

MAYBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Touch and Physical Intervention Policy

Reviewed: Spring 2026





Maybury Primary School

Produced : Autumn 2015
Updated: Spring 2026
Next Review : Spring 2027

Touch and Physical Intervention Policy

Mission Statement

Our values-based school nurtures curiosity and creativity through an inspiring, broad and engaging curriculum, where learning is at the heart of all that we do. Our children learn to become resilient and self-assured in an environment where safety is outstanding. Everyone is challenged and encouraged to thrive and achieve as individuals, preparing them for their role as caring and active citizens in modern Britain.

Vision Phrase:

Believe. Succeed. Achieve.

Context

This policy is in line with the Surrey Policy on Touch and the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention and associated guidance.

The Policy is in written in conjunction with the school's Behaviour Policy; It also connects to, and should be consistent with, policies on Health and Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding and Diversity and Equality policies.

1. Introduction

At Maybury Primary School we believe that pupils need to be safe, know how to behave, and know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. For a very small minority of pupils the use of restrictive physical intervention may be needed, and, on such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention will be used.

The majority of pupils behave well and conform to the expectations of our school. We have responsibility to operate an effective behaviour policy that encompasses preventative strategies for tackling inappropriate behaviour in relation to the whole school, each class, and individual pupils.

All the school staff need to feel able to manage inappropriate risk and behaviour, and to understand what and how challenging behaviours might be communicated. They need to know what the options open to them are, and they need to be free of undue worries about

the potential risks of legal action against them if they use physical intervention. Parents need to know that their children are safe with us, and they need to be properly informed if their child is the subject of a Restrictive Physical Intervention, including the nature of the intervention, and the rationale for its use.

2. Definition of 'restrictive physical intervention'

The Law allows for teachers and other persons authorised by the Head teacher to use Restrictive Physical Intervention to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following: -

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property
- engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintain the good order and discipline at the school

“Restrictive Physical Intervention” is the term used by the DFE to include interventions where bodily contact using force is used. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorised by the Head teacher has to, in specific circumstances, use “reasonable force” to control or restrain pupils. There is no legal definition of “reasonable force”. However, there are two relevant considerations:

- the use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of an incident warrant it
- the degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent

The definition of physical force also includes the use of mechanical devices (e.g. splints on the pupil prescribed by medical colleagues to prevent self-injury), forcible seclusion or use of locked doors. It is important for staff to note that, although no physical contact may be made in the latter situations, this is still regarded as a Restrictive Physical Intervention.

3. When the use of restrictive physical interventions may be appropriate in Maybury Primary School

Restrictive Physical Interventions will be used when all other strategies have failed, and therefore only as a last resort. However, there are other situations when physical management may be necessary, for example in a situation of clear danger or extreme urgency. Certain pupils may become distressed, agitated, and out of control, and need calming with a brief Restrictive Physical Intervention that is un-resisted after a few seconds.

The safety and well-being of all staff and pupils are important considerations. Under certain conditions this duty must be an over-riding factor.

Who may use restrictive physical intervention at Maybury Primary School

The following staff (as well as the teachers employed at the school) are authorised by the Head teacher to have control of pupils, and **must** be aware of this Policy and its implications.

We take the view that staff should not be expected to put themselves in danger, and that removing pupils and themselves is the right thing to do. We value staff efforts to rectify what can be very difficult situations and in which they exercise their duty of care for the pupils.

All staff at our school are trained in the use of recognised, good practice approaches and de-escalation strategies to respond to behaviour and safety incidents. We access Positive options training delivered by our local authority partners. Where necessary we will consider a higher level physical interventions training should this be recommended for individual pupils.

4. Planning for the use of restrictive physical interventions at Maybury school

Staff will use the minimum force needed to restore safety and appropriate behaviour. The principles relating to the intervention are as follows: -

- Restrictive Physical Intervention is an act of care and control, not punishment. It is never used to force compliance with staff instructions
- staff will only use it when there are good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary and in the pupil's and/or other pupil's best interests
- staff will take steps in advance to avoid the need for Restrictive Physical Intervention through dialogue and diversion and at the level of understanding of the child or young person
- only the minimum handling necessary will be used to prevent severe distress, injury, or damage
- staff will be able to show that the intervention used was in keeping with the incident
- every effort will be made to secure the presence of other staff, and these staff may act as assistants and/or witnesses
- as soon as it is safe, the Restrictive Physical Intervention will be relaxed to allow the pupil to regain self-control
- a distinction will be maintained between the use of a one-off intervention which is appropriate to a particular circumstance, and the using of it repeatedly as a regular feature of school policy
- procedures are in place, through the pastoral system of the school, for supporting and debriefing pupils and staff after every incident of Restrictive Physical Intervention, as it is essential to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved at these times
- escalation will be avoided at all costs, especially if it would make the overall situations more destructive and unmanageable. The age, understanding and competence of the individual pupil will always be taken into account in developing Individual Behaviour Plans/ EHCPs and risk assessments.

5. Acceptable forms of intervention at Maybury Primary school

There are occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with pupils for a variety of reasons, for example:

- to comfort a pupil in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age)
- to gently direct a pupil
- for curricular reasons (for example in PE, Drama etc)
- in an emergency to avert danger to the pupil or pupils
- As part of an intimate care plan or medical procedure
- in rare circumstances, when Restrictive Physical Intervention is warranted

In all situations where physical contact between staff and pupils takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the pupil's age and level of understanding
- the pupil's individual characteristics and history
- the location where contact takes place (where possible it shouldn't be in private or without another member of staff present)

Physical contact is never made as a punishment, or to inflict pain. All forms of corporal punishment are prohibited. Physical contact will not be made with the participants neck, breasts, abdomen, genital area, other sensitive body parts, or to put pressure on joints.

6. Developing a positive handling plan at Maybury Primary School

If a pupil is identified for whom it is felt that Restrictive Physical Intervention is likely, then a Positive Handling Plan will be completed. This Plan will help the pupil and staff to avoid difficult situations through understanding the factors that influence the behaviour and identifying the early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours that may be developing.

The plan will include:

- involving parents/carers and pupils to ensure they are clear about what specific action the school may take, when and why
- a risk assessment to ensure staff and others act reasonably, consider the risks, and learn from what happens
- a **record** needs to be kept in school of risk reduction options that have been examined and discounted, as well as those used
- managing the pupil, strategies to de-escalate a conflict, and stating at which point a Restrictive Physical Intervention is to be used
- identifying key staff who know exactly what is expected. It is best that these staff are well known to the pupil
- ensuring a system to summon additional support
- identifying training needs

Where necessary, the school may also need to take medical advice about the safest way to hold a child with specific medical needs.

7. Guidance and training for staff

Guidance and training is essential in this area. We need to adopt the best possible practice. This is arranged at a number of levels including:

- awareness for governors, staff and parents
- behaviour management for all staff
- managing conflict in challenging situations - all staff
- specific training on Restrictive Physical Intervention techniques - all staff

8. Searching, screening and confiscation. (The school follows the DFE guidance on Searching, screening and confiscation.)

Headteachers and Senior Staff are authorised to search pupils or their possessions, where they have reasonable ground for suspecting that pupils may have prohibited items, including:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Tobacco
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used:
 - to commit an offence or,
 - to cause personal injury, damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil)

Headteachers and authorised staff can also search for any item banned by the school's rules which has been identified as an item which may be searched for.

8. Strip searching

In more serious cases where there are high level and immediate concerns for pupils and staff in school it may be necessary to instigate strip searching. A strip search is a search involving the removal of more than outer clothing. 'Outer clothing' means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear, as well as hats, shoes, boots or scarves.

Strip searches on school premises **can only be carried out by police officers** under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Code A and in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Code C.

While the decision to undertake the strip search itself and its conduct are police matters, school staff retain a duty of care to the pupil(s) involved and should advocate for pupil wellbeing at all times.

Staff should consider whether introducing the potential for a strip search through police involvement is absolutely necessary, and should always ensure that other appropriate, less invasive approaches have been exhausted. Once the police are on school premises, the decision on whether to conduct a strip search lies solely with them, and the role of the school is to advocate for the safety and wellbeing of the pupil(s) involved.

Strip searching would only be carried out in the presence of a suitably identified “appropriate adult” who advocates for the child’s well-being. This would often be the child’s parent or a member of school staff.

Unless there is an immediate risk of harm and where reasonably possible, staff should inform a parent of the pupil suspected of concealing an item in advance of the search, even if the parent is not acting as the appropriate adult.

Parents should always be informed by a staff member once a strip search has taken place. Schools should keep records of strip searches that have been conducted on school premises and monitor them for any trends that emerge.

9. Complaints

It is intended that by adopting this policy and keeping parents and governors informed we could avoid the need for complaints. All disputes that arise about the use of force by a member of staff will be dealt with according to Surrey’s Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.

Associated resources:

*Use of reasonable force- DFE July 2013

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

The use of restrictive physical interventions by staff

This procedure supports the application of the Surrey County Council policy and guidance on the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention. All staff should study the policy statement carefully – it can be found **on the shared drive**.

- 1.** The person responsible for authorising staff to use restrictive physical intervention as part of a structured and planned intervention within this school is **Amanda Merritt Head Teacher**

2. The person responsible for ensuring that all planned use of restrictive physical intervention is risk assessed is **Della Sullivan**.
3. Copies of all risk assessments are held **electronically on cpm** and are reviewed after every use of force and termly.
4. As of **Jan 2026** the people who are authorised to use reasonable force in planned restrictive physical interventions are listed here. No other person should engage in a planned intervention.

Mrs Della Sullivan Assistant Head teacher/Inclusion Leader

5. Only those trained in appropriate techniques within the last twelve months may be authorised. The person responsible for ensuring that appropriate training is provided, including regular updates, is **Mrs Katy Henry**.
6. Training records are held **in the School Business Manager's office**.
7. Those not involved in risk assessment but whose roles include the supervision of children may use reasonable force in an emergency unplanned intervention where it is necessary to prevent a serious injury from occurring.
8. Every use of restrictive physical intervention is to be reported the same day to the Head teacher or the Assistant Head Teacher in charge if the Head teacher is off-site. The Head teacher or Assistant Head will ensure that a parent of the child who has had force used against them is notified that day.
9. In addition, the details of each use of physical intervention must be recorded on the Physical Intervention Record Form, a copy must be uploaded on CPOMS. This form can also be found in Appendix B of this document. The person leading the planned or unplanned intervention must complete this form. The head teacher will review every use of physical intervention.

Appendix B- Physical Intervention Record Form

Location:	Date
Name of Child:	Date of Birth:
Description of incident:	

Where did it occur?			
What was happening at the time?			
Who was present?			
Why was physical intervention deemed necessary?			
What other strategies were tried before physical intervention occurred?			
Staff Involved			
Name	Role in setting	Involvement	
		Physical	Observer
How was the child held?			
Which part of the body was held?			
How long was the child held?			
Has the child been held before?			

Physical intervention should only be used to manage a child's behaviour if it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, other children or an adult, to prevent serious damage to property, or in what would reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances.