



USE OF FORCE AND RESTRAINT POLICY

Introduction

The key objective of this policy is to maintain the safety of pupils and staff and volunteers/visitors; to prevent serious breaches of school discipline or to prevent serious damage to property. It is the belief of this school that force or restraint should only be used when there is no viable alternative, and then only to the minimum needed.

This policy sets out in which circumstances force might be used, by whom, and in what form, and also makes clear what recording and follow up action should happen afterwards.

1) Minimising the need to use force

- At this school, we believe that a calm environment coupled with positive behaviour management strategies will result in very little need for force or restraint.
- *Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE)* is used to teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings.
- Force is used only when the risks involved outweigh the risks in not doing so.
- It is unlawful to use force as a punishment.

2) Staff authorised to use force

- All staff who deal with children have the authority to use force if necessary. These include the Headteacher, teachers, teaching assistants and midday assistants, although on occasion in an emergency this might also include other adults who are present, for example the caretaker or office staff or volunteers.
- Other adults who are responsible for children on a temporary basis, for example, with a group on a school trip, also have the authority to use force for the duration of that activity.
- Adults who have temporary authorisation are informed prior to the activity taking place by their line manager, or by the teacher if this is for a class based or school visit activity.

3) Deciding whether to use force

There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force, so the following points should be taken into consideration:

Restraint should only be used if:

- A criminal offence is being/ is about to be committed (or what would be reasonably deemed to be a criminal offence if the child were old enough)
- A child is causing personal injury to, or damage to property of, any person, including themselves.

- A child is significantly prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at school

Staff should only use force when:

- The potential consequences of not intervening are sufficiently serious to justify considering the use of force;
- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means are low;
- The risk associated with not using force outweighs those of using force.

Staff should always be well appraised of children who present significant risk to themselves or others, and adequate risk assessments should be in place for both class based, but especially for out-of-school activities. All of these should be signed by the Educational Visits Coordinator.

Some examples of situations which might merit the use of force would be:

- Attack on a child/member of staff
- Criminal damage
- Serious fighting
- Serious risk of injury even if unintentional (eg: very rough play)
- Where child leaves the class or school without permission and this would lead to a serious risk of harm.
- Where a child won't leave the classroom when asked, and is seriously disrupting the lesson

4) Using force

- Passive: blocking or impeding an action taking place.
- Active:
- Leading by the hand / arm
- Ushering with hand in the centre of the back
- Restrictive holds
- If there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, **any**

necessary action should be taken.

5) Staff training

- It is the intention that staff training for all teachers, TAs be held every three years. New staff are informed about restraint procedures and policy on induction. Except in an emergency, only staff who have been trained in Team Teach methods should undertake any force.

6) **Recording incidents**

- Records should be kept of any significant incidents where force has been used in the Child Protection folder, in the 'serious incident' log.
- Parents should be informed where and when the incident took place, although those involved may remain anonymous. This communication should initially be by phone, on that day. Then the parent(s) should be informed in writing of the incident, and should receive with the letter a copy of this policy.

7) **Complaints**

- Should parents/ carers wish to raise a complaint about the use of force/ restraint, they should in the first instance discuss this with the Headteacher. If this does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, they should put their complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors, via the school office.

8) **Review**

- This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if government guidance changes.

Sept 14 JD

Review autumn 17