

Pioneer Childcare

Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy

Restrictive Physical Intervention refers to a situation where a member of staff uses force intentionally to restrict a child's movements against their will.

There are occasions when restrictive physical intervention (RPI) is an appropriate response to the risks presented in a particular situation. However, the scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled, and the nature of the harm they might cause.

Underpinning Principles

- The use of force should, wherever possible, be avoided.
- There are occasions when the use of force is appropriate.
- When force is necessary, it must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.

DfE guidance states that no schools should have a 'no contact' policy. There is a real risk that such a policy might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a child or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a child causing harm.

It is reasonable to assume that we can follow this guidance in childcare.

Legal Context

All members of staff have a duty of care to ensure the safety of the children in their care. Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives all school staff the power to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a child from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

1. Committing an offence.
2. Causing injury, or damage, to a person or the property of any person (including the person themselves).
3. Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline in the school or among children receiving education in the school, whether during lessons or elsewhere.

It is **the third** of these criteria that staff will most frequently be confronted with.

Club requirements

- Our RPI policy is a part of a wider behaviour policy which outlines a proactive approach to promoting positive behaviour.
- Our Behaviour Policy outlines the approaches and procedures which will minimise the likelihood of needing to use RPI.
- If RPI is used as a part of a planned response for a child, the plan should be informed by a risk assessment which is carried out using the relevant documentation and consultation with parents/carers.
- The plan to use RPI should be recorded in a Positive Handling Plan.
- Staff need to record any incidents of RPI using the relevant report.
- We will notify parents/carers of any incident involving physical intervention.
- We have procedures in place for supporting children and staff who are involved in an incident requiring RPI.

We will remind all managers of:

- Their responsibilities with regard to RPI.
- De-escalation techniques.
- Risk assessments for planned and emergency RPI.

Principles for the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention

There are occasions when restrictive physical intervention is an appropriate and reasonable response to the risks presented in a particular situation.

Restrictive physical intervention should only be used when there is no alternative, less intrusive, course of action and should always be reasonable and proportionate.

What is reasonable force?

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most childcare workers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with children.
- Force is usually used either to **control** or **restrain**.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- "**Control**" means either passive physical contact, such as standing between children or blocking a child's path, or active physical contact such as leading a child by the arm out of a room.
- "**Restraint**" means to hold back physically or to bring a child under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances.
- Staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury. It is acknowledged that in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injury as an accidental consequence of the intervention.

Who can use Restrictive Physical Intervention?

- All staff can use restrictive physical intervention to maintain safety in an emergency consistent with the principles of common law.
- The 2006 Education and Inspections Act gave all teachers and other school staff, who have control or charge of children, the statutory power to use reasonable force.

It is reasonable to assume that we can follow this guidance in childcare.

However, the club manager should, whenever possible, be the person to decide on the use of RPI.

- If the club manager is unavailable, then staff should try to wait for their manager to arrive. If they feel that the child poses an immediate risk (i.e., by running away) then they must deal with the situation themselves as calmly as possible. They will be required to write an account of what happened on an incident report.
- For the sake of clarity, a manager should come to deal with the situation unless what they are currently occupied with is of a more serious nature. By this definition, this type of occurrence will be extremely rare.

Planned versus unplanned Restrictive Physical Intervention

It is important to distinguish between the use of RPI in planned circumstances compared to an unplanned, emergency situation.

Planned Restrictive Physical Intervention

When children present particularly challenging behaviour we will create and use a **Positive Handling Plan**, which will include the following:

- A copy of the Risk Assessment of the child's behaviour.
- A copy of the Environmental Audit to identify changes which may reduce likelihood of the disruptive behaviour.
- A list of Reactive Strategies for managers and staff alike.
- A list of the adults involved (Club Manager, Area Manager, parent/carers, teacher) in the care of the child.
- Be made in partnership with the parent/carer to understand the child's needs.

The information in the risk assessments will help to inform this plan which will outline:

- ✓ Who has been consulted about the plan.
- ✓ The type of physical intervention to be used.
- ✓ Which adults are authorised to use this intervention.
- ✓ Parental consent for the plan.
- ✓ Director authorisation for the plan.

Recording the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention

When restrictive physical intervention has been used, whether in a planned or unplanned way, it must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead on the same day and recorded within 24 hours.

Informing parents/carers

Parent/carers should always be informed of any incident involving physical intervention on the day it occurred. Parents/carers should be included in any review of a child's Positive Handling Plan which takes place as a result of an incident of RPI.

Serious incidents - Post incident support and recording

Any serious incident involving RPI is likely to be highly emotional and distressing for all children and staff involved, whether they are involved directly or as observers. Support will be made available to the staff and children. This should be offered in a timely manner when individuals are sufficiently calm to be able to talk about the incident.

It is important to help children understand why RPI was used, allow them to explain how they felt about it, the triggers for their behaviour and explore how they could make different choices about how they behave in the future to reduce the need for this type of intervention.

Staff will need an opportunity to talk about the incident, how they feel about it, how it might impact on their future relationship with the child and how this can be addressed. This should also include a discussion about how the incident could have been managed differently.

The support given to staff and children should be recorded in the follow up action section of the RPI incident record form.

Unplanned Restrictive Physical Intervention

- In an unexpected, emergency situation, the member of staff must make an immediate mental assessment of risk and act accordingly to maintain the safety of all involved.
- The procedures outlined above for recording the incident, informing parent/carers, support for those involved and future risk assessment should all be followed.
- Staff will not be expected to act in a way which puts themselves at risk of injury.
- Staff will receive training on RPI.

Monitoring the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention

The use of RPI within the company should be monitored by the Club Managers, Area Managers, and the Director of Childcare.

Any training requirements identified should be offered to staff to extend their knowledge and experience.

Concerns and complaints

If a parent/carer makes a complaint about the use of force by a member of the club staff, it must be taken seriously and addressed by the Director of Childcare, following Ofsted guidance on such issues.

Related documents: Positive Handling Plan

This policy was adopted by: Pioneer Childcare Ltd	Date: 25 th January 2025
To be reviewed: 24 th January 2026	Signed: <i>J. Wilkins</i>