The Lloyd Williamson Nurseries

Physical Intervention and Positive Handling Policy

2026-2027

Updated by Lucy Meyer
Date: 14.10.26
Due for Update: October 2027

1. Aims

The Lloyd Williamson Nurseries aim to provide a welcoming, secure and safe environment for all children and staff. This policy ensures that everyone—staff, parents/carers and, where appropriate, children—understands when and how to use reasonable physical intervention safely, calmly and consistently.

2. Statutory Guidance

This policy reflects current legislation and guidance, including:

- Education Act 2006 (ss. 93–95) and Education Act 2011
- Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (DfE 2022)
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (DfE 2021, updated 2025) – safeguarding and welfare requirements
- Human Rights Act 1998; Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025

3. Relationship to Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

4. Philosophy

Physical intervention is always a last resort. We minimise its use by:

- Building positive relationships and modelling safe, respectful interactions
- Using de-escalation techniques and clear communication
- Establishing predictable routines and simple, consistent rules
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5. Authorised Staff

Under the Education Act 2006 (s. 95), the following employees are authorised to use reasonable force:

- Teachers and early years practitioners employed by the nursery
- Support staff (teaching assistants, office staff) when supervising children
- Short-term authorised staff (catering staff, volunteers, parents on supervised outings)

The Nursery Manager or Director may grant temporary authorisation in writing. All authorised staff receive annual refresher training and guidance.

6. When Reasonable Force May Be Used

Staff may use reasonable force to prevent a child from—

1. Committing a criminal offence (or, for a child under the age of criminal responsibility, an act that would be an offence for an older child)
2. Causing injury to themselves or others, or damage to property
3. Seriously disrupting good order and discipline on the premises or during an authorised activity

Examples include:

- Physical assault on staff or other children
- Children fighting or presenting immediate risk through rough play
- Attempting to damage nursery property or equipment
- Running into a busy road or other dangerous situations

Decisions must take into account the child's age, understanding and any special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Staff should always consider:

- The seriousness of the incident and likely harm if force is not used
- Whether other strategies could achieve the desired outcome
- Relative risks of physical intervention versus alternative approaches

7. Types of Physical Intervention

Reasonable force can involve:

- Passive contact: standing between children, blocking pathways
- Active support: guiding a child by the hand or arm, ushering away with a hand on the back
- Restrictive holds: in extreme circumstances, using approved holds taught through accredited training

Staff must never:

- Act out of anger, frustration or punishment
- Use force to punish or humiliate
- Restrain in a way that could be perceived as sexually inappropriate

8. De-escalation and Avoidance

Before any physical intervention, staff should, wherever possible:

1. Warn the child verbally and calmly ask them to stop
2. Use defusing language and body posture to reduce tension
3. Remove bystanders who may escalate the situation
4. Call for assistance if needed

9. Individual Risk Management

For any child whose behaviour may give rise to serious incidents, we draw up a Positive Handling Plan (PHP) in consultation with parents/carers, the SENCo and relevant professionals. The PHP includes:

- Identified triggers and early warning signs
- Preferred de-escalation strategies
- Agreed physical intervention techniques (if required)
- Post-incident support arrangements

10. Record-Keeping

All significant incidents involving physical intervention must be recorded within 24 hours using our Pupil Restraint Incident Report Form, which captures:

- Child's name, date, time and location
- Description of the behaviour and reasons for intervention
- Method of restraint used and duration
- Names of staff and witnesses involved
- Any injuries or property damage
- De-brief notes: child's response, staff reflections, next steps

Parents/carers receive a copy of the incident report on the same day and are invited to discuss it further.

11. Post-Incident Support

After any physical intervention, we:

- Provide immediate emotional support to the child and staff involved

- Conduct a de-brief meeting to review the incident, identify learning and update any risk assessments
- Offer counselling or external support where needed (occupational health, union advisors)
- Monitor the child's well-being and behaviour plan, adjusting strategies as required

12. Complaints

Any complaint about the use of force is handled through our Complaints Procedure. Allegations of misuse of physical intervention are reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and, if appropriate, to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day.

13. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager and Director will:

- Audit incident records termly for patterns or training needs
- Report safeguarding and restraint metrics to the Proprietor and governing body
- Ensure this policy remains aligned with DfE, EYFS and Ofsted requirements
- Review and update the policy annually or sooner if legislation or best practice changes occur.

Updated October 2026

Lucy Meyer - Director