Saffron Walden County High School

Policy and Guidelines on Physical Restraint/ Intervention

Date ratified: September 2015

This policy is regularly reviewed following recommended guidelines
Policy and Guidelines on Physical Restraint/ Intervention

Definition of physical restraint

Physical restraint is a form of physical contact in which one person imposes his or her will upon another often, but not always, by the use of superior physical strength. It is not a form of corporal punishment which is not allowed in any circumstances, nor should it be confused with other means of influencing students' behaviour through physical contact, such as the use of physical prompts to assist a child in acquiring particular motor or other skills.

In many situations involving physical restraint it is not possible to provide definitive guidance covering every eventuality and those authorised to use it will be expected to exercise their own judgement and to act reasonably.

Who can apply physical restraint?

The legislation gives statutory power to use force to any person who, in relation to a student, is a member of staff at any school at which education is provided for the student.

The following groups of staff are permanently authorised to use physical restraint:

- any teacher who works at the school
- any other person who, with the authority of the Headteacher, has lawful control or charge of pupils for whom education is being provided at the school
- any paid member of staff whose job involves supervising pupils including teaching assistants, learning mentors and lunchtime supervisors

People who the Headteacher has temporarily authorised to have control or charge of pupils could include

- paid members of staff whose job does not normally involve supervising students (such as catering or premises related staff)
- unpaid volunteers (such as parents accompanying students on school organised visits).

In the case of these groups the Headteacher should inform the people concerned of their responsibilities and ensure that they understand what authorisation entails, and keep an up-to-date record of these people.

Paid staff and volunteers who are not authorised to have control or charge of students (either by nature of their job or temporary authorisation) do not have statutory power to use force. However, section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 does not remove the common law right of any citizen in an emergency to use reasonable force in self-defence, to prevent another person from being injured or his property from being damaged. Any member of staff or volunteer has that right.

The Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 authorises the Headteacher and staff authorised by him to search a student for a weapon without their consent if they have reasonable suspicion that there is a weapon with the student or in his or her possessions. Persons authorised by the Headteacher to search for weapons may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for exercising that power.
Where physical restraint can be used

Authorised staff can use physical restraint whenever they are on school premises and in charge of students, and on other occasions when they have lawful control of students on behalf of the school, such as on school trips or other out of school activities.

When the use of physical restraint might be appropriate

Physical restraint can be used to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property
- engaging in behaviour which is prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the categories above. Staff should always act within the School's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of students during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in loco parentis and should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure students’ safety and well being. Failure to physically restrain a student who is subsequently injured or injures another, could, in certain circumstances, lead to an accusation of negligence. At the same time staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

De-escalation strategies

The following strategies may help to de-escalate a situation and avoid the use of physical restraint:

- calm communication throughout an incident using non-threatening verbal and body language
- seek colleagues’ support
- do not leave the student alone
- ensure that the student does not feel trapped
- offer the student the chance to move away from the incident
- offer the student the opportunity to sit down and to have a drink of water
- offer to call a member of staff well known to the student
- offer to call a friend or family member to help to defuse the situation
How to apply physical restraint

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint. However, there is no absolute definition of this, given that what constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the student to whom it is being applied. As a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a student's path, or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the student and another student or object. However, in many circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary.

In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate or effective. Physical restraint is a last resort.
A list of staff trained in basic restraint techniques is attached to this document.

If it is necessary to apply restraint:

**DO**
- Tell the student what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- involve another member of staff if possible
- tell the student what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- use simple and clear language
- hold limbs above a major joint if possible eg. above the elbow
- relax your restraint in response to the student's compliance

**DON'T**
- act in temper (involve another member of staff if you have lost control of your emotions)
- involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the student
- involve other students in the restraint
- touch or hold the student in sexual areas
- twist or force limbs back against a joint
- bend fingers or pull hair
- hold the student in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing eg. around the neck
- slap, punch or kick
- trip up the student

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the student to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment.

Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff would be justified in taking any action (consistent with the principle of using the minimum force required to achieve the desired result). Such situations could include preventing a student running off the pavement onto a busy road or hitting someone with a dangerous object such as a glass bottle or hammer.
**Actions after an incident**

Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the student. A member of SLT should be informed as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. It is important that colleagues who have been involved in such situations are offered support, and are kept informed of subsequent decisions concerning the student.

A member of SLT should always be involved in debriefing the student and, as well as talking through the situation with the student, consideration should be given to whether or not the incident merits the involvement of outside agencies in addition to Pastoral staff and the SENCO. If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural IEP or a Pastoral Support Programme (PSP), which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies delivered by the support services.

**All incidents should be recorded in writing with 24 hours of the incident on a Restraint Incident Form (attached)** and should include the following:

- name of student
- date, time and location of incident
- staff involved both directly and as witnesses *(any witnesses should provide a signed statement and hand to the member of SLT investigating the incident)*
- other pupils involved
- nature of the incident
- events leading to the use of force
- any de-escalation or other strategies used to minimise the need for the use of force
- reasons for using force
- description of force used (type, duration)
- subsequent actions, including those related to the welfare of the student and staff involved
- any injury suffered by staff or students and any first aid and/ or medical attention required
- information given to other staff, parents and external agencies

A copy of the Restraint Incident Form is attached to this policy.

A member of SLT will contact the parents as soon as possible after an incident to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.
Dealing with complaints

Parents and students have a right to complain about actions taken by school staff, including the use of force, and will be dealt with using the School's Complaints Procedure.
In the event of a formal complaint to the school it would be for the Headteacher and the Governors to decide whether the use and degree of force was reasonable in the circumstances. In doing so they would be likely to take account of the school's policy on the use of force and whether that had been followed. In the event of a complaint to the police about unreasonable use of force the allegation may be referred to the local Children's Safeguarding Board. The school policy and the degree to which it had been followed will be at the core of any investigation.

Colleagues trained in Unisafe Level 2 Physical De-escalation Techniques:

Sally Ogilvy: Science
Grant Douglas: Art
Penny Banks: Pastoral
Polly Lankester: SLT/ Humanities
Sam Lock: Humanities
Mark Vaughan-Shaw: SLT/ Languages
Nick Lee: Site Team
USE OF FORCE TO CONTROL OR RESTRAIN PUPILS:
INCIDENT RECORD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details of pupil or pupils on whom force was used by a member of staff (name, class):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date, time and location of incident:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names of staff involved (directly or as witnesses):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details of other pupils involved (directly or as witnesses), including whether any of the pupils involved were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social reasons:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of incident by the staff involved, including any attempts to de-escalate and warnings given that force might be used:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for using force and description of force used:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any injury suffered by staff or pupils and any first aid and/or medical attention required:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for making a record of the incident:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up, including post-incident support, and any disciplinary action against pupils:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any information about the incident shared with staff not involved in it and external agencies:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the incident and any views they have expressed:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has any complaint been lodged (details should be recorded here)?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report compiled by:</th>
<th>Report countersigned by (SLT):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name and role:</td>
<td>Name and role:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature:</td>
<td>Signature:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>