

Physical Prompts and Behaviour Management Policy

1. Purpose of Policy

This policy is to clarify when physically handling a young child is an “educational action” and what exactly is permissible.

The use of physical prompts or any physical handling of a child is not about punishment, it is about changing challenging behaviour.

This policy does not replace the behaviour management policy of the setting but supplements it and modifies it in the light of the very special needs of a small group of pupils; those with severe or complex learning, communication or behavioural difficulties.

2. Definition of Physical Handling

2.1 A “Physical Handling” is any physical contact with a child aimed at changing the child’s behaviour or aimed at keeping the child on a specific task. This physical prompt can also be used to support accessing the curriculum.

2.2 Physical handling for other reasons for example, restraining a child to protect them from endangering themselves or others.

3. Principles

Staff should:

- i. Start by trying to understand why the child is responding in the way they are.
- ii. Take account of the parents’ wishes and understanding of their child’s difficulties.
- iii. Ensure that any interventions used are appropriate to the child’s developmental understanding, communication levels, social competency and dignity.
- iv. Always have an agreed educational reason for the use of physical prompts, which they are willing to explain if asked.
- v. Try other methods of encouragement before physical prompts are used.
- vi. Work with at least one other professional e.g. your appointed member of the SEN team to plan and agree any intervention that involves physical prompts.
- vii. Have a very clear plan indicating what is to be achieved e.g. IEP/Behaviour plan/ Portage plan.

4. This Policy Should Be Read In Conjunction With The Following Policies

- i. Behaviour Policy
- ii. Inclusion Policy
- iii. Care plans if relevant.
- iv. Education Health Care plans, if relevant.

5. Application of Policy

Parental permission should be sought before physical methods are used but this should be done as part of a general discussion about aims for the child and methods of achieving them.

- 5.1 Work with a child should be regarded as happening in two phases;

- a. i) Early Years Action
- b. ii) Early Years Action plus where there will be an IEP

5.2 Parents will be asked to sign to say they agree to the general plan for their child. Parents have the right to see plans and IEPs relevant to their child.

5.3 Assessment, IEPs and behaviour plans will contain a very brief explanation of and justification for the use of physical prompts. Staff may be asked to expand on this if more information is asked for.

6. Details

6.1 It is justifiable to physically handle a child to make him/her do something that the adult in charge wants but he or she does not in the following circumstances:

- a. I. When working with a child with complex difficulties who would otherwise not learn.
- b. II. When working with a child with physical difficulties who would otherwise not have physical access to learning, after taking advice from therapy services and after consideration of the child's care plan / Educational Health Care plan
- c. III. When working with a child who has behavioural difficulties that prevent them from learning.

6.2 The physical intervention should always be as little as possible to get the child to co-operate and should be consistent with the practice of good "holds" and "restraints".

6.3 Physical methods need to take into account the health and safety of both the staff concerned and the child.

6.4 Wherever possible at least two adults should be in the room and near enough to be aware when physical intervention is used.

6.5 Staff should have all been advised of the safe handling of children by the Area SEN.

6.6 Other than in an emergency no staff member should physically handle a child without another member of staff observing.

7. Recording

7.1 Use of physical prompts must be recorded;

- i. Either as part of the assessment, IEP or behaviour chart in which case it is not necessary to record the individual use of prompts.
- ii. Separately as individual incidents.

8. In Action

The following physical handling is acceptable, but this is not an exhaustive list:

- I. Sitting behind a child both child and adult on floor with adults legs hooked over the child's legs
- II. Child on a chair adult sitting on a chair behind with adult's hands holding seat of child's chair between child's legs.
- III. Adult standing behind a child with adults hands on child's elbows or shoulders to guide them to adult requested activity.

More examples could include:

- I. In order to move a child from an area of the room into another, two adults walk at each side of the child, each holding the child's elbow and hand
- II. Getting a child to sit on a chair rather than the floor as this is easier
- III. Reduce prompts as necessary for each individual as per IEP or behavioural plan.

Reviewed Nov 21 by Mrs Sandhya Godhania

Physical Prompt

Physical handling for example, restraining a child to protect them from endangering themselves or others.

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