

## Physical Handling of Children **Reviewed September 2019**

We believe that positive behaviour management is effective in most situations. When adults do restrain children it must only be to prevent injury to the child or others or damage to property. This is a serious matter requiring understanding of how and when to restrain appropriately and how to record the event and follow it up afterwards.

### **3 Types of Handling:**

**Positive Handling:** a normal, permitted and positive part of human interaction in settings (in accordance with safeguarding guidelines): e.g. helping a child up a step, cuddling a distressed child, helping a child to toilet themselves.

**Physical Intervention:** measures such as using mechanical and environmental means to ensure a child's safety, e.g. using a stair gate, closed door or high chair.

**Restrictive Physical Intervention:** where an adult restrains a child physically against their will. Guidance for the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention: This will only be used once all positive behaviour measures have been tried. It will not be the preferred or default way to manage a child's behaviour. Minimum restraint and force are used for the minimum period of time. Physical restraint is never used in anger or as a punishment or part of 'time out'. Children being physically restrained are never left alone with the restraining adult. Only staff who have completed their induction and probationary period in the setting may use physical restraint on a child. If possible the child's key person or a pre-agreed staff member should carry out this intervention.

### **How to use Restrictive Physical Intervention:**

- the adult should come alongside the child to avoid being kicked or accused of inappropriate touching from behind.
- the adult should close the gap between themselves and the child to reduce the impact of any struggling
- the adult should avoid trying to lift the child.
- the adult should keep their back as straight as possible and position their head to avoid collision or injury from the child's body
- the adult should grasp only the 'long bones' of the child's arms or legs, never joints such as the wrist or elbow, never the abdomen or chest, to reduce the risk of injury to the child.

**Following the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention:**

Staff will keep a specific restraint log, forming part of the child's confidential records, detailing the date, time, circumstances and people involved. The parent/carer will see and sign the log when they return to the setting. A behaviour plan must be drawn up for a child who has been restrained in conjunction with the key person and parents/carers. This will detail measures taken to respond to the child's needs by changing the environment and adopting appropriate strategies to change their behaviour, note any other agencies involved, record progress made and set dates for review.

**Date:**                      **Name:**                                      **Signed:**                                      **Review:**

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