



PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

There are three main types of physical handling:

1. Positive Handling

- giving guidance to children – such as how to hold a paintbrush or when climbing
- providing emotional support – such as placing an arm around a distressed child
- physical/personal care – such as first aid or toileting

2. Physical Intervention

Physical intervention can include mechanical and environmental – such as stair gates or locked doors. These may be appropriate ways of ensuring a child's safety.

3. Restricted Physical Intervention

This is when a member of staff uses physical force intentionally to restrict a child's movement against his or her will. In most cases this will be using the adult's body rather than mechanical or environmental methods.

When would we need to restrict a child's movement?

Part of our roles at Nippertime is to keep children in our care safe. If a child is behaving in a way that could cause them to hurt themselves, or someone else, we must try and prevent this from happening. The statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, (EYFS), 2024, sets out the specific legal requirements in relation to EYFS and provides the following guidance: *'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.'*

Examples of what this behaviour might look like

- a child attacks a member of staff, or another child
- children are fighting, causing risk or injury to themselves or others
- a child is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate damage to property
- a child is causing, or at risk of causing, injury, or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
- a child absconds from or tries to leave the setting, other than at an authorised time, and you believe that this may result in injury, damage, or disorder
- a child is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a session.

Physical intervention is always used as a last resort and reduced at the earliest possible time. If appropriate other strategies must be used first. When all other strategies have been exhausted, it may become necessary to physically intervene for several reasons. These include the child placing themselves in danger, hurting themselves or someone else, causing serious damage to property, or trying to run away.



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Positive strategies to prevent unwanted behaviour that may require physical interventions

The most effective way to prevent the need for physical interventions is to create a supportive environment, where relationships are positive, and expectations of behaviour are clear.

Examples are below.

- creating a calm and supportive environment that minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require using force.
- developing positive relationships between children, staff, and parents
- ensuring that staff have appropriate expectations of behaviour, and that these are conveyed to children and parents
- taking a structured approach to professional development that helps staff to acquire the skills of positive behaviour management
- de-escalating incidents as they arise - recognising that situations which trigger challenging behaviours are often foreseeable
- completing risk assessments and positive handling plan for individual children, where appropriate.

Physical intervention should be used when there is no other way to keep children safe - it should be a supportive act of care

There is a statutory power that applies to all members of staff, or to any other person whom the manager has authorised to have control or charge of children. If necessary, they are permitted to use reasonable force to manage a difficult situation.

When using physical intervention practitioners should:

- aim for side-by-side contact between themselves and the child leaving no gap between the adult and the child's body
- aim to keep the adult's back as straight as possible
- be aware of head positioning, to avoid head butts from the child
- avoid holding a child at joints to avoid pain and damage
- avoid lifting a child
- ensure that there is no restriction to a child's ability to breathe, avoiding holding a child around the chest cavity or stomach

What is reasonable force?

When physically intervening, the amount of force used should be appropriate to the situation. For example, if a child is about to run in front of a car, and the only thing you can do is pull their arm to prevent them from being knocked over, this force is reasonable. However, the same amount of force would not be reasonable if a member of staff was trying to persuade a child to pick up a pen.

Recording of Physical Intervention and informing Parents

A written record of any incident involving the use of physical restraint should be made as soon as possible after the incident on our physical intervention form, and parents must be informed of the incident on the same day. Witnesses or any staff involved in providing additional support should also add signed and dated notes giving details of the incident. These records will be kept in our Safeguarding folder. Details of such

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events are brought to the attention of the Manager, or the Senior Team Leaders in the Manager's absence.

Individual Behavioural Plan

It may become necessary to write a behaviour plan for a child whom you find you are having to use physical intervention on a regular basis. The plan will include details on:

- what the behaviour looks like
- when and why, it occurs
- what can be done to prevent it?
- what physical interventions may be used when it occurs

Parents and carers play a vital role in promoting positive behaviour of their child. When planning behavioural strategies and interventions, parent's opinions will always be sought. In addition, parents will be fully informed of any incidents that have resulted in the use of force to their child. Parents will be directed to the settings policies during the registration phase.

Staff understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under Safeguarding and Child Protection and/or disciplinary procedures.

We recognise that sometimes touch is appropriate in the context of working with children, and all staff have been given safe practice guidance to ensure they are clear about their professional boundaries.

When applying disciplinary measures such as physical intervention or isolation for children with SEND the setting will consider the risks, given the additional vulnerabilities of these children.