

# Summerfields

PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Physical Restraint of Pupils Policy

**Reviewed: December 2018**

**Next Review: December 2019**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Allman'.

Signed:



**SUMMERFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**POLICY ON THE PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF PUPILS**

*All the governors and staff of Summerfields Primary School are committed to sharing a common objective to help keep the children and staff of the school community safe. We ensure that consistent effective safeguarding procedures are in place in order to support families, children and staff of the school.*

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Equalities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy

**RATIONALE:**

All at Summerfields Primary School start from a premise that staff should work positively and confidently with children and find the least intrusive way possible to support, empower and keep children safe. The foundation of good practice in working with children should be:

- Building relationships of trust and understanding
- Understanding triggers and finding solutions
- If incidents do occur, defusing the situation and/or distracting the child wherever possible

However, very occasionally there will be times when staff feel that they need to intervene physically to keep children safe (or to keep staff safe). We expect staff to be skilled and confident in finding the best ways to keep children safe; ways that promote their rights, respect their dignity and equip them for the future.

**AIMS:**

The aim of this policy is to identify types of incidents that may require reasonable force, to clarify the term "reasonable force" and who might use it.

**RESPONSIBILITY AND MONITORING:**

The Head Teacher and Governors will review this policy regularly and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

Signed:

Date:

## GUIDELINES

### Planning ahead:

- When the school is aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that may require physical control or restraint, it is sensible to plan how to respond if the situation arises. This planning should address:-
  - Managing the pupil and putting together a risk assessment outlining the need for any physical intervention.
  - Involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about what specific action the school might need to take.
  - Briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should take.
  - Ensuring additional support can be summoned if appropriate.
  - Taking medical advice if necessary as to the safest way to hold pupils with specific health needs.
  - Ensuring staff are trained appropriately.

### Positive Touch

"Positive Touch" is a strategy endorsed by the Governing Body. The school defines "touch" as a physical response to trauma, distress and human emotional need that would comfort, protect and enhance secure relationships.

To deny a child physical reassurance is against the needs of the child and their healthy emotional development. For some children a physical response may be an essential way of communicating if there is little or no spoken language, or a sensory impairment that makes communication difficult.

Staff may respond to children in distress or with emotional need, including a need to share happy emotions, with appropriate touch. All staff are aware of the definition of appropriate touch:

- touch that is not invasive, humiliating or causing physical or emotional discomfort
- appropriate touch in order to comfort or congratulate a child may be on specific parts of the body; back, arms, shoulders and hands
- holding a child's hand in accordance with a child's request verbally or non-verbally, is a response to an emotional need. (As shaking hands is a widely used friendly greeting; holding hands a common appropriate parental response to emotional need, it has been deemed appropriate for use in our school.
- younger children seeking comfort and reassurance during separation of their primary carer may require physical contact with an adult in the form of hand-holding or other contact

Staff acknowledge the growing culture that believes it is safer to refrain from any touch due to anxieties that allegations of inappropriate behaviour may be made.

Staff are also aware of, and highly skilled in, the use of other methods of comfort, de-escalation, and the control of undesirable behaviour. However, our staff team believe that providing a good quality emotional environment may sometimes require the use of touch. All staff are aware that they should avoid situations where they are alone with a child, particularly when a child requires physical contact for reassurance or comfort.

Children need to be educated in what constitutes appropriate touch, so that they can recognise the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch. This helps each child to respond appropriately to others and to seek help in threatening situations (such information delivered to children through external visitors eg NSPCC - PANTS initiative).

### **When might reasonable force be necessary?**

To prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following -

- Committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility);
- Injuring themselves or others;
- Causing damage to property (including the pupil's own property);
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere;
- Absconding

This applies when a teacher, or other authorised person, is on the school premises, and when he or she has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned elsewhere eg on a trip or other authorised out of school activity.

Everyone has a right to defend themselves against attack provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so. In an emergency if a pupil is at immediate risk of injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff would be entitled to intervene.

### Authorised Staff

All teachers at the school are allowed to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. Other people may do so provided they have been authorised by the Head Teacher to have control or charge of pupils.

The Head Teacher should identify people, other than teachers, who they wish to authorise to have control or charge of pupils and therefore be able to use force if necessary.

Authorisation may be on a permanent or long-term basis, or short-term specific.

### **Types of incidents**

There are three broad categories of incidents in which reasonable force might be appropriate:-

1. Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury;
2. Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property;
3. Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Some examples

These fall within categories one and two -

- A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- Pupils are fighting;
- A pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property;
- A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- A pupil is running in a corridor in a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident, likely to injure him or herself or others;
- A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school putting them at risk.

These fall within category three-

- A pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom;
- A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

### **What is reasonable force?**

As there is no legal definition of "reasonable force", it will always depend on circumstances.

Always consider -

- Do the circumstances warrant reasonable force...
- Is the degree of force in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent...
- Is the force the minimum needed to achieve the desired result...

Physical force may involve -

- Interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Holding
- Leading a pupil by the arm
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back

### **Procedures**

- If practicable tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if he or she does not;
- Continue to attempt to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident;
- Make it clear that physical restraint or contact will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary;
- At all times teachers should be calm and measured in their approach;
- Teachers should not intervene if an incident may put them at risk of injury;
- If necessary remove other pupils who might be at risk of injury, and summon assistance;
- It should be noted that restraint that deliberately inflicts pain should never be used as it is unlawful to use force as a punishment.

### **Recording incidents**

There should be detailed formal recording of occasions where reasonable force is used, see Annex A.

Parents will be notified.

An evaluation of the restraint will usually take place swiftly afterwards to consider whether the action was lawful and necessary - eg was the action taken to prevent the child injuring themselves or someone else or causing serious harm to property? Could the action be considered as "reasonable" in this particular circumstance? Was it minimum force necessary? Was it proportionate? All of these responses will be used to review/influence future practice as part of a post incident review.

### **Other physical contact**

Physical contact with a pupil may be proper or necessary in order to:-

- Demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons;
- Administer First Aid;
- Provide young children with physical prompts or help;
- Comfort a pupil in distress;
- Reassure very young pupils.

Be aware that some pupils may dislike physical contact of any kind because of their cultural background or because they have been abused.

Annex A

RECORD OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Name of Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Events leading to this incident**

1.1 Where did the incident occur?

1.2 When did the incident occur? Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

1.3 How did the incident begin?

**2. Describe the incident**

2.1 What was happening at the time?

2.1 Was anyone else involved?

2.3 Did anyone else see what happened? (give details)

2.4 What behaviour was the pupil presenting that warranted restraint?

2.5 Was there damage to property or an assault on a pupil or staff during the incident?

2.6 What did you do to try to defuse the situation before using restraint?

2.7

(i) How was the pupil restrained? (describe)  
eg two people escort; one person wrap; spine control

(ii) For how long?

(iii) By how many staff members?

(iv) Were they authorised?

### **3. Injuries sustained**

3.1 Was anyone injured (pupil or staff)? **YES/NO**

If yes, give details

3.2 Was this recorded in the accident book? **YES/NO**

3.3 Was the pupil checked for injuries by a member of staff who was not involved in the incident? **YES/NO**

If yes, by whom?

### **4. Implications for future planning**

4.1 What do you think this behaviour was about?

eg attention; emotional release; task escape mechanism; other

4.2 What would you do differently next time?

4.3 Are other staff aware of the need for a planned response to the pupil? **YES/NO**

## 5. Follow Up Action

5.1 The incident was reported by:

5.2 Parent/Carer was informed by:

Telephone      Letter (with pupil)      Letter (post)      Personally

When were they informed? Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Incident form completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Post held: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_