SOUTHWICK PRIMARY SCHOOL
POLICY STATEMENT: PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Rationale.

The school believes that to deny pupils all physical contact with adults is to deny a basic human need and expression of care and concern for all pupils.
However physical contact must be appropriate for the age, understanding and sex of the child and must never threaten or be sexually inappropriate.

Staff must be sensitive to:

- cultural backgrounds.
- the need to maintain pupils' personal space.
- any concerns that a pupil may have been sexually abused and will either seek physical contact or positively avoid it.

Physical contact may be appropriate:

- when a pupil needs to get comfort or reassurance e.g. following an accident or personal crisis.
- when First Aid needs to be administered
- when a pupil needs encouragement to attempt a new challenge e.g. to climb on to a piece of apparatus or use a musical instrument
- when there is a need to take urgent action to avoid an accident or injury.

Staff should take extreme care when offering physical comfort to pupils of the opposite sex, particularly as they approach puberty because physical contact can be misconstrued and this can cause distress to all concerned.

Purpose.

The use of force to control or restrain pupils.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Guidance from the Wiltshire Department for Children and Education and takes into account the Education Acts 1996 and 1997 and the Dfe's Use of Reasonable Force (2013) which states reasonable force and restraint may be used by teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Head Teacher to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- injuring themselves or others
- causing significant damage to property including the pupil's own property
- committing a criminal offence
- engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order at the school or among any of its pupils whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere

Guidelines.

Guidelines on the use of force to control or restrain pupils are part of the school's discipline and behaviour policy. Restraint will not be used punitively. The school has a disciplinary approach based on positive reinforcement of acceptable behaviour.

All staff are familiar with the school's policy and have a clear understanding about when physical restraint is appropriate and how it should be done. They must also know when and how to get support from other staff. Unless it is an emergency, a member of staff should summon rapid assistance or remove other children before taking any other action.

All staff have the right to use physical restraint in an emergency, for example if a pupil was at immediate risk of injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else.

Staff also have a right to defend themselves against physical attack and do everything possible to diffuse the situation before such an attack occurs. In the event that it is necessary to defend themselves against physical attack minimum force for maximum effect should be used. Parents will be informed of the action the school intends to take should the need arise.

Risk assessment.

- all staff including teachers, teaching assistants and other colleagues in the school must be informed about pupils and families who are vulnerable or volatile.
- vulnerable or volatile pupils and families should be clearly identified in documentation and kept in the class record file.
- a risk assessment based on knowledge and previous experience will be carried out and a plan of action for individuals written by a delegated member of staff.

Action.

Situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate.

1. When action is necessary in self-defence; when the pupil attacks another pupil or adult.

2. When a child is self-harming.

3. When there is an immediate or imminent risk of injury to another child or an adult. e.g. when pupils are fighting or there is rough play or misuse of dangerous materials or objects.

4. When there is immediate risk of significant damage to property-when a pupil is about to vandalise property.

5. Where behaviour jeopardises good order and discipline.

6. A pupil persistently refuses to leave an area e.g. the classroom or a playground and this would entail a risk to his/her safety or would lead to behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline.

7. Behaviour which seriously disrupts a lesson eg if a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson and persistently refuses an order to leave the classroom.

8. Behaviour that seriously disrupts a school event or school visit.

9. A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school other than at an authorised time.

Physical intervention may need to be used when:

1. There is clearly no alternative approach which would work in the circumstances i.e. there is an immediate urgency to resolve.

2. Defending or protecting.

3. For children with special needs (EBD, Aspergers, Autism etc) special procedures may be needed appropriate to their condition. If they regularly choose the wrong option and need to be restrained in any way, an individual positive handling plan will be drawn up with the parents' agreement. This will detail what the response will be in given situations.

Procedure.

1. Staff must use minimum force for maximum effect over the shortest time and use only the agreed restraint methods.

2. Pupil safety is paramount. Staff must be aware of signs of distress such as vomiting, changes in colour, breathlessness.

3. After an incident staff must complete the forms in the red book entitled "Behavioural Management / use of restrictive physical intervention" kept in the Head teacher's office. The forms (pages 1-4) should **NOT** be removed from the book but a scanned copy should be emailed to IYSReferrals@wiltshire.gov.uk within 24 hours of completion. Differing accounts of what happened should also be recorded in case of a subsequent complaint or investigation. Members of staff who have been assaulted will wish to consider reporting that to the police.

4. In addition to the red book if any incident in which a restrictive physical intervention results in actual physical harm to the child or any other person must also be reported using the appropriate incident report form available on WISEnet. You can find the incident report form by clicking on the Health and Safety link on the School Information pages; and then the Accident/incident reporting link at the bottom of the next screen.

5. Parents must 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 school intends to take.

6. The SLT and Staff will evaluate any incident of physical restraint to inform future arrangement of pupils in similar situations.

7. Staff involved will be debriefed following an incident and kept informed of any future action which relates to it.

8. The Chair of Governors will be informed on the day of any incident.

Essential points to remember.

Whenever possible staff are advised to 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.
The other adult will be a witness to the incident and will complete a witness report for the record.

Complaints.

In the event of complaints to the school or to the Social Services in connection with the use of force by a member of Staff, the school will follow Child Protection Procedures. The matter will be reported to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO).

Application of Force.

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve Staff in:

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking pupil's path
- Holding
- Pushing or pulling but only in extreme circumstances to avoid danger
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- In extreme circumstances using more restrictive holds

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 pupil from running onto a busy road or to prevent a pupil from hitting someone or throwing something.

In other circumstances staff should not act in a way that might be expected to cause injury for example by:

- holding a pupil 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 pupil face down on the ground.
- Using the double seated embrace which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position.
- The 'double basket hold'

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil 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 other agreed strategies to calm a situation before using force. He/she should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if he/she does not. The staff member should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measure approach to a situation is needed and staff members should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the pupil.

This policy should be read in conjunction with those on:

- Anti bullying
- Behaviour
- Child Protection
- Child Protection record keeping
- Code of Conduct for Safe Practice for Staff and Volunteers
- Code of Conduct for Teaching & Support Staff – HR Policy
- Confidentiality
- Health and safety
- PSHE
- Recruitment
- Safeguarding
- Volunteer Adults in School
- Whistleblowing

as well as our Written Procedures.