

USE OF FORCE TO CONTROL OR RESTRAIN PUPILS

Education and Inspection Act 2006

Authorised staff

The Act allows all teachers and other people who have been authorised by the Headteacher to have control or charge of students to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. It is the policy of the school that physical restraint be used on a pupil **only** as a last resort.

Reasonable force

There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force'. It will always depend on all the circumstances of the case. However the degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Types of incidents

Reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, in the following three broad categories:

- a) where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury, e.g. where a student attacks a member of staff or another student;
- b) where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property, e.g. a student is causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- c) where a student is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline, e.g. a student persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom.

N.B. Staff should always try to deal with a situation through other strategies before using force and must try to avoid putting themselves into physical danger.

Physical intervention

If a teacher considers that physical intervention is necessary because other methods have failed: it may involve staff in physically interposing between students, blocking a student's path, holding, pushing, pulling, leading a student by the hand or arm, shepherding a student away by placing a hand in centre of the back or (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

Staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury e.g. by holding a student around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict breathing, by slapping, punching or kicking, by twisting or forcing limbs against a joint, by tripping-up a student, by holding or pulling a student by the hair or ear or by holding a student face down on the ground.

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

Where a student is recognised as likely to behave in ways which may require physical restraint, then an individual plan will be prepared on the action to be taken when it becomes necessary. As far as possible staff will be made aware of situations likely to provoke difficult behaviour or trigger a violent reaction and a preventative strategy and de-escalation techniques will be made available.

Recording incidents

The school's recording system will be used to report any occasion (except minor or trivial incidents) where force is used. A report should be completed giving details of how the incident began and progressed, details of the student's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long. The student's response and the outcome of the incident including details of any injury suffered by the student, another student or a member of staff and of any damage to property, should also be recorded.

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from a senior colleague or a representative of their professional association when compiling a report. They should also keep a copy of the report.

Informing Parents

The incident should be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will consider whether parents need to be informed straight away or at the end of the school day, and whether they should be told orally or in writing. The school's disciplinary procedures would be followed.

Informing Police

School reserves the right to inform the police of incidents which have required the use of force to control or restrain students.

Complaints

Involving parents when an incident occurs with their child and staff adhering to this policy should help to avoid complaints from parents. In the event of a complaint the normal complaints procedure will be used. The possibility that a complaint might result in a disciplinary hearing, or criminal prosecution, or in a civil action brought by a student or parent, cannot be ruled out.

Training Issues

All responsible adults will be made aware, as part of their induction, of the professional response that is expected in the school in relation to behaviour of students.