



Use of Restraint Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Academy's Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy

In certain circumstances physical contact with students may be appropriate and/or necessary.

Important Considerations

Physical intervention should be used as a last resort, when other strategies have failed. Where a risk is not urgent, staff should consider carefully whether, and if so when, physical intervention is right. A calm and measured approach is essential. While restraining student, the member of staff should attempt to calm the situation and should release the student at the earliest safe opportunity. The restrainer must keep his/her temper under control. This is particularly important in situations where the aim is to maintain good order and discipline, and there is no direct risk to people or property. Unless an emergency, it is often not advisable for members of staff to intervene physically in an incident without the help of a colleague.

A member of staff should only feel obliged to intervene physically (as a last resort) if such an intervention is judged likely to be successful in the circumstances and the member of staff feels confident that they will not be placing themselves in danger. Members of staff are not expected to restrain a student if by doing so they are placing themselves at risk.

The law states that, where necessary, reasonable force may be used by teachers (and others who are authorised by the Principal to have charge of students) to control or restrain students in schools. This applies when a teacher or authorised person is on the school premises, around the school entrance (e.g. on gate duty) and when he/she has lawful charge of students elsewhere, e.g. on a field trip or out of school activity.

There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force'. However there are three relevant considerations:

- The use of force is reasonable only if circumstances warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force.
- The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.
- Whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could reasonably be employed, might depend on the age, understanding, special needs, background, gender or culture of the student.

In no circumstances should corporal punishment be used by a member of staff. The law forbids a member of staff from using any degree of physical contact which is deliberately intended to punish a student or which is primarily intended to cause pain, injury or humiliation. If it is necessary to use force, it must be used to maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.

Types of Incident

There are a wide variety of incidents in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a student. They fall into two broad categories:

- a. Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- b. Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property.

Examples of situations that fall within one of these categories are:

- A student attacks a member of staff or another student
- Two or more students are fighting
- A student is engaged in, or about to commit, deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- A student is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage to themselves or others by accident, rough behaviour or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- A student is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way which is likely to cause an accident or injury.

In very exceptional circumstances a senior member of staff or a duty teacher may be called to use reasonable force in a situation where a student is behaving in a way that is compromising good order or discipline.

An example of a situation that falls into this category is where a student persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an exam room.

Application of Force

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve a member of staff

- physically interposing between students
- blocking a student's path
- holding
- pushing
- pulling
- leading a student by the hand or arm
- guiding a student away by placing a hand in the centre of the back
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

Members of staff should **not** act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by

- holding a student around the neck, by the collar, or in any other way which might restrict breathing
- slapping, punching or kicking a pupil
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- tripping up a student
- holding or pulling a student by the hair or ear
- holding a student face down on the ground.

Staff should avoid touching or holding a student in a way that might be considered indecent/sexual.

Recording Incidents

Whilst of course there are many incidents of minor or trivial contact with students which do not need to be recorded, if it has been necessary to use reasonable force to control or restrain a student, staff should inform the Principal (or the Vice Principal if the Principal is unavailable) of the details as soon as possible. Appropriate support will be provided by the school for member of staff who been involved in such an incident. A record of the incident will be made and kept. The following points should be recorded in the report:

- details of the date, time and location of the incident
- circumstances and significant factors which led to the incident
- the duration and nature if any physical restraint used
- the names of the students and staff involved
- a description of any injury sustained by the student(s) and /or staff
- a description of any action taken after the event
- the full names and job title of the person making the report
- the signatures of the person who applied the restraint, the person making the report (if different) and the Principal.

Physical Contact With Students In Other Circumstances

There are occasions other than the above, when physical contact with a student may be necessary or proper (e.g. to demonstrate a technique in PE lesson, or when giving First Aid). Touching may also be appropriate where a student is in distress. There may be some students, however, for whom touching is particularly unwelcome, for example because of their cultural background. Staff should bear in mind that even innocent and well-intentioned physical contact can sometimes be misconstrued and should be avoided.

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