

1.17 Child Protection: Reasonable Force and Physical Restraint Policy

Statement

In our preschool we believe that children 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 children only will the use of physical restraint be needed, and, on such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention are used.

Introduction

The majority of children behave well and conform to the expectations of our preschool. We have a responsibility to operate an effective behaviour policy that encompasses preventative strategies for tackling inappropriate behaviour in relation to the whole group of children, and to individuals. All the staff need to feel able to manage inappropriate behaviour, and to have an understanding of what challenging behaviours might be communicating. They need to know what the options open to them are, and they need to be free of undue worries about the risks of legal action against them if they use appropriate physical intervention/restraint. 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 Physical Intervention/Restraint, including the nature of the intervention, and the rationale for its use.

Definition

The Law allows for members of staff authorised by the Manager to use physical restraint to prevent a child from doing or continuing to do any of the following:-

- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing damage to property
- Engaging in any behaviour which is prejudicial to maintain the good order and discipline at the setting.

Physical Restraint is where bodily contact using force is used. It refers to any instance in which a member of staff authorised by the Manager or Deputy has to, in specific circumstances, use “reasonable force” to control or restrain a child. 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 (eg. splints on the child

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 physical restraint.

Appropriate use

Physical Restraint will only be used when all other strategies have failed, and therefore only as a last resort.

However, there are other situations when physical handling may be necessary, for example in a situation of clear danger or extreme urgency. Certain children 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 children are important considerations. Under certain conditions this duty must be an over-riding factor.

Authorised persons

The following staff are authorised by the Responsible person to have control of children, and must be aware of this Policy and its implications.

Hazel Hilton

Alana Tudor

Jackie Tudor

We take the view that staff should not be expected to put themselves in danger, and that removing children 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 children.

This policy was adopted by Sandbach Heath (St. Johns) *(name of provider)*
Playgroup

On _____ *(date)*

Date to be reviewed _____ *(date)*

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or
owner)