



Physical Restraint: Guidance & Procedures

This document is informed by: The use of reasonable force; advice for Headteacher, staff and governing bodies (July 2013) which all schools and academies must have regard to.

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1 Introduction

The Education Act 1996 recognised that, in certain circumstances, necessary reasonable force to control or restrain a student can be used by the Headteacher or by other staff authorised by the Headteacher.

- 1.1 National guidance reinforces the fact by establishing the power of teachers and other staff who have lawful control or charge of pupils to use reasonable force in order to prevent a pupil causing injury to themselves or others or causing damage to property.
- 1.2 Whilst always a last resort, and to be avoided wherever possible, staff must neither feel that they must make a physical intervention nor feel that they will be unsupported if they do.

2 Application

All staff must be aware that any physical intervention including use of force may lead to a complaint, including an allegation of assault. This guidance aims to support their defence in that staff who follow this guidance, use a proportionate response to a situation and do not resort to an emotional or angry response are in a very strong position to demonstrate reasonableness.

- 2.1 Pupils and parents need to be aware that, in the very rare circumstances described, the Academy does have the right to use reasonable and proportionate physical restraint and may do so quite legally. This guidance is a key document in refuting any complaint from a parent or pupil.
- 2.2 The overriding purpose of this guidance is to protect young people from coming to harm as a result of their own, or another pupil's, behaviour whilst also providing adequate protection to members of staff.

3. Procedures

3.1 Outline

The use of any degree of force is only lawful if it can be regarded as reasonable in the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour. Where force is applied it should reduce rather than provoke further aggressive reaction. If a person has done only what he or she honestly and instinctively believes was necessary at the time to protect themselves or others, then this would be potent evidence that only reasonable force was used.

3.2 Number of staff

The number of staff involved should be the minimum necessary to control / restrain the student whilst minimising risks of injuries to all parties.

3.3 Appropriate Use of Physical Intervention

The circumstances where physical intervention, as a last resort, may be appropriate are:

- Self defence
- Risk of injury or significant damage to property
- Where there is risk of harm to self or others.

3.4 Nature of Physical Intervention

The nature of the intervention, which must be proportionate will be based on the Steps programme and may include:

- Escorting, guiding, shepherding away from a situation to a certain place
- Holding with a degree of force in relation to the level of cooperation and compliance being displayed by the young person
- Restrictive physical intervention where reasonable force is applied to prevent movement or mobility or to disengage from dangerous or harmful physical contact

3.5 Inappropriate use of physical intervention

Staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.

The following should not be used:

- Pushing or pulling the student.

- Holding round neck or collar or in any other way, which might restrict airway or circulation.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against the joint.
- Holding by hair or ears.
- Holding face down to the ground.
- Ground recovery holds should not be employed by any member of staff without appropriate training.

3.6 Risk Assessment

In a very small number of cases, a risk assessment linked to the challenging behaviour of a student may be required which includes references to restraint. This will link to an agreed behaviour management plan which will be communicated to the pupil, parents and staff.

3.7 Authorisation and Training

Due to the completely unpredictable nature of events which may lead to physical restraint being required and the size of the Academy site, the Headteacher will authorise named members of staff to take appropriate action, including as a last resort physical intervention, to deal proportionately with a situation.

No member of staff should feel that they should place themselves at unnecessary risk or take an action they do not feel competent or trained to take.

3.8 SLT Responsibilities

At least two members of the senior management team will attend relevant training on physical intervention. AS necessary, training will also be made available to other members of staff through attendance at LA courses or by use of staff training days. An up to date record of staff authorised to use physical intervention strategies should be kept by the Headteacher along with a record of any training provided. (Amended September 2020) The staff authorised to use physical restraint include members of the SLT (where trained) and those already trained who work in the The Hive.

3.9 Recording and Reporting Procedures

All incidents must be reported and recorded using the incident forms held in the main office. Any witness statements must be gathered and stored with this record. Parents / carers should be informed of any incident as soon as possible after the event. All staff and pupils involved in an event should be provided with support (time to collect themselves before continuing their duties and supervision as necessary). Staff and pupils must have access to a first aider if there is any sign of injury. All injuries must be recorded and reported following the correct medical incident reporting procedures. All records are reviewed regularly by the Headteacher, senior leader or Director of Primary Education. If the report has been completed by the Headteacher then this is reviewed by the Director of Primary Education.

Any concerns regarding inappropriate use of physical intervention should be reported to the Headteacher as part of our safeguarding procedures, who would report to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as appropriate. Should concerns be around the Headteacher then these should be reported to Anglian Learning Trust Safeguarding Lead, Camilla Saunders, who would report to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

3.10 Monitoring

The use of physical intervention must be monitored and this information used for improving Academy approaches to managing behaviour. Information must be provided to the IEB on a termly basis and to the Trust annually. All injuries must be recorded and reported as part of this monitoring process.

If a pupil is displaying difficult behaviour, staff must attempt to de-escalate the situation by following the principles of the Steps approach - Step On and Step Up. (see also the Behaviour Policy). Where a support and risk management plan is in place, it should be adhered to and any incidence of the plan not working should lead to a review of the plan.

Steps is a therapeutic approach to positive behaviour management. The Steps approach is based on the following principles:

- A shared focus on inclusion of all children and young people within their educational settings.
- A shared set of values and beliefs.
- Open and shared communication.
- A shared commitment to diversion and de-escalation.
- Shared risk management.
- Shared reparation, reflection and restoration.

4. Searching Pupils and Their Belongings

At Howard Primary Academy, it is highly unlikely that it would be necessary to search a pupil or their belongings. A search would only take place where failure to do so might put the welfare of the pupil or others at risk. The grounds for the search must be explained to the pupil concerned. The pupil involved, and a witness, should be present during a search of personal belongings.

5. Recording and reporting incidents of difficult behaviour

The expectation is that a pupil will amend and modify their behaviour in response to adult intervention. In this case it is not necessary to complete an incident/accident form.

Difficult behaviour must be recorded, and shared with the SLT, when any of the following behaviours are evident:

- Verbal abuse of others (eg: pupils, staff, visitors).
- Physical injury to self/others or damage to property.
- Bullying/e-bullying and/or racist incidents.

In addition, where “step-on” physical intervention is used in response to a behaviour incident, this will be logged and responded to using a risk management plan.

All staff have a responsibility to record incidents of difficult behaviour.

If another pupil or member of staff has been injured during an incident, this must be recorded on the incident/accident form

Should Restrictive Physical Intervention be used this should be recorded in the bound and numbered book.

Reports will be collated by Headteacher or senior leaders who will then analyse the data and provide monitoring and evaluation reports to share at SLT and the IEB. It is imperative to:

1. Monitor and keep a record of all documented incidents.
2. Liaise with and support colleagues regarding risk reduction planning.
3. Keep parents informed of any action taken and involve them in the ongoing support strategies implemented for their child.

At times, it may be necessary to implement particular strategies for individual pupils. The relevant information will be recorded on the risk reduction plans and where a child has SEND will be evidenced in their EHCP.

Difficult behaviour occurs for several reasons. There are always reasons why children display such behaviour and it is important that all staff recognise the influence of their own response and the impact of how they respond to pupils' behaviour. It is also important to work to establish the triggers for difficult behaviour and to understand the underlying causes of the behaviour.

6. Conclusion

It should be very rare that incidents requiring physical intervention occur at the Academy but, in order to ensure the safety of all members of the Academy community, it is essential that all staff, students and parents are provided with this clear framework within which the rights of all Academy members can be protected.

