

Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Document Version	1.0
Date of Last Review	September 2024
Next Review Date	September 2025
Approving Body	Headteacher
Document Author	Chris Leigh

Revisions Log

Date	Pages/Whole Document	Description of Change	Origin of Change (e.g. Routine Update, request for Review)

Forward

This policy is intended to emphasise the need to wherever possible avoid using force or restraint and promote de-escalation techniques but also to provide a clear rationale for when incidents do arise.

Team-teach training is clear in the way staff should look to resolve any issues or incidents in school. In a school advocating relational practice staff should facilitate a low arousal atmosphere that allows for all incidents to be de-escalated. There will though be times when staff need to use physical intervention. Forms of physical intervention may include:

- Escorting
- Guiding
- Using Reasonable Force/Restrain

The school does not require parental consent to use reasonable force.

Reasonable Force

Any use of force must be reasonable, proportionate, and necessary. Force may only be used as a last resort to:

- Prevent a pupil from committing an offence.
- Prevent a pupil causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including themselves, or to the school).
- Prevent a pupil from engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils.

The overarching principle of the policy is that the best interests and safety of our young people should guide all the decisions taken by staff when considering using reasonable force. Reasonable force should:

- Only be used as a last resort.
- Preserve the dignity and respect of all concerned.
- Never be used as a form of punishment or to make a young person behave.
- Never deliberately cause injury or pain.

Staff Authorised to Use Force

Staff will receive updated Team-teach training every 3 years in line with Team-Teach guidance. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take responsibility for ensuring that this training is organised in a timely manner.

Within the school there will be a team of staff who are trained and therefore have permanent authorisation to use reasonable force. These staff are listed in Appendix 1.

Staff with **temporary authorisation** (any member of the teaching or support staff) can also use reasonable force where to not do so would potentially result in a danger to the student, other students and staff or serious damage to property. Staff using this authorisation should always, at the first opportunity, send for a member of staff with permanent authorisation.

Deciding on Whether to Use Force

In deciding whether to use force, a member of staff (whether permanently or temporarily authorised) should be able to demonstrate all of the following conditions co-exist;

- the potential consequences of not intervening are sufficiently serious to justify considering the use of force;
- the chances of achieving a result which maintains the safety of students and staff or prevents a serious breach of school discipline are very low; and
- the risk associated with not using force outweighs those of using force.

When considering whether to use reasonable force staff will be making a dynamic risk assessment before coming to a decision. On occasion it may be possible to discuss this with another member of staff. It is also possible that the member of staff may be working alone and may not have the time to consult with a colleague (e.g. student fight). On such occasions the member of staff will still be making a dynamic risk assessment.

Where a student has identified needs, which may involve restraint or the use of force, there will be a **Risk Reduction Plan** (see Appendix 2). Staff teaching, or those likely to come into contact with such a student, will be made aware of strategies that can be used.

Recording of incidents

- Any incident requiring the use of force or restraint will be recorded in the 'Team-Teach' log (bound and numbered) and on CPOMS.
- All incidents will be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The copy of this log will be held by the Designated Safeguarding Lead on the Bexton Road site.
- The Headteacher and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will review these incidents on a regular basis.
- Any incident where force is used will be reported at the earliest possible opportunity to parents or carers. Advice will be sought from the Local Authority for each incident about any other agencies that the incident may need to be reported to.

Post-incident support

It is likely that if force is used that those staff and students involved in a witnessing the incident may need both physical and emotional support. This could result in individuals needing one of the following types of support :

- Physical injury needing immediate attention.
- Physical injury which does not need immediate attention.
- Restoring relationships.
- Learning lessons from the incident to inform policy and practice.
- Emotional support.

This support may be provided by the school, the Trust or another body external to the organisation. Staff within the school Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for ensuring that all concerned receive the appropriate support.

Review and Update.

This policy has been created making reference to two key documents :

[Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92222/Use_of_reasonable_force_in_schools_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

[DE Circular 13 of 2021 - Restraint and Seclusion.pdf \(education-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/~/media/Department/Policy-Development/2021/03/DE-Circular-13-2021-Restraint-and-Seclusion.pdf)

The school recognises that whilst the policy is reviewed bi-annually it is important that it reflects any key updates or amendments to working practice.

Appendix 1 : Staff with Permanent Authorisation

- Chris Leigh
- Hazel Weigh
- Maxine Roughley
- Emma Hilditch
- Adam Lyons
- Clare Storrow
- Ashleigh Jones
- Jane Murphy
- Philippa McConville
- Nicola Powell
- Mandie McKay
- David Middleton
- Tom Horner
- Andrew Mason
- Ryan Acton
- David Cole

Risk Reduction Plan



Student Name		
Form		
Present		
Date/Time of Meeting		
Location of Meeting		
Teaching Staff		
Context		
	Action Points	RAG Rating
Condition of Return to School		
Further Comments		

Signatures		
Role	Signed	Name
Student		
Parent		
School		
Date		
Provisional Review Date		

RAG Ratings

Very Likely	
Likely	
Unlikely	
Very Unlikely	