



George Mitchell School Physical Intervention Policy Use of force to restrain

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and further guidance issued in 2011 enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances listed below to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence;
- Injuring themselves or others;
- Causing damage to property;
- Engaging in behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline

Summary

- Reasonable force *can* be used to control or restrain students/pupils.
- Physical contact with students/pupils may also be appropriate or necessary in other circumstances.
- No corporal punishment is permitted – i.e. physical contact which is deliberately intended to punish a student/pupil or cause pain, injury or humiliation.
- Pre-emption is preferable: strategies, consultation, support etc.

Who?

- These guidelines apply to all staff, whenever responsible for students, on OR off site.
- They also apply to any person authorised by the Head to have control/charge of students/pupils.

When?

- Reasonable force may be necessary when:
 - A student/pupil attacks a member of staff or another student/pupil
 - Students/Pupils are fighting
 - A student/pupil is engaged in or on the verge of committing deliberate vandalism
 - A student/pupil is causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident
 - A student/pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway
 - A student/pupil absconds from class or tries to leave school (but only if they could be at risk as a result)
 - *A student/pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom**
 - *A student/pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson**

*Some instances of physical restraint become increasingly inappropriate for older students/pupils, and never as a substitute for good behaviour management

How?

- It is permitted to use 'reasonable' force, i.e. force which is proportional and unavoidable.
- It is also dependent on the age, understanding or gender of the student/pupil(s) concerned.
- Staff should always:
 - Maintain a calm approach
 - Explain their action throughout
 - Avoid giving an impression of anger or punishment.
- Sometimes an individual teacher should not act without requesting assistance first. They should, however, remain present, intervening orally

What?

- Physical intervention can take many forms, for example:
 - Physical interposing;
 - Blocking a student/pupil's path;
 - Leading a student/pupil by the hand or arm;
 - Shepherding by placing your hand in the centre of a student/pupil's back;
 - (In extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.
- However, staff should NEVER:
 - Hold a student/pupil by neck or collar or restrict their ability to breathe;
 - Slap, punch, trip or kick a student/pupil;
 - Twist or force a student/pupil's limb(s) against a joint;
 - Hold or pull a student/pupil by the hair or ear;
 - Hold a student/pupil face-down on the ground;
 - Touch or hold a student/pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

Next

- After the incident, staff should complete a detailed report, including:
 - Name, time and location;
 - Witnesses;
 - Reason(s) for the use of physical restraint;
 - Detailed account;
 - Pupil's response/outcome;
 - Injury/damage.

- The school should also contact parents/carers, orally and in writing, as soon as possible.
- The school should be comprehensively prepared to respond to complaints.

Miscellaneous

- Other physical contact is also permitted e.g. demonstration in practical lessons; physical prompts for SEND; comforting students/pupils in distress etc.
- Staff should use their 'professional judgement'.
- Staff should also respect a student/pupil's cultural background when considering physical contact.
- Equally important is an awareness of how easily physical contact can be misconstrued among adolescents in particular.