



Policy on Touch and the use of reasonable Physical Restrictive Force

This Policy is based on the 'Surrey Touch and the use of restrictive physical intervention when working with children and young people – Guidance and Policy' written by Inclusion and Additional Needs Team in 2019 (Version 18)

This Policy document comprises of 2 parts.

Part 1 - describes 'Touch' between adults and children at Manby Lodge Infant School.

Part 2 - describes policy on the on the use of reasonable force by staff to control a child at Manby Lodge Infant School.

Reviewed: Autumn 2025

Next Review due: Autumn 2026 (Or when Surrey updates the Model Policy)

Part 1 - 'Touch' between adults and children at Manby Lodge.

Acceptable forms of touch/physical intervention in Manby Lodge Infant School

There are many occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with children or young persons for a variety of reasons, for example:

- communication
- first aid
- to comfort a child in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age)
- to direct a child (holding hands, hand on shoulder etc)
- for educational skills (PE, Drama etc)
- for life skills (changing for PE, toileting, using cutlery etc)
- in an emergency to increase safety to the child and staff
- during interventions of a physical nature eg OT or physio exercises

In an emergency incident staff may consider the use of reasonable force and their responsibilities under duty of care.

In all situations where physical contact between staff and children or young persons takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the child's age and level of understanding
- the child's individual characteristics and history
- the location where the contact takes place (it should not take place in private without others present)

If a child requires physical support on a regular basis this information will be documented on an individual plan such as a handling plan, toileting plan, deescalation plan or behaviour support plan.

Some children at Manby Lodge regularly seek out adults for physical contact. They may want to hold hands, may want to sit next to or touching adults, and may want a cuddle. Staff need to always consider whether this contact has the child's best interest in mind and not shy away from physical contact if it is public, proportionate and appropriate to the situation.

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 child's neck, breasts, abdomen, genital area, other sensitive body parts, or to put pressure on joints. It will not become a habit between a member of staff and a particular child.

This policy should be read alongside the Intimate Care Policy.

Part 2 - Policy on the use of reasonable force by staff to control a child at Manby Lodge Infant School

This Policy is based on an exemplar policy from Surrey, on the use of reasonable force by staff to control a child.

Objectives:

This school endeavours to ensure that all children are safe and that all aspects of the every child matters agenda are addressed. The main objective of this policy is to ensure all staff, parents and children or young persons are aware of the procedures and practice that will be carried out to ensure that this is the case at the school. This policy links with the schools Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying Policy and Special Educational Needs Policy. It is intended to ensure that it will prevent serious breaches of school discipline and prevent injury to individuals or serious damage to property.

In order to minimise the need to use force to control a child staff will strive to:

- Create a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents that might require using force and apply school rules consistently and fairly.
- Develop an effective relationship between staff and a child that is central to good order.
- Ensure all supervision of children is carried out in a consistent manner so children and staff are comfortable within the setting.
- Use relevant materials for approaches to teach children or young person's how to manage conflict and strong feelings.
- Ensure all staff have appropriate instructions and training to enable them to be effective in their various roles in and out of the classroom.
- Ensure that handling plans will be put in place and training given to ensure staff are equipped to deal with individual children or young persons who have been identified.
- Use distraction and de-escalation techniques in the first instance
- Whenever possible, warn a child that force may have to be used before using it.

Responsibilities

It is the Headteacher's duty to ensure all staff are aware of their statutory powers to use reasonable force and or restrain a child. As part of the induction process into school the Headteacher will inform staff if they have the powers to restrain, and who they can turn to if they are in a situation with a child that may be causing concern. It is expected that staff will have Positive Touch training before they could use restrictive physical intervention with a child, other than in exceptional circumstances.

All staff at school may have the statutory powers to use reasonable force to control a child or remove them from a classroom. The majority of staff at Manby Lodge have completed Positive Touch training and as such, would be authorised to use reasonable force to control a child.

The judgement on whether to use force and what force to use should always depend on the circumstances that staff find themselves in.

Time in these circumstances is often short with little time for reflection.

Nevertheless, staff need to make the clearest possible judgements. Staff will need to decide the seriousness of the incident and the injury, disorder or damage that could occur if force is not used. The chances of achieving a desired outcome by other means and the risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. Staff will have been made aware of any significant children or young persons i.e. those on SEND/Child Protection Registers and in any extreme cases where there is a need to engage the police to avoid danger to themselves and others.

If a member of staff decides that the use of force is appropriate and an action of last resort then they should

always:

- Try to give a warning to the child that a physical intervention may have to be used.
- Suggest how the child is to be handled ensuring that no form of restrictive physical intervention is used that could constrict breathing. Appropriate means are passive physical contact such as standing between children or young persons or blocking a child's path, leading a child by the hand or arm, ushering a child away by placing a hand in the centre of the back or in more extreme circumstances using appropriate restrictive methods that a member of staff has been trained to perform.
- Try to ensure that they do not use force unless or until another responsible adult is present to support, observe or call for assistance.

Examples of situations that particularly call for judgements of this kind include:

- a child attacks a member of staff or other child
- children are fighting, causing risk or injury to themselves or others
- a child is causing or on the verge of committing deliberate damage to property
- a child is causing or is at risk of causing injury or damage by rough play or use of an object
- a child absconds from a class or leaves school at an unauthorised time
- a child persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave a classroom
- a child is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson, a school event or school visit

In these examples use of force would be reasonable (and therefore lawful) if it is clear the behaviour is dangerous and the situation could not be resolved in any other way. Account must be taken of the individual needs of the child their understanding of the situation.

Recording of incidents

1. All incidents where physical touch or restrictive physical intervention has been necessary will be logged on CPOMS against the child's name by the adult involved. The words **POSITIVE TOUCH** must be entered in capitals on the child's record to act as a flag.
2. The child's parents must be informed on the day positive touch or restrictive physical intervention was used. **This will either be a face to face meeting, phone call or TEAMS meeting. An email does not suffice.**
3. All accidents, incident or near miss reports must be recorded. Surrey schools can access the SCC online health and safety event reporting portal surreycc.oshens.com
4. Following any incidents where force has been appropriate the Headteacher will make arrangements to support the staff and children as these can be upsetting times.
5. First aid will be administered by a trained first aider and emotional support will be provided as required.
6. Staff will discuss the situation within 2 days with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to see if all Procedures were followed and how we could try to avoid further repercussions, learning from the experience.

Complaints procedures

The school has a clear complaints procedure and any complaints would be received in the first instance by the Headteacher. If matters were not resolved then the complainant would take the matter to the Governing Body. Parents wishing to make a complaint will be issued with the guidance booklet detailing the procedures from the school.

School procedures for 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 Touch and Restrictive Physical Intervention

1. The person responsible for authorising staff to use restrictive physical intervention as part of a structured and planned intervention within this school is Karen Saffer.
2. The person responsible for ensuring that all planned use of restrictive physical intervention is risk assessed is Karen Saffer.
3. Copies of all risk assessments are held in SEN record keeping, and on TEAMS and are reviewed after every use of force and termly.
4. The majority of staff have completed Positive Touch training (day long course). Staff across the school work with children who may occasionally need physical interventions. Any staff member who has completed Positive Touch training may use a restrictive physical intervention with children as necessary and appropriate.
5. The person responsible for ensuring that appropriate training is provided, including regular updates, is Karen Saffer.
6. Training records are noted on the staff Safeguarding training grid.
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 Headteacher or the Deputy Headteacher in charge, if the Head teacher is off-site.
9. In addition, the details of each use of physical intervention must be recorded on CPOMS by completing an incident report linked to the child (see recording of incidents above).