

Balcombe C E (C) School



Physical Restraint Policy

Adopted by Governors: Nov 2009

Reviewed: Feb 2013
Jun 2016

Next Review: Jun 2019

(This policy should be read in the light of other policies, especially Equal Opportunities Policy, Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy and the Code of Conduct)

An effective school Behaviour Policy should secure an orderly atmosphere in which effective teaching and learning can take place. There may, however, be rare occasions on which school staff will need to use “reasonable force” in order to control or restrain pupils.

It is the responsibility of the person who had to restrain the pupil to immediately report it to the Headteacher.

TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF ARE AUTHORISED TO USE “REASONABLE FORCE”

What is “reasonable force”?

The use of force is illegal if physical circumstances do not warrant it. The force used should always be the minimum needed.

In what situations does the guidance apply?

- When a pupil attacks a member of staff
- When a pupil attacks another pupil
- When a pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of, committing deliberate damage or vandalism
- When a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects (for example in the classroom or on the playground or sports field)
- When a pupil absconds from class or tries to leave the school, especially where the child could be at risk if not kept there
- When a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom
- When a pupil is seriously disrupting a lesson
- Where the actions or behaviour of a pupil may threaten to undermine whole school discipline

Application of force is allowed where staff may need to

- Physically interpose between pupils
- Block a pupil’s path
- Hold (but never round the neck or collar)
- Push
- Pull
- Lead a pupil by the hand or arm
- Shepherd a pupil away by placing your hand in the centre of the back
- In extreme cases (such as self-defence) – more restrictive holds

But you should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury

We do not:

- Hold round the neck
- Restrict a pupil's ability to breathe
- Slap
- Punch
- Kick
- Throw objects
- Twist or force limbs against a joint
- Hold or pull by hair or ear
- Hold face down on the ground
- Touch in a way that might be considered indecent

Recording

The Headteacher or Senior Teacher is responsible for interviewing a member of staff who has restrained a pupil and recording the incident in writing as soon as possible. The report should include:

- The names of everyone involved, time and place and names of any other witnesses
- How the incident began and progressed, with details of behaviour
- What everyone said, as near as possible
- What steps were taken to defuse the situation
- The degree of force used, how applied and for how long

General advice

- It is better to defuse than intervene
- Be sure that you are aware of the Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policy
- Always send for the help of the Headteacher or a colleague as soon as possible (e.g. send a reliable child to the office)
- Talk over the episodes with the Headteacher and colleagues, find out what you think might have been a good response in difficult situations. A culture of openness is essential. Don't hide behind a notion of professionalism; it is unprofessional not to report incidents
- Make sure you are aware of principle of reasonable adjustment for pupils with disabilities

On breaking up a fight

- Get rid of non-combatants; violence thrives on witnesses
- Don't put yourself at risk; alert colleagues, enlist their help
- Assess a situation first
- Be calm, don't take it personally
- Use verbal intervention first
- Think about surprise and noise as more useful than force; a whistle/bell may be much more effective than another body in the fray

On misuse of dangerous materials

- Minimise the number of people who may be affected. Protect yourself as much as possible.

On vandalism

- Identify the perpetrators. Consider whether the police could then deal with them better

On stopping a pupil absconding

- If you are considering stopping a pupil leaving the premises, think what you will do next; you cannot lock a student in a room.

THIS POLICY DOES NOT IN ANY WAY AUTHORISE THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT