

Please refer to this policy alongside the behaviour policy, safeguarding policy, SEND policy and the DFE Use of reasonable force guidance document (2013)

Introduction We are justly proud of the way our pupils conduct themselves. However, it is important that clear guidelines exist for those few occasions when pupils behave in such a way that the use of force by staff may be necessary. Situations involving decisions about whether to use force to control or restrain a pupil can occur in any school. Both using force and deciding not to do so can entail significant risks for pupils and staff. Establishing a clear school policy, based on the DFE document 'Use of reasonable force' is therefore an important part of minimising these risks.

What is reasonable force? The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed. Schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. 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 out of a classroom. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention. School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

Who can use reasonable force? Physical intervention should always be used as a last resort. However, there are occasions when it is appropriate and all teachers and any other person who the Headteacher has authorised to have control and charge of pupils (teaching assistants, learning mentors, lunchtime supervisors) do have, via Section 10 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006, the legal power to use reasonable force to:

- Prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

In a school, force is used for two main purposes - to control pupils or to restrain them. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

At this school, we do not give authorisation to volunteers to use such force.

When can reasonable force be used?

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Schools cannot:

- use force as a punishment - it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

The use of force must take account of any particular special educational need and or disability that a pupil might have. Under the Disability Discrimination Act, schools have a key duty not to treat a disabled pupil less favourably and must take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage to those who are not disabled.

Minimising the need to use force We do all we can to create a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require using force. We are committed to using Relationships and Health education to teach children how to manage their feelings and behaviour. This has been planned using the RHE curriculum, the EEF Social and Emotional learning approaches alongside support through small group and individual engagement in the Thrive programme. Risk assessments and positive handling plans will be created for individual pupils as appropriate.

Deciding whether to use force Staff should only use force when the potential consequences of not intervening were sufficiently serious to justify considering use of force; the chances of achieving the desired result by other means were low; and the risks associated with not using force outweighed those of using force. Staff will be kept informed by the Headteacher and SENCO about how to deal with pupils who present particular risks to themselves or others. If staff suspect that a pupil is carrying a weapon, although they have the powers to search the pupil without their consent, it is likely to minimise the risk to staff and others if the Police are called to carry out the search.

Using force It is important to only use the minimum amount of force necessary to achieve the desired result. *Staff are advised to:*

- give a clear oral warning to the pupil that force may have to be used
- stay calm, do not over react
- avoid being alone with the pupil. Instead call for assistance and as far as possible, do not use force unless or until another responsible adult is present to give support
- report the incident to the Headteacher ASAP and complete a report form
- complete the school's accident procedures if anyone was hurt in the incident
- complete the LA violent incident form if anyone was hurt in the incident
- consult your line manager, professional association/Trade Union of any concerns

Staff should not:

- put themselves at risk of harm or of false allegation
- attempt to restrain a pupil when you are emotionally dysregulated
- use unreasonable force or that which is likely to injure a pupil

Staff training This will be provided by the Local Authority Family Services and is likely to be in the form of Team Teach or be provided by other approved providers such as REACT.

Recording and reporting incidents Incidents will be recorded using the Bound and Numbered book, an ABC form may be completed alongside this to help identify triggers for the behaviour. The Headteacher will report incidents to the child's parents. The Headteacher must not report the incident to a parent if it appears that doing so would be likely to result in significant harm to the pupil. In such cases, the incident must be reported to the Local Authority Family Services.

Post-incident support The Headteacher and SENCO will work with those involved as appropriate, including meeting immediate physical needs and rebuilding relationships and ensuring lessons are learned from the incident.

Complaints and allegations All complaints about the use of force should be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated. This would need to be reported to the school following the complaints procedure available on the school website.

Safeguarding statement

Child Protection Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families, education staff have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect. Where it appears to a member of staff that a child may have been abused, the school is required, as part of local child protection procedures, to report their concerns to social services immediately. The Headteacher (and Assistant Headteacher in her absence) is the designated teacher responsible for child protection. The Chair of Governors is the designated governor responsible for child protection.

UK General Data Protection Regulation This school collects data in order to meet its statutory responsibilities for the provision of education to children in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act 2002 and The School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Some of this data will be shared with Wakefield Metropolitan District Council and may be shared with other agencies that are involved in the health and welfare of school children. Please be aware that personal data is also covered by the UK General Data Protection Regulation 2018. Please see the school's Data Protection policy.

Please see the privacy notice on the school website for more information on how your data is used.

Safe recruitment and selection of staff.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All posts are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, therefore all convictions must be declared. Providing false information is an offence. Appointed staff, governors, regular volunteers and trainees have identity, qualification and criminal records bureau checks and have been successfully cleared to work with children.

Inclusion

This policy will be applied to all pupils. We welcome our general responsibilities under the Disability Equality Duty by promoting equal opportunities, eliminating discrimination and improving access to learning for disabled people. In order to comply with the requirements of the DDA 2006 we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure all stakeholders understand and can follow this policy. We will actively seek to remove any barriers to learning and participation that may hinder or exclude individuals or groups of pupils.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Headteacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request. It will be reviewed appropriate to new legislation or to the needs of the school.

Signed
Headteacher

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Chair of Governors