

## USE OF REASONABLE FORCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### Aim

This policy will give clear guidelines for the use of force or control in the restraint of children for all staff in the school. The use of force will only be resorted to when all other possible interventions have been utilised. The school has rare incidences of physical fights between pupils, or attacks on staff. The school recognises that it has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustment for disabled children and children with special needs.

The school will reference the DfE 'Use of Reasonable Force' Guidance alongside this policy.

### What is reasonable force?

'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed. 'Control' means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm. 'Restraint' means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control.

### Guidelines

The school will allow the use of restraint in the following situations:

- To prevent pupils from injuring themselves or others.
- If there is a developing risk of injury, or of significant damage to property.
- If a pupil is behaving in a way which compromises good order, discipline or safety and they are unresponsive to verbal information.
- To prevent a pupil from leaving the classroom/school where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others.
- If a pupil is committing a criminal offence (including behaviour which would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility).

Examples:

- Attacking another pupil or staff member/fighting.
- Deliberate vandalism.
- Causing risk, injury or damage by rough play or misuse of materials or objects.
- Running in the corridors or stairways in a way which might cause an accident.
- Leaving the class or school premises (and it is felt the child would be at risk if not kept in the classroom or school).
- Refusal (persistently) to leave the classroom.
- Behaving in a seriously disruptive way.

***The school does not permit the use of force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force for this purpose.***

## Procedure

Everyone has the right to defend themselves, provided a disproportionate amount of force is not used. In an emergency any member of staff can intervene.

## Initial Intervention

Before using any physically interventions the teacher will tell the pupil;

- To stop the misbehaviour.
- Consequences of continuing with the behaviour will be explained.
- The teacher will talk continually to the pupil throughout the incident.

## Using force

If physical intervention becomes necessary the teacher will;

- Take a calm and measured approach explaining what they are doing and the reason for it.
- Be clear that the restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
- Assess the level of risk to him/herself and other pupils and remove anyone who is at risk and send for help.
- Continue to talk to the pupil and try to prevent the incident from escalating.
- Consider the age, understanding and gender of the pupil.
- Take no action that may cause an injury.

Inappropriate holding or touching of a pupil should be avoided. Intervention could mean:

- Interposing between pupils.
- Blocking a pupil's path.
- Holding, pushing or pulling.
- Leading by the arm.
- If there is an immediate risk of injury a teacher may take necessary action, for example, if a pupil were to run into a busy road.

Teachers/staff should always try to use other strategies and techniques to deal with difficult situations. In a non-urgent situation force will only be used when all other strategies have failed.

## Staff Training

The College of Teachers will assess whether members of staff require additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities and should consider the needs of the pupils when doing so.

## Recording restraint incidents

A written account of any incident involving the use of restraint will be made in the Incident Book and the Education Coordinator (or experienced staff member) will be informed. Information to be included:

- Names of all those involved.
- Any witnesses
- The reason for the intervention.
- Details of the intervention.
- Any steps taken to diffuse the situation.
- The force/restraint used and for how long.
- The outcome.
- Any injuries or damages sustained.

A copy of these details should be made and kept with the child's files. The child's parents will be informed immediately of any incident involving the use of force.

Any concerns or complaints will be dealt with through the school's Complaints Procedure, thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated.

### **Other Physical Contact**

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. The school recognises that there are times when physical contact with a pupil may be necessary; for example,

- During sports lessons,
- Giving first aid,
- If a pupil is in distress.
- Congratulating or praising a pupil.
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument.
- Holding a pupil's hand at the front or back of the line on a trip etc.

The school recognises there are some children for whom touching is unwelcome because of their cultural background or personal history. The school will aim to develop clear common practice towards particular groups of children and events, and between staff and children of the opposite sex.

Children in Kindergarten (age 7 and under) retain a need for physical contact, especially when hurt or upset, or to show affection to staff. However, staff must be careful that cuddling does not become excessive and be sensitive to when the child no longer needs to be comforted in this way, if at all.

**Revised: January 2014 Executive HN/JP**

**For Review: January 2016**