



# Physical restraint policy

## Introduction

- 1) The academy is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for children's safety and welfare deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, and use physical intervention only as a last resort.
- 2) At all times academy staff will follow the guidance in this policy and any additional Department for Education guidance. Staff should refer to the DfE publication, 'Use of reasonable force' July 2013<sup>1</sup> for further information.
- 3) Members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom.
- 4) The power to use reasonable force also extends to people whom the Principal/Headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils, such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying pupils on a school-organised visit.
- 5) Principals/Headteachers and authorised academy staff may also use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search without consent for 'prohibited items'.<sup>2</sup>
- 6) The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the adult concerned and should always depend on individual circumstances.

## Definition of reasonable force

- 7) 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.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

<sup>2</sup> Prohibited items: knives and weapons; alcohol, illegal drugs; stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers; fireworks; pornographic images; any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.



- 8) 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 pupil needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 9) 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- 10) 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.
- 11) 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.
- 12) 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.

### **When can adults use reasonable force?**

- 13) Adults may use reasonable force to:
  - a) remove disruptive children from the classroom when they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
  - b) prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts an academy event, trip or visit
  - c) 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
  - d) prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight
  - e) restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.
- 14) Adults may not use force as a punishment; this would be unlawful.

### **Unacceptable use of force**

- 15) The following techniques must not be used as they present an unacceptable risk when used on children and young people:
  - a) the 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing



- b) the 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest
- c) the 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

### **Staff Training**

- 16) The Principal/Headteacher must consider whether members of staff or other adults require any additional training to carry out their responsibilities and should consider the needs of pupils when doing so.

### **Record keeping and informing parents when force has been used on their child**

- 17) Whenever a member of staff uses force, this must be recorded in the academy behaviour record and be reported to the Academy Council or Rapid Improvement Board through the academy report.
- 18) Parents must always be informed in writing when force has been used on their child.

### **Complaints**

- 19) All complaints about the use of force must be investigated thoroughly and speedily in line with the academy's complaints procedure.