

**EXCELLENT EDUCATION ACADEMIES TRUST (EEAT)  
CULLODEN PRIMARY SCHOOL  
RESTRAINT POLICY**

**Reissued: December 2013**

**To be reviewed: December 2014**

## **1. Introduction**

This policy is for the guidance of when it is appropriate to use physical force in order to control or restrain dangerous or destructive behaviour.

## **2. Reasonable force**

2.1 In unusual or extreme situations staff may have to use reasonable force to control dangerous or destructive behaviour particularly when pupils are at risk of injury to themselves or at risk of causing injury to others. We believe in these situations that the care, welfare, safety and security of pupils should always come first and the use of reasonable force should be seen only in this context.

2.2 The Executive Principal and Leadership Team will ensure they have appropriate training on non-violent crisis intervention and physical restraint. It is the responsibility of the assistant headteacher for inclusion to ensure that any specific staff that have control or charge of an at-risk pupil is given guidance or training in this area.

2.3 There is no legal definition of reasonable force. What is deemed to be reasonable always depends on the circumstances.

There are two considerations:

- The use of force can only be regarded as reasonable if the incident warrants it. Force cannot be warranted if it is used to prevent a pupil committing a trivial misdemeanour or is used in a situation that could be resolved without the use of force.
- The degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident. Any force should be kept to a minimum. It should bear a relationship to the age, sex and understanding of the pupil.

## **3. Situations where reasonable force may be appropriate:**

3.1 There are a number of situations where adults may use reasonable force. Physical intervention to manage pupils should be seen as a last resort, to be used only where:

- it is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury to a pupil;
- there is a developing risk of injury or significant damage to property by a pupil;
- where a pupil is compromising the safety and security of the rest of the class, in particular extreme circumstances;
- a pupil is disrupting the smooth workings of the school (including preventing other pupils from learning) and all other methods of dealing with the situation have failed;
- any physical interventions undertaken will be the minimal required to achieve the required outcome;
- where there is no other realistic and timely way of resolving the problem.

3.2 Examples of these situations are:

- when a pupil is putting him/herself at risk;
- when a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil;
- where pupils are fighting;
- when a pupil is engaged in or is about to commit an act of deliberate vandalism or a criminal offence;
- when a pupil is causing danger through rough play or misuse of dangerous objects or materials;
- when a pupil is acting in an unsafe manner where they might hurt him/herself;
- where a pupil may be at risk if not kept within the school, e.g. attempting to climb over the fence.

#### **4. Intervention:**

4.1 Intervention should not immediately involve the use of restraint or the application of force unless it is an emergency. In most situations it is possible to apply strategies to manage behaviour to prevent the situation developing into a crisis where physical intervention is the only solution. Physical intervention using force should not be a substitute for good behaviour management.

4.2 There are two kinds of physical intervention:

- *planned* (e.g. where a pupil is refusing to leave a classroom and physical intervention is planned, after other options have been exhausted)
- *quick response* to an urgent situation (e.g. when a pupil is about to strike another pupil)

#### **5. Planned physical intervention**

This should be carried out, as far as possible, by the most senior member of staff available (normally the Executive Principal or a member of the Leadership Team) who has received the necessary training.

Less senior staff who have received the relevant training may also be directed by senior staff to carry out, or support, a planned physical intervention.

The intervention should be considered in advance of its implementation and should be proportionate to the situation it is being used to resolve.

#### **6. Physical intervention which occurs in response to an urgent situation**

6.1 This should be carried out, as far as possible, by the most senior member of staff available (normally the Executive Principal or a member of the Leadership Team) who has received the necessary training.

However, the nature of urgent situations means that, at times, the person who needs to take action may not have had the necessary training and there will be no timely opportunity to consult with senior staff. In these situations, any adult within the school is authorised to take those actions, which are seen to be appropriate at the time that the actions are taken.

The intervention should be proportionate to the situation it is being used to resolve.

6.2 If restraint becomes necessary, staff should continue to attempt to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident and tell them that the physical contact or restraint will cease as soon as it is no longer necessary. Staff should remain calm and

not give the impression they have lost their temper or are punishing the pupil. Two members of staff should stay with the pupil until s/he has calmed down. A member of the Leadership Team should be sought immediately.

#### **7. Physical intervention can take several forms:**

- physically interposing between pupils;
- blocking a pupil's path;
- holding;
- pushing;
- pulling;
- leading the pupil by the hand or arm;
- shepherding a pupil by placing a hand in the centre of their back;
- in extreme circumstances using more restrictive holds and staff would normally be specially trained for this.

#### **8. Force which is not appropriate:**

- holding a pupil by the neck, collar or in any way that might restrict breathing;
- slapping, punching or kicking a pupil;
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- tripping up a pupil;
- holding a pupil by his/her hair or ear;
- holding a pupil face down on the ground;
- a hold or touch that is considered indecent.

Staff should always try and deal with a situation through other strategies first. Possible consequences of intervening physically may increase the disruption or provoke an attack and need to be carefully evaluated. Physical intervention to enforce compliance is likely to be increasingly inappropriate with older pupils. Staff will not use any force as part of a punishment.

#### **9. Use of a risk assessments:**

Individual risk assessments will be made where it is known that force is more likely to be necessary to restrain a particular pupil, such as a pupil who's SEN and/or disability is associated with extreme behaviour. An individual risk assessment may be required for pupils who's SEN and/or disabilities are associated with:

- a. communication impairments that make them less responsive to verbal communication;
- b. physical disabilities and/or sensory impairments;
- c. conditions that makes them fragile, such as haemophilia, brittle bone syndrome or epilepsy; or
- d. dependence on equipment such as wheelchairs, breathing or feeding tubes.

#### **10. Reporting:**

It is important that a detailed, contemporaneous written report by all involved be made of any incident where force is used. Incidents should be reported immediately to the Executive Principal and/or Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion. An incident report form needs to be completed and parent/carers informed. If physical intervention using force becomes necessary, it is essential to seek assistance from colleagues who can

independently support the intervention, wherever this is possible, to control the environment by removing onlookers and to verify the nature of the intervention.

### **11. Complaints:**

11.1 Any allegation of inappropriate restraint or excessive force will initially be considered under child protection procedures. The designated person for child protection is the Executive Principal, or a member of the Leadership Team. They will refer any allegations to the child protection advice line.

11.2 Complaints regarding the application of force or the failure to restrain may be the subject of an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures, child protection procedures or by the police. In these cases it will be necessary to determine whether the degree of force was reasonable in the circumstances. It will also need to take account of this policy, whether it had been followed and whether the pupil suffered significant harm.

### **12. Physical contact in other circumstances:**

12.1 Some physical contact may be necessary and proper to demonstrate exercises or techniques during sports or physical education. It is also proper in the administration of first aid.

Young pupils or those with special educational needs and disabilities may require physical prompts to help or encourage where they may be wary of initiating activity. Usually care programmes will address any physical contact required as part of a personal care package. For pupils with physical or learning disabilities this may include intimate care for example, helping a child change dress or undress where that is required in school and will always be done by a member of the same sex. Touching may also be appropriate when a pupil is in distress and needs comfort. This must be the result of a staff member's own professional judgement. There may be some pupils where touching is unwelcome due to cultural background or abuse. Physical contact becomes increasingly open to question as pupils near and reach puberty. Staff should bear in mind that innocent and well intentioned physical contact can be misconstrued. Staff are strongly advised to document such occurrences so that it is obvious that a judgement has been made if challenged.

### **13. Incident report from:**

The incident report form is an appendix to this policy.

14. This policy has been developed following reference to:  
DFE 'Use of reasonable force' July 2013, Tower Hamlets LA Guidance and Advice on Non-Violent Crisis Intervention; Ian Findlay, December 2006, The use of force to control or restrain pupils by the department for children, schools and families 2010 and is linked to the CPSA behaviour policy.

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