

Use of Reasonable Force, Restrictive Interventions and Searching and Screening Policy

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1.0 – Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions in school settings - Context and framework

This policy, which closely follows the **Department for Education guidance for schools in England February 2025** and should be read in conjunction with all other policies and not as a standalone.

“The use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions can have a significant impact on the pupils, staff members and parents involved, as well as the wider classroom. However, there are times when the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions will be lawful; for example, to keep individuals and the wider school community safe”

The principal legislation to which this guidance relates is:

- the Education and Inspections Act 2006, especially sections 93 and 93A updated March 2025
- the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated regulations
- the Human Rights Act 1998
- the Equality Act 2010

It will only be in very rare circumstances that reasonable force will ever be necessary, for example if a pupil is likely to seriously harm themselves or likely to seriously harm another person.

The Education Act 1996 forbids corporal punishment, but allows all teachers to use reasonable force in order to prevent a pupil from:

- Harming him/herself or others
- Seriously damaging property
- Committing a criminal offence
- Acting in a way that is counter to maintaining good order and discipline at the school

Using reasonable force

Who can use reasonable force?

All members of Woodlands School staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. Here at Woodlands School, staff who are likely to need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions are adequately trained in its safe and lawful use and in a wide range of preventative strategies.

When auditing formal staff training needs, Woodlands School leaders will ensure that the chosen training reflects the principles of the latest relevant guidance. All employers have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their employees. Therefore, here at Woodlands School we routinely carry out risk assessments to ensure that staff who regularly work alongside pupils where the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions may be required can do so as safely as possible.

Terminology

For clarity, our policy will use the following definitions derived from **DFE Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance (March 2025)**:

Reasonable force: Physical contact by a member of staff on a pupil to control or restrain their actions/movements. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount

of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances. Any use of reasonable force is an example of a restrictive intervention and may or may not involve the use of restraint.

Restrictive interventions: Any planned or reactive action which limits a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom to act independently. Restrictive interventions may include for the purpose of this guidance, references to "schools" means all schools whether maintained, non-maintained or independent (including academy schools and alternative provision academies), maintained nursery schools and pupil referral units. Section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 use of equipment, medication or seclusion. Restrictive interventions may or may not involve the use of reasonable force.

Restraint: A form of restrictive intervention involving direct physical contact and force where the intention is to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. Restraint may also include mechanical or chemical restraint. Restraint may or may not involve the use of force. As noted within the definitions, these terms are not necessarily mutually exclusive categories. For example, depending on the circumstances, if two members of staff briefly physically pull apart two pupils who are fighting, all three definitions could be relevant.

Understanding when to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions

Factors staff might want to consider include:

Is it necessary?

Staff should consider whether there are reasonable alternative ways to manage a situation and achieve the desired outcome. Staff should assess whether the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the consequences of the behaviour that it intends to address. Where possible, staff should communicate with other staff members to understand any broader risks in the environment.

Is it proportionate?

Staff should use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce the relevant risks. Staff should consider the personal circumstances of the pupil such as medical conditions, special educational needs or other vulnerabilities, their characteristics such as age and size, and must consider relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.

Have you considered the pupil's welfare?

Staff should consider the impact on the pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. For example, pupils who have experienced an adverse life event, with diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, past trauma or neglect, communication difficulties, or other needs, may find the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions particularly distressing. Staff should seek to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity. This may include, where possible, considering the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers. Where possible, staff should clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why, and explain what the pupil needs to do. For pupils with difficulties with speech, language and communication, or with English as an additional language, verbal and/or non-verbal strategies should be used to ensure the pupil understands what is happening and has adequate time to process information and respond. Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.

This list of factors is not definitive, and consideration must be given to all other relevant factors. Training on the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions should support staff in

assessing when the need to use force and/or other restrictive interventions is reasonable, which may require a quick decision.

Unacceptable uses of force

School staff must never use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment. Pupils should not be deliberately restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example by covering the mouth and/or nose or applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen. The use of force can be dangerous, particularly where it occurs on the ground. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should release their holds or re-position into a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible. Where needed, the pupil should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. For any form of restraint, including seated and standing, there is a risk of physical and psychological harm, and it should be avoided where possible

1.1– Physical Intervention in School Settings Procedure

Where reasonable force may be required the Head Teacher, or Pastoral Deputy Head Teacher in the absence of the Head Teacher, should be alerted immediately.

The person should notify the SLT team and request a member of senior staff to attend the incident.

Whenever possible, reasonable force should only occur when witnesses are present.

Once a pupil has been a subject to **any form of restraint**, they should be taken to a quiet room to be calmed.

Staff accompanying the pupil must have a walkie-talkie or another means of communication.

Two designated members of staff must always remain with the pupil, until the pupil's parents/carers have been contacted.

1.2 - Principles Relating to the Use of Reasonable force

Reasonable force must only be used as a last resort when other strategies have failed. It must serve to defuse or prevent a violent, or potentially violent, situation. It must not be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate risk to people or property.

At Woodlands School, staff will have good grounds for believing that immediate action (reasonable force) is necessary in order to prevent a pupil from injuring him/herself or others or causing serious damage to property.

Where possible staff should take steps in advance to avoid the need for reasonable force, for example, through dialogue and diversion. The pupil should be warned orally that reasonable force will be used unless s/he desists.

Reasonable force must not be used in anger. When it becomes apparent that the pupil is not responding to verbal instructions and a violent incident is imminent, the member of staff, wherever possible, should call for assistance before engaging in reasonable force.

Where possible female staff should be summoned as assistance in the instance of female pupils requiring restraint or physical intervention, and male staff should be summoned as assistance in the instance of male pupils requiring restraint. Calling for support and assistance also provides support and witnesses.

When it becomes necessary to physically restrain a pupil, the member of staff must, if possible, continue to talk to the pupil in a calm manner, offering choices and time for the pupil to become calm.

The age and competence of the pupil must be considered in deciding what degree of intervention is necessary.

Only the minimum force necessary, to prevent physical injury or damage, should be applied. particular care must be taken to avoid inflicting any unnecessary pain or injury.

Physical Intervention must not involve deliberately painful or dangerous procedures. It must:

- Never interfere with breathing, blood supply or genital areas.
- Whenever possible avoid holding the head, throat, or fingers.
- Be discontinued as soon as the situation is deemed safe.
- As soon as it is safe, restraint must be gradually relaxed as the pupil regains self-control.

A pupil must never be asked to restrain another pupil.

1.3 - Operational/Procedural Points Relating to the Use of Reasonable force.

Department for Education issued under section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This document has been updated with implication surrounding the use of reasonable force in March 2025. The governing body or proprietor of a school in England must have regard to this in relation to recording and reporting each significant incident involving the use of force by members of Woodlands School staff

The circumstances and reason for using reasonable force must be recorded immediately, or as soon as possible, but ideally no later than the next working day.

Pupil and staff support

Following each significant incident involving the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive intervention, schools should evaluate the incident to understand why reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions were used, the impact on pupils and staff, any patterns and trends, and how the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions might be avoided in future, for example by amending or introducing a behaviour support plan.

'Significant incident' refers to any incident where the use of reasonable force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff. This includes when physical force is used to implement a restrictive intervention. If necessary, the pupil and staff member involved should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. Any significant incident in which a member of staff uses reasonable force on a pupil must be recorded as described in 'Recording the use of force' in this document. In addition, any injuries should be recorded in accordance with the Woodlands School's procedures and reported as appropriate to the Health and Safety Executive.

Following a significant incident in which reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions are used, schools should hold a follow-up conversation(s) to facilitate reflection, learning and to support pupil and staff wellbeing. This conversation should be framed as part of the overall debriefing process and look to understand what happened during the incident and why, based on separate reflections from both the staff and pupils involved; as well as to repairing and rebuilding relationships through dialogue. This process should ideally be facilitated by a staff member who was not involved in the incident and may also benefit from the presence of an additional person to

ensure impartiality and support. By engaging in this process, schools can foster a culture of continuous improvement and consider how things might be improved in the future.

At Woodlands School we will continue to monitor pupil and staff wellbeing and provide additional support if needed, for example through further follow-up conversations, counselling or other resources. Additionally, any pupil who witnesses an incident of reasonable force and/or restrictive intervention where a peer may have been injured or become distressed, should also be provided with appropriate support where necessary.

Reasonable force incident form that is attached to this policy (**pg9**) to be completed and given to Deputy Head Pastoral.

The member of staff must inform the Head Teacher or Pastoral Deputy Head Teacher in the absence of the Head Teacher, as soon as possible of the incident.

The pupil's views by completion of the Pupil View proforma (**pg11**) should also be recorded as soon as possible, preferably on the same day.

The Head Teacher will discuss the incident with the teacher within an appropriate timeframe. Where possible CCTV may be collated and shared with the Head Teacher

Counselling may be needed for staff who, following the incident, are distressed. (For example, counselling services are offered who can be contacted via the Education Personnel Department).

Following the incident, the pupil could also be counselled on the reasons why it was necessary to restrain him/her.

Pupils will be interviewed about the reasons that led to the incident and the circumstances that followed. The interviewer must be a senior member of staff who was not directly involved in the incident.

At Woodlands School our staff will always try to consider any wider audience. Some of our students may have difficulty processing the use of reasonable force and therefore, should have the opportunity to talk to a member of staff as to why the situation required reasonable force, particularly if the young person has witnessed domestic violence within the home. In these circumstances if further concerns present then these should be recorded by safeguarding team and parents/carers informed.

All our staff will be provided with opportunities to discuss incidents involving reasonable force and their subsequent feelings. Where it is clear that the teachers may need further advice or training, the Head Teacher will always take prompt action to see that this support is provided.

Our parents/carers will always be promptly informed when reasonable force has been used and will be welcomed in the opportunity to discuss the matter with our Senior Leaders at Woodlands School.

At the discretion of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), information around the event may be recorded on **My Concern** as a means of informing future decisions on interventions, support or information sharing with other agencies.

REASONABLE FORCE INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Fill in this form immediately after the occurrence of any significant incident.
Forward this report to Mr. S Amran, Deputy Head Teacher or Mr. D Wright, Head Teacher.

1. BASIC INFORMATION

Name of school: **Woodlands School**

Name of pupil: _____

DOB: _____

Year: _____

2. EVENTS LEADING TO THIS INCIDENT

Where did the incident occur? _____

When did the incident occur? Date: _____ Time: _____

How did the incident begin? _____

3. DESCRIBE THE INCIDENT

What was happening at the time?

Was anyone else involved? (If yes, who?) _____

Did anyone else see what happened? (Give details)

What behaviour was the pupil presenting that warranted restraint?

Was there damage to property or an assault on a pupil or staff during the incident? **YES/NO**
(If yes, give details) _____

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

How was the pupil restrained? (Describe – e.g. two people escort, one person wrap)

For how long? _____ By how many staff? _____

4. INJURIES SUSTAINED

Was anyone injured? **YES/NO** (If yes, give details) _____

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

Was the pupil checked for injuries by a member of staff who was not involved in the incident? **YES/NO** (If yes, by whom?) _____

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PLANNING

What do you think this behaviour was about? (e.g. attention, emotional release, task escape mechanism, other)

6. FOLLOW UP ACTION

The incident was reported by: _____ (designation)

Parent/Carer was informed by? Check box

Telephone & letter (with pupil) Letter (post) Personally

When were they informed? Date: _____ Time: _____

Incident form completed by: _____ Post Held: _____

REASONABLE FORCE PUPIL VIEW FORM

Fill in this form at an appropriate time after the incident.
Give the completed form to:

- Mr. D Wright, Head Teacher
- Mr. S Amran, Deputy Head Teacher
- Mr D Riste, Assistant Head Teacher

2. BASIC INFORMATION

Name of school: **Woodlands School**

Your Name:

Year Group:

2. EVENTS LEADING TO THIS INCIDENT

Where did the incident occur?

When did the incident occur?

Date		Time	
-------------	--	-------------	--

How did the incident begin?

3. DESCRIBE THE INCIDENT

What was happening at the time?

What did the member/s of staff do?

Why do you think members of staff felt the need to use some physical restraint?

Did the member/s of staff try to defuse the situation before using restraint?

(Tell you stop or talk to you)

Yes	No
-----	----

How were you restrained? (for example; two teachers holding my arms)

Was anyone injured? **YES/NO** (if Yes, who was injured and describe the injuries below and to who)

Was the reason for the use of physical restraint explained to you after the incident?

Yes	No
-----	----

4. Do you have any further comments you would like to add?

Pupil View form completed by: _____ Year Group _____

Date : _____

1.5 - Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Use of reasonable force to search pupils

Head teachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item.⁹ A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for legally prohibited items, but not to search for items banned under the school rules only. The decision to use reasonable force should be made on a case-by-case basis. Staff should refer to the Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools guidance document for detailed advice on searching a pupil.

This section refers to the **Search, Screening and Confiscation in Schools guidance (DFE 2022)** which closely follows the statutory guidance **Working together to safeguard children**. Keeping children safe in education makes clear that all school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn ensuring school staff and pupils feel safe and secure is vital to establishing calm and supportive environments conducive to learning.

Using searching, screening and confiscation powers appropriately is an important way to ensure pupil and staff welfare is protected and helps schools establish an environment where everyone is safe. This advice is intended to explain screening, searching and confiscation powers so that Head Teachers and other staff have the confidence to use them if necessary. Schools and their staff are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children.

Keeping children safe in education makes clear that all school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn.

Through the school's ethos of respect, it is usual for pupils to volunteer any items deemed illegal or dangerous if reported to staff. In rare occasions it may be necessary to conduct a search with consent.

School staff, (Member of school staff means any teacher who works at the school and any other person who, with the authority of the head teacher, has lawful control or charge of pupils for whom education is being provided at the school) can search pupils **with their consent** for any item.

1.6 - Searching Without Consent

The law outlines what can be searched for:

Prohibited Items

The following list of items (whilst not exhaustive) are banned from being brought into school. The **school does not need parental or student consent to search a student** if they think a student has prohibited items:

- Weapons, for example, knives or bladed articles
- Tobacco related products, including smokeless tobacco for example, cigarettes including E-cigarettes/vapes/nicotine based Snuz/SNOOSS and any other associated smoking equipment
- Electronic devices such as mobile phones, smart watches, air pods/ear phones, laptops, tablets, speakers, META glasses, still and video cameras
- Lighters and matches
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Legal High or stimulant substances (caffeine based Snuz/SNOOSS, Energy drinks)
- Paint thinners or other solvents

- Stolen goods
- Pornographic images (of any kind, including images on phones other electronic devices)
- Fireworks or similar articles of a pyrotechnic nature
- Anything that has been, or is likely to be, used to cause injury or commit an offence.
- **Anything else which the Head Teacher deems inappropriate or dangerous**

At Woodlands School any member of staff conducting a search:

- a) Would give a verbal reason for the search; and there must be a witness (also a staff member).
- b) There is a limited exception to this rule. You can carry out a search of a pupil without a witness present, but **only** where you reasonably believe that there is a risk that **serious harm** will be caused to a person if you do not conduct the search **immediately** and where it is **not reasonably practicable** to summon another member of staff.
- c) Our staff conducting a search or screening process may use an electronic handheld metal detector device to assist them (**WAND**)

1.7 - Extent of any search; clothes, possessions, and lockers.

- **‘Outer clothing’** means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear, but ‘outer clothing’ includes hats; shoes; boots; gloves and scarves.
- **‘Possessions’** means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control – this includes desks, lockers, and bags.
- A pupil’s possessions can only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that **serious harm** will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is **not reasonably practicable** to summon another member of staff.
- Where they find **stolen items**, these must be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable – but may be returned to the owner (or may be retained or disposed of if returning them to their owner is not practicable) if the person thinks that there is a good reason to do so.
- Where a member of staff finds an **E-cigarette, Vape, tobacco, cigarette papers or similar** they may retain or dispose of them. As with alcohol, this means that schools can dispose of **E-cigarette, Vape, tobacco, cigarette papers or similar** as appropriate, but this should **not** include returning them to the pupil.
- **Fireworks, matches or lighters** found as a result of a search may be retained or disposed of but should **not** be returned to the pupil.
- If a member of staff finds an adult pornography image, on paper or on an electronic device, they may dispose of/delete the image. If pornography is found that constitutes a specified offence (i.e. it is extreme pornography and/or an indecent image of a child) it must be seized, and the police contacted as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- Where an article that has been (or could be) used to commit an offence or to cause personal injury or damage to property is found it may be delivered to the police or returned to the owner. It may also be retained or disposed of.
- Where a member of staff finds an item which is banned under the school rules, they should consider all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgement to decide whether to return it to its owner, retain it or dispose of it.
- Any weapons or items which are evidence of an offence must be passed to the police as soon as possible.

1.8 - Use of Handheld Metal Detector Device (Wand)

Handheld Metal Detector Scanning Technique

When using the handheld metal detector, it's important to understand that it is a motion detector, which means that they will not raise an alarm if held stationary.

The operator must be moving the scanner over the metal object for it to be detected.

It is important to remember that screening people using a handheld metal detector requires **no body contact**.

The operator doesn't need to touch the subject in any way as the metal detector is passed over the outside of a student's clothing, close to their body, but not touching them.

1.8 a - People Scanning (use of wand) Guidelines

Here are some guidelines for those responsible for scanning students using the handheld metal detector.

1. Be always courteous and polite.
2. Carry out the scan in a location that allows discretion. (Office or unoccupied room)
3. It is considered good practice that **the adult performing the scan give verbal reasoning as to the nature of the search.**
4. Always make certain a student is aware that they are being scanned.
5. Make certain that the student is standing in an area where you can approach them from all sides.
6. Scan the student's front, focusing on the torso and legs. Pay thorough attention to pockets and the belt line.
7. Scan the student's back, from the back of the head down to the heel of the one leg and then in reverse up the other leg, back up to the head, including the arms.
8. **Never attempt to scan between the legs.**
9. **Never place the metal detector in front of a student's face.**
10. Always inspect any metal objects which may have triggered an alarm (such as belt buckles).
11. If you get an alarm from a student's pocket, **ask them to empty the contents of their pocket into a tray and then rescan the pocket.**
12. Remember that there is no need to come into contact with the student's body. Simply move the scanner slowly over the surface of their clothing, close to them but not touching

1.9 – Searching Electronic Devices and Content

Where the member of staff conducting the search finds **an electronic device**, they may examine any data or files on the device if they think there is a good reason to do so. Following an examination, the member of staff may decide to return the device to the owner, or to retain it, they may also choose to erase any data or files, if they think there is a good reason to do so.

In determining a 'good reason' to examine or erase the data or files the staff member must reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school rules.


2.0 - Central Record Keeping

After a member of staff has conducted a search there is a statutory requirement for schools to record the details of search centrally. The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or Deputy DSL should be notified immediately no matter if prohibited articles are found or not. At the discretion of the DSL

notes may be added to safeguarding database software to assist with ant future intervention or information sharing.

Informing parents and dealing with complaints

- 1) Schools are not required to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child.
- 2) There is a **statutory requirement to make or keep a record of a search (DFE 2022)**. At Woodlands School **the central database must be updated promptly by staff** no matter if prohibited articles are found or not
- 3) Schools should inform the individual pupil’s parents or guardians where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found, though there is no legal requirement to do so.
- 4) Complaints about screening or searching should be dealt with through the normal school complaints procedure.

Signed:  _____
Head Teacher

Dated: 8th December 2025

Signed:  _____
Vice Chair of Governors

Dated: 8th December 2025



Appendix	
i)	Education and Inspections Act 2006
ii)	Consultation on the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance March 2025
iii)	Searching, Screening and Confiscation July 2022
iv)	Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
v)	Human Rights Act 1998
vi)	Equality Act 2010

Appendix B – Staff Guide

Guidance for Staff: Physical Intervention, Use of Reasonable Force & Restraint

Purpose of this section

- To provide for the safety and security of pupils in need of physical intervention.
- To clarify for staff the steps they are allowed to take if a situation requiring physical intervention arises
- To enable staff to distinguish between what intervention is and is not acceptable.
- To ensure that staff have read the documentation from DfE and Essex County Council.
- To help ensure that any physical intervention is minimal, infrequent, recorded and that relevant authorities and parents are appropriately informed.

2. The decision to employ a Physical Intervention Strategy

You should be aware that all staff who have responsibility for a student or group of students are authorised to employ physical intervention strategies in the event they are necessary and that the law allows you to intervene in this manner. You should however be aware that you have a choice whether to intervene physically in any given situation and that you should not do so if you are uncomfortable with the situation or not confident to deal with it effectively. You should be aware that if you employ a physical intervention strategy, the parents of the child will be informed of your actions, the record of the intervention will be kept on the student’s file and where necessary relevant authorities will be notified of the incident for your own future protection.

3. In what way can you Physically Intervene?

Any application of physical intervention must only use the minimum force for the minimum amount of time. There are several ways in which you can physically intervene, and you must choose the strategy appropriate to the situation and presenting least risk to yourself, the student and other persons. Appropriate actions include Shepherding or Guiding, using body positioning and positive gestures to move a student away from harm. This may include the placing of a hand on the back (between the shoulder blades) and using reasonable force to actively move them from one place to another. Blocking or Interposing; placing yourself between the student and their objective (e.g. exit, another student) thereby preventing the potential injury damage or prejudice to good order. Holding and Leading; leading the student (with open hand e.g. by the upper arm) to prevent them from injury, damage, etc. In cases of resistance from a student, it may be necessary to employ holding to effectively achieve shepherding and, hence you are actively leading them away.

Restraining: used only in the most extreme cases, restraining may require a significant amount of force to prevent significant injury (as described in the policy). Essentially, restraining is a more extreme version of holding, may require more than one adult and may last significantly longer than other strategies. However, the same care must be taken to restrain a student appropriately.

4. In what ways must you NOT Physically Intervene?

The purpose of physical intervention is essentially to maintain good order and ensure the safety of all individuals, therefore it is never appropriate to employ a physical intervention strategy if you are not in control of your own emotions. Physical interventions must never be employed in anger or frustration. If you find yourself angry or frustrated by the situation at hand you must step back and allow someone else to manage the issue. It is never appropriate to use physical intervention strategies as a punishment. Just as there are several acceptable intervention strategies, there are also several actions it is completely inappropriate to take. Inappropriate actions include Hitting or Striking, while it is entirely possible that during an intervention (e.g. breaking up a fight) you may be hit yourself; you must not strike a student.

Deliberately inflicting pain: it is not okay to twist limbs or put pressure on joints (e.g. arm up a student's back), pull or hold hair, pinch or hold a student in a pain inducing way (e.g. by the ear). Making contact with sexually sensitive areas of the body; where at all possible contact should be restricted to arms, shoulders and the back as previously described. Restricting breathing; by holding round the throat or for a prolonged period around the chest. It is also never appropriate to sit on/straddle a student or hold them face down to the floor.

5. Guidance for managing your intervention

- a) Always give a student an opportunity to resolve the situation without use of physical intervention first.
- b) Always send for assistance from colleagues or another authorised adult; other students should never be involved in physical intervention. You may have to intervene before help arrives, but not managing this entirely on your own is safer for all concerned.
- c) Be aware of your emotions. Are you comfortable and confident to deal with this scenario without anger? If not – don't intervene.
- d) Continue to communicate with the student (and witnesses) throughout the incident even if the student doesn't respond. Be clear about what you are doing and inform the student that the intervention will cease when it is no longer necessary.
- e) Apply only appropriate strategies and the minimum required force to achieve the required outcome (prevention of injury/harm, student/staff safety, restoration of good order). Release the student once this has been achieved.
- f) Manage the situation calmly – even if the student responds negatively.
- g) Complete a 'Physical Intervention Record Form' as soon as possible after the event.

6. Minimising the need for Physical Intervention

In most circumstances Physical Intervention really should be a last resort or an emergency action.

Therefore, all staff should:

- endeavour to create a calm environment which will minimise the risk of incidents where the use of physical intervention may be required.
- endeavour to teach pupils how to manage strong emotions and conflict through opportunities for SMSC and wider aspects of the school curriculum.
- quickly seek to de-escalate incidents if they do arise.
- only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force.
- be aware of risk assessments and positive handling plans for specific individual pupils. A list of authorised personnel is available from the school but will include all teachers and staff who are contracted by the school.

