



Ashford School and Ashford Friars Preparatory School

Physical Restraint Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard the well-being of pupils and staff when an incident requires the use of physical intervention. Its intention is to develop and encourage consistent and safe practices in the use of physical restraint. Staff should not hesitate to act in an emergency provided they follow this guidance; however, they should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience.

Rationale

Whilst wishing to resolve serious incidents without the use of physical intervention, the Local Governing Body and staff understand that there are some situations in which the use of physical intervention may be the appropriate course of action. As outlined below, staff are encouraged to avoid this eventuality if at all possible. However, the right of teachers to use reasonable force is laid down in the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Revised guidelines (August 2010) clarify the following -

- Force may be used to prevent pupils committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others or damaging property
- Force may be used to maintain good order and discipline
- Force may not be used as a form of punishment
- Incidents where force is used should be recorded and parents informed
- Schools should not adopt a 'no-contact' policy
- Teachers have a duty of care to pupils but are not required to put their own safety at risk

Definition

Physical Restraint is the positive application of force in order to protect/prevent a child from causing injury to him/herself or others or seriously damaging property.

Injury means 'significant injury'; this would include: actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of, or injury to, themselves or others by wilful or reckless behaviour, and self-poisoning.

It must be shown that on any occasion where physical restraint is used there were strong indicators that if immediate action had not been taken, injury or the committing of a criminal act would have followed.

Procedures

Guidance during an Incident

In any application of physical restraint, the **minimum** reasonable force should be used to calm down the situation. Help should be summoned from colleagues; other pupils should never be involved in restraint.

The pupil should be approached calmly but firmly. Where possible, explain the consequences of refusing to stop the behaviour and continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident; it should be made clear that the physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and

measured approach is needed and a teacher/practitioner must never give the impression that she/he has lost his/her temper, or is acting out of anger or frustration - or to punish the pupil.

The method of restraint employed must use the **minimum force** for the **minimum time** and must observe the following requirements:

Restraint must NOT:

- involve hitting the pupil
- involve deliberately inflicting pain on the pupil
- restrict the pupil's breathing
- involve contact with sexually sensitive areas

During any incident the restrainer should:

- offer verbal reassurance to the pupil
- cause the minimum level of restriction of movement
- reduce the danger of any accidental injury

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff:

- physically interposing between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- holding
- pushing
- pulling
- leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back or (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds

Some Dos and Don'ts

Do:

- be aware of any feelings of anger
- summon help
- continue to talk to the pupil in a calm way
- provide a soft surface if possible
- be aware of any accessories worn by you or the pupil
- hold the pupil's arms by his/her sides

Don't:

- try to manage on your own
- stop talking even if the pupil does not reply
- straddle the pupil
- push arms up the back
- touch the pupil near the throat or head
- put pressure on joints

Recording Incidents

It is important that a written report is kept on any occasion when force is used; the member of staff concerned should advise the Head or a senior member of staff immediately following the incident and provide a written report as soon as possible afterwards.

The report should include:

- the name(s) of the pupil(s) involved
- when and where the incident took place
- the name(s) of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident
- the reason that force was necessary
- how the incident began and progressed
- the pupil's response, and the outcome of the incident
- details of any injury suffered by the pupil/another pupil/member of staff, and any damage to property

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from their professional association or a senior colleague when writing a report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Physical Restraint Log Book (Boarding)

Boarding Staff Handbook

Date Document Updated	Document Updated by	Location of Saved File
28/1/11	Yvonne Howard (Deputy Head)	
Date Document Reviewed	Document Reviewed by	Date of Next Review
		September 2011