

# **Oakthorpe Primary School**

## **Use of force to control or restrain pupils.**

This policy was updated September 2022

Situations involving decisions about whether to use force can occur in any school. Both using force and deciding not to can entail significant risks for both pupils and staff. Establishing a clear policy on the use of force by staff is an important part of minimising these risks.

### Objectives

The key objective of this policy is to maintain the safety of pupils and staff. It is therefore important to prevent serious breaches of school discipline as this puts pupils and staff at increased risk. This Policy also includes the need to prevent serious damage to property.

### Legal context – use of physical controls – the rules

DoH Guidance “permissible Forms of Control in Children’s Residential Care” 1993

1. Good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent physical injury or serious property damage.
2. Minimum force for minimum time
3. Witnessed by other staff (if possible)
4. For care and control – not punishment
5. Not to force compliance alone

The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils DCSF November 2007

‘Use such force as is reasonable under the circumstances to

Prevent a pupil: -

1. Committing an offence
2. Causing personal injury or damage to property.
3. Behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline’.

### Guidelines

#### Minimising the need to use force

- All staff recognise the need to create a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents that might require the use of force arising.
- The school has a powerful approach to PSHE, which encourages pupils to manage conflict and strong feelings.
- It is also recognised that effective tone of voice and body language can de-escalate incidents if they arise.
- All staff recognise that adults should only use force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force.

- There are some pupils for whom the use of force/ restraint may be necessary due to a special need. These children will be discussed at staff meetings and be subject to a risk assessment which includes an individual positive handling plan.

#### Staff authorised to use force

Permanent authorisation:

All teachers and staff the Head teacher has authorised to have control or charge over pupils, automatically have the statutory power to use force.

#### Deciding whether to use force

Staff should only use force when:

- The potential consequences of not intervening were sufficiently serious to justify consideration use of force;
- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means were low; and
- The risk associated with not using force outweighed those of using force.

Staff will be kept informed about and advised how to deal with pupils who present particular risks to themselves or others (as a possible result of SEN and/or disabilities and/or other personal circumstances) via staff briefings and pastoral plans.

Staff should call police where a pupil is suspected of having a weapon if a pupil is likely to resist a search. Mrs Sefer as DSL takes the role of the Appropriate adult.

#### Using force

It cannot be emphasised enough that it is important to use only the minimum force necessary to achieve the desired result.

The PRICE method is now used in Enfield schools and designated staff have received training in how to deescalate, evaluate risk and intervene should it be necessary.

It also fulfils the following criteria:

1. Use the minimum force necessary for the minimum amount of time.
2. Do not involve hitting the child.
3. Do not involve deliberately inflicting pain on the child. So, for example cannot involve joint locks or finger holds.
4. Do not restrict the child's breathing. So, for example do not compress the chest or push their face into soft furnishings.
5. Avoid the adult's hands touching the genital area, the buttocks or the breasts.
6. Avoid the adult putting their full weight upon the child's spine or abdomen.

In addition to meeting these criteria the adult should seek as far as possible, given all the circumstances of the situation, to: -

1. Seek to lower the child's level of arousal during the restraint by offering verbal reassurance and avoid generating fear of injury in the child.
2. Cause the minimum level of restriction of movement, consistent with the danger of injury. So for example will not restrict the movement of

the legs unless in an enclosed space where thrashing legs are likely to be injured.

3. Take account of the danger of accidental injury during the restraint by using a method of restraint suitable for the environment in which it takes place. So, for example on a paved surface would seek to avoid placing a child on the ground.

### Possible Forms of Control

- Always seek to deescalate
- Dialogue (requesting, persuading, asserting, distracting)
- Physical presence (being there. blocking path)
- Reinforcing presence (raised voice, touch) these are usually witnessed, not resisted and are unambiguous
- Holding
- Restraining
- Detaining

### Staff training

Designated staff have received PRICE training. There is a programme of whole staff training in de-escalation techniques and supporting emotional regulation of children planned for the coming year to build on INSET 2022.

### Recording incidents

Each child has personal logging arrangements which could take a variety of forms including use of Form 1 attached. These will be closely monitored by SLT and centrally stored by the SENCo.

### Reporting incidents

Serious incidents are recorded on Health and Safety forms VA2 or Accident reporting forms. The Welfare Assistant in conjunction with Mrs Sefer have responsibility for ensuring they are completed accurately and faxed to the Civic Centre. Risk assessments may be carried out dependant on the severity of the incident.

Advice will also be sought from external agencies e.g. Educational Psychologist/SWERRL/ local Safeguarding Partnerships.

### Post - incident Support

We recognise that Staff as well as children may need support following an incident, this may include meeting immediate physical needs, rebuilding relationships and ensuring lessons are learnt.

### Complaints and allegations

Complaints and allegations of misconduct will be addressed according to the school policy.

### Monitoring & review

This policy and guidelines will be kept under constant review to ensure it remains appropriate. It will be reviewed at least annually.

## **Form 1**

### **Use of force to control or restrain pupils: incident record**

<b>Details of pupil/pupils on whom force was used by a member of staff (name+ class)</b>	
<b>Date, time and location of incident</b>	
<b>Names of staff involved (directly or as witnessed)</b>	
<b>Details of other pupils involved (directly or as witnessed) including whether any of the pupils were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social reasons.</b>	
<b>Description of incident by staff involved, including any attempted to deescalate and warnings given that force may be used.</b>	
<b>Reasons for using force and description of force used.</b>	
<b>Any injury suffered by staff or pupils and any first aid and/or medical attention required.</b>	
<b>Reasons for making a record of incident.</b>	
<b>Follow up. Including post-incident support and any disciplinary action against pupils.</b>	
<b>Any information about the incident shared with staff not involved in it and external agencies.</b>	
<b>When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the incident and any views they have expressed.</b>	
<b>Has any complaint been lodged (details should not be recorded here)</b>	
<b>Report compiled by:</b> <b>Name and role:</b> <b>Signature:</b> <b>Date:</b>	<b>Report countersigned by:</b> <b>Name and role:</b> <b>Signature:</b> <b>Date:</b>