

## Safeguarding children

### 1.21 Physical Handling

#### Policy statement



All staff within Medstead Pre-school & Nursery aim to help children take responsibility for their own behaviour. This is detailed in our policy “Achieving Positive Behaviour” (1.13) and is done through a combination of approaches which include:

- Positive role modelling.
- Planning a range of interesting and challenging activities.
- Setting, and enforcing, appropriate boundaries and expectations.
- Providing positive feedback..
- We work with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all our children.

However, there are very occasional times when a child's behaviour presents particular challenges that may require physical handling.

#### Definitions

There are three main types of physical handling:

- *Positive Handling* – The positive use of touch is normal part of human interaction. Touch might be appropriate in a range of situations.
  - Giving guidance to children (such as how to hold a paintbrush or when climbing)
  - Providing emotional support (such as placing an arm round a distressed child)
  - Physical care (such as first aid or toileting)
- *Physical Intervention* – Physical intervention can include mechanical and environmental means such as high chairs, stair gates or locked doors. These may be appropriate ways of ensuring childrens safety.

- *Restrictive Physical Intervention* – This is when a member of staff has to use physical force intentionally to restrict a child's movement against his or her will. In most cases this will be through the use of the adult's body rather than mechanical or environmental methods.

### **Principles for the use of positive handling and physical intervention.**

Our staff exercise appropriate care when using touch and implementing means of physical intervention.

### **Principles for the use of restrictive physical intervention.**

*This policy is based on national guidance.*

Restrictive physical handling will be used in the context of positive behaviour management approaches.

We will only use restrictive physical intervention in extreme circumstances. It is not the preferred way of managing children's behaviour and will only be used in the context of a well established and well implemented positive framework.

We will do all we can in order to avoid using restrictive physical intervention.

Restrictive physical intervention will only be used when staff believe that its use is in the child's best interest: their needs are paramount.

When children are in danger of hurting themselves, others or of causing significant damage, staff have a responsibility to intervene.

When restrictive physical intervention is used, it is used within the principle of reasonable minimal force in proportion to the circumstances. Our staff will use as little restrictive force as necessary in order to maintain safety. Staff will use this for as short a period as possible.

### **Who can use restrictive physical intervention?**

A member of staff who knows the child well, this is the person most likely to be able to use other methods to support the child and keep them safe without using restrictive physical intervention. In an emergency all staff could use it.

## **What type of restrictive physical intervention can and cannot be used?**

Any use of restrictive physical intervention in our setting is consistent with the principle of reasonable minimum force.

Our staff will:

- Aim for side-by-side contact with the child.
- Aim for no gap between the adult's and the child's body.
- Aim to keep the adults back as straight as possible.
- Hold children by 'long' bones i.e. avoid grasping at joints where pain and damage are most likely.
- Ensure that there is no restriction the the child's ability to breathe.
- Avoid lifting children.

## **Recording and Reporting**

The use of restrictive physical intervention will be documented in our Pre-school incident book within 24hrs of the incident, the Pre-school leader and the parent/carer will be advised on the same day in line with our "Achieving Positive Behaviour" policy (1.13).

## **Supporting and Reviewing**

It is distressing to be involved in a restrictive physical intervention, whether as the person doing the holding, the child being held or someone observing or hearing about what has happened. Support will be given to all those who were involved.

After a restrictive physical intervention our staff will review the child's behaviour plan so that the risk of needing to use restrictive physical intervention again is reduced.

## **Monitoring**

Monitoring the use of restrictive physical intervention will help identify trends and therefore help with our ability to meet the needs of the children more effectively. Support can also be obtained from our Area SENCO where it is required.

## **Complaints**

Where anyone (child, carer, staff member or visitor) has a concern, this should be dealt with in line with our complaints policy. (1.10)