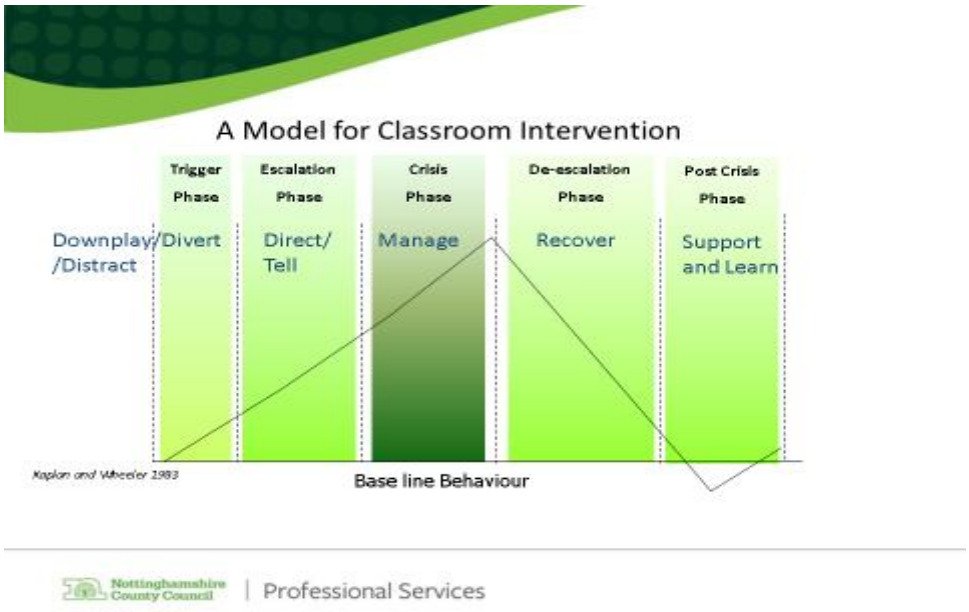
Staff will be kept informed and have a duty to inform others about the plans around specific pupils who can present risks to themselves and others. This may include information about SEN, personal circumstance and temporary upset.

Using Reasonable Force

When using force members of staff should only use the minimum amount of force required in achieving the required outcome. Staff should also use force within the context of existing good practice in non-physical skills and techniques, such as in model for classroom practice outlined below.

Departmental advice for schools is available at:

Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)



Staff should, where possible, avoid any type of intervention that is likely to injure a pupil, unless in the most extreme of circumstance where there was no viable alternative. Also staff should try to avoid using force unless or until another member of staff is present to support, observe or call for assistance.

Staff training

Staff at Northfield Primary School, who have been identified as needing training in this area, have accessed Physical Intervention training, known as Understanding Behaviour Training through the County Council co-ordinator who delivers certified courses.

These courses provide participants with an insight into recent legislation and guidance that could impact on policy and practice, as well as a range of physical and non-physical strategies to help manage the risks posed by children and young people's behaviour.

Understanding Behaviour Training (UBT) is not a statutory requirement, and it is for school to determine the required level of support through annually evidencing that UBT has been considered. As a school we have accessed training historically and therefore, if required, we will access phone support and consultations as and when appropriate. If it is felt needed, face to face conversations can take place where skills are reviewed.

Staff who have received the previous Controlling Risky Behaviour (CRB) training are: Carole Marron, Lisa Metherell, Vicky Thomas, Tanya Jones, Karen Smith, Karen Kanalas, Kirstie Fidler and Carolyn Burgin. These staff will now undertake the UBT on a rolling programme.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

The governing body will ensure that a procedure is in place, and is followed by staff, for recording and reporting, significant incidents where a member of staff has used reasonable force on a pupil, in line with the most recent Safeguarding requirements issued to Governors and the latest advice given to OFSTED inspectors.

The record must be made as soon as practicable after the incident. While ultimately only a court of law could decide what is 'significant' in a particular case, in deciding whether or not an incident must be reported, staff should take into account:

- an incident where unreasonable use of force is used on a pupil would always be a significant incident;
- any incident where substantial force has been used (e.g. physically pushing a pupil out of a room) would be significant;
- the use of a restraint technique is significant;
- an incident where a child was very distressed (though clearly not over reacting) would be significant.

In determining whether incidents are significant, schools should consider:
- the pupil's behaviour and the level of risk presented at the time;
- the degree of force used and whether it was proportionate in relation to the behaviour;
- the effect on the pupil or member of staff.

Staff should also bear in mind the age of the child, any special education need or disability, mental health problems, medical conditions or other social factors which might be relevant. Sometimes an incident might not be considered significant in itself, but forms part of a pattern of repeated behaviour. In this case, although there is no legal requirement to record such incidents, schools are advised to let parents / carers know about them.

Records are important in providing evidence of defensible decision-making in case of a subsequent complaint or investigation. Staff may find it helpful to seek the advice of a senior colleague or a representative of their trade union when compiling a report.

Northfield Primary School will record any significant incident where force has been used, or any incident where violence/threats to staff have occurred. Significant incidents where force has been used will be recorded on the Physical Intervention Recording Form (see Appendix A) and uploaded onto CPOMS. The incident will also be logged in the Physical Intervention Log saved on All Staff Northfield – 0-First Aid – Physical Intervention Log. Any incident where violence or threats to staff have occurred will be recorded on the Violence/Threats to Staff Recording Form (see Appendix B) and uploaded onto CPOMS. As above, the incident will be logged in the Violence to Staff Log saved on All Staff Northfield – 0-First Aid – Violence to Staff Log.

All incidents will be dealt with in line with our safeguarding policy.

Post-incident support

Following the use of physical intervention staff and pupils will be supported, the immediate physical needs of all parties will be met and staff will ensure that positive relationships are maintained. This is to ensure the well-being of staff and pupils.

Complaints and allegations

We will also make clear to pupils that they have a right, and are able, to question/complain about the use of reasonable force. We will ensure that mechanisms are in place for pupils, parents, carers and staff to voice the opinions, comments or concerns.

Complaints and allegations will be taken seriously and we will endeavour to investigate the incident. The procedure for this is outlined in our School Complaints Policy, a copy of which is available from the school office or can be found on the school website.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed by the governing body at least annually or as required. This is the first version of this policy and is due to be reviewed in autumn 2024**.**

The Head Teacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy and Jayne Bradley is the Link Governor, who also has responsibility in this area.

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Policy written by: J. Jenkins

Date: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

Appendix A

Northfield Primary School - Physical Interventions – Recording Form

Name of pupil:	**Date, time and location of incident:**
Staff involved:	**Details of any additional pupils involved:**
Witnesses:	**Staff reporting:**

Description of incident, including any triggers (if known) and any de-escalation

Reason for using force and description of force used

Any injuries to staff or pupils and details of first aid or medical attention

Follow-up, including post incident support and disciplinary procedures

How and when were those with parental responsibility informed

Has any complaint been logged as a result of this incident

Names and signatures of staff involved (including any witnesses):

Date:

Signature of parent/carer

Date:

Appendix B

Northfield Primary School – Violence/Threats to staff – Recording Form

Name of staff:	**Date, time and location of incident:**
Pupil/adult involved:	**Details of any additional pupils/adults involved:**
Witnesses:	**Staff reporting:**

Description of incident, including any triggers (if known) and any de-escalation

Any injuries/harm to staff or pupils

Follow-up, including post incident support

Names and signatures of staff involved (including any witnesses):

Date:

Signature of parent/carer

Date: