



Policy on the use of force to control or restrain pupils

This Policy was reviewed by the Deputy Head Teacher

April 2019

Next review date April 2021

Introduction

This policy is based on guidance issued by the Children and Young People Services (Leicester City Council) outlined in Health and Safety Guidance 34 – 'Physical Intervention Guidance – The use of Reasonable Force to control or restrain Children and Young People, and the Education Act Section 550A

Rationale.

As a school we feel it is important to promote a caring and supportive environment to enable all members of the school community to feel secure, respected and therefore promote good behaviour in others.

The development of resilience qualities and social skills and the fostering of socially acceptable behaviour are an integral aspect of the school curriculum and therefore demand planning.

We view discipline as an educative process, through which the responsibility for a child's behaviour progressively transfers from the adults and parents to the child itself. Consequently, rewards and sanctions must be chosen which promote personal responsibility.

At Folville Junior School we believe that the use of reasonable force is only necessary to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence
- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing damage to property, including their own
- Engaging in behaviour at school or on school activities/visits which is prejudicial to the welfare of other pupils or staff.

Staff empowered to use restraint:

- any adult employed to work at Folville Junior School.

The use of restraint should always be a last resort. If practical before intervention, a calm warning or instruction to stop should be given and every effort should be made to achieve a satisfactory outcome without physical intervention.

In all circumstances help must be sent for, even when immediate intervention is necessary.

Restraint can take a variety of forms, many of which are outlined in **Guidance Health and Safety 34**. Staff should always avoid touching/holding a pupil in a way that might be considered inappropriate.

'Reasonable Force' should not be used for trivial misdemeanours and should always be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident. It should be used only to control or restrain and never with the intent to cause pain or harm. It must, therefore, be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. In any action, due regard has to be taken to the age, understanding and sex of the pupil.

The school accepts and understands that in accordance with the law corporal punishment is forbidden.

Where restraint has been necessary, the incident must be reported to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher and logged.

In the event of an injury occurring, the form SO2 will have the appropriate section to fill in. In the event of staff injury the form SO1 should be completed.

Parents of the pupils involved will always be advised of the incident and it may be necessary for it to be followed up by other disciplinary action or pastoral support.

Do not place yourself at risk of false allegation: avoid being alone with any pupil.

The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force.

Physical force cannot be justified in a situation that could clearly be resolved without force.

Physical force cannot be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour.

Any force used must be the minimum force needed to achieve the desired results

Other physical contact with pupils

There are occasions when physical contact with a pupil may be appropriate or necessary. They are as follows:

- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons, sports coaching
- If a member of staff has to give first aid
- To physically prompt or help a pupil with special educational needs
- Where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting

In some cases physical contact may not be welcome or advisable

- Some pupils may be particularly sensitive to physical contact because of their cultural background
- Some pupils may have been abused and are particularly vulnerable
- Physical contact with pupils reaching or going through adolescence must be carefully considered

Use of Restraint

All staff have been trained in legal and approved physical restraint techniques using the Team Teach approach, approved by Leicester City Council.

Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the person restrained, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of attempts to keep the person safe.

When physical restraint is necessary, it should be used in such a way that care and concern for the child are demonstrated.

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In all cases where physical restraint and control are necessary, the minimum reasonable force should be used to exercise your duty of care to students and should only be used as a last resort.

Good practice in the use of physical interventions:

1. Issue one or more verbal warnings prior to restraint, where possible.
2. As far as possible, remove onlookers and observers who are not essential to the control of the situation.
3. Attempt to maintain the dignity and self-respect of the student both during and after use of physical intervention.
4. Continue to communicate with the student throughout, repeating that the restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. However, be mindful that for some students, communication can worsen the situation.
5. Try to ensure a calm and measured approach to the situation. Never act out of frustration or are trying to punish the student.
6. Where possible ensure that more than one person is present during an incident requiring physical intervention.
7. Following an incident, debriefing should be offered to staff and students and those who witnessed the incident.
8. Staff should be made aware that there are some students for whom physical intervention is particularly unwelcome. This may be because of cultural background or because they have been abused.

Unacceptable Practices:

1. Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint.
2. Pinning students against walls or furniture.
3. Slapping, punching or hitting pupils.
4. Techniques which restrict circulation or breathing.
5. Holding or pulling a student by the hair or ears.
6. Holding a student face down on the ground.

Staff must avoid any holding which could be interpreted as being of a sexual nature and must avoid sitting on a student.

Recording

All incidents involving physical intervention should be recorded on an incident form. Parents/carers must be informed of the use of any physical intervention.

Responding to complaints

The use of restrictive physical intervention can lead to allegations of inappropriate or excessive force. This is why it is imperative that records are clearly written showing that the restraints policy has been followed. The complaint will be dealt in accordance to the complaints policy.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the school's Behaviour Management Policy.