

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND RESTRAINT POLICY

Date of last review	April 2015	Date of next review	April 2018
Review period	Three years	Owner	Executive Principal and Principals
Type of policy	Non statutory		

Paradigm Trust Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy (PIRP)

This Policy applies to all Academies within Paradigm Trust. It is in line with Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and non-statutory advice from the Department of Education (DfE) July 2013 on the use of reasonable force.

1. Principles underpinning the PIRP

The Board of Directors is responsible for setting general principles that inform the PIRP. These include:

- applying strategies to manage behaviour to prevent the situation developing into a crisis where physical intervention is the only solution;
- the definition of physical intervention/restraint as the use of force to control, handle or restrain dangerous or destructive behaviour by pupil(s);
- that in unusual or extreme situations staff may have to use reasonable force to control dangerous or destructive behaviour particularly when pupils are at risk of injury to themselves or at risk of causing injury to others;
- the care, welfare, safety and security of pupils should always come first and the use of reasonable force should be seen only in this context;
- all staff have appropriate training on physical intervention and physical restraint.

To further support this policy the Trust uses DfE definitions of '*reasonable force*', '*force*', '*control*' and '*restraint*' to inform the policy's implementation:

- *reasonable force* covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils;
- *force* is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a pupil needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury;
- *Reasonable in the circumstances* means using no more force than is needed;
- *Control* means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom;
- *Restraint* means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control.

2. Who can use reasonable force?

- All members of the Academy staff.
- Adults who are temporarily in charge of pupils, such as volunteers and parents/carers accompanying a class on a school visit.

3. When can reasonable force be used?

Reasonable force is used for two main purposes:

- to control pupils;

and/or

- restrain pupils.

It is used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

4. Considerations

- SEND pupils may have a specific diagnosis which may influence their behaviour/responses.
- The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member/adult concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.
- The use of force can only be regarded as reasonable if the incident warrants it. Force cannot be warranted if it is used to prevent a pupil committing a trivial misdemeanour or is used in a situation that could be resolved without the use of force or is used as a punishment.
- The degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident. Any force should be kept to a minimum. It should bear a relationship to the age, sex and understanding of the pupil.

5. Situations where reasonable force may be appropriate

There are a number of situations where adults may use reasonable force:

- it may be necessary because there is an imminent risk of serious injury to a pupil;
- it may be necessary if there is a developing risk of injury or significant damage to property by a pupil;
- in extreme circumstances it may be appropriate where a pupil is compromising the safety and security of the rest of the class or group;
- it may be necessary in self-defence or to defend others from assault;
- it may be necessary in order to enable a pupil to be removed from a classroom or prevent a pupil from leaving a classroom.

6. Examples of situations where reasonable force may be necessary

When a pupil is:

- putting him/herself at risk, eg. climbing on window ledges/opening windows, on the roof or fire escape;
- attacking a member of staff or another pupil;
- fighting;
- engaged in or is about to commit an act of deliberate vandalism or a criminal offence;
- causing danger through rough play or misuse of dangerous objects or materials;
- acting in an unsafe manner where they might hurt him/herself;

- at risk if not kept within the school, eg: attempting to climb over the fence, get out through the gate;
- losing physical and/or emotional control;
- failing to follow repeated instructions to leave a classroom;
- allowed to leave a classroom leading to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others.

7. Physical Intervention

Intervention should not immediately involve the use of restraint or the application of force unless it is an emergency. In most situations it is possible to apply strategies to manage behaviour to prevent the situation developing into a crisis where physical intervention is the only solution. All reasonable steps in the circumstances, to manage the risky behaviour(s) and/or calm a situation through other means should be attempted before the use of restraint. The only acceptable exception is when there is a need to restrain immediately because the pupil is at risk of significant harm or injury to self or others.

Physical intervention using force should not be a substitute for good behaviour management. If restraint becomes necessary, staff should continue to attempt to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident and tell them that the physical contact or restraint will cease as soon as it is no longer necessary.

If the pupil requiring restraint is deaf and needs sign to communicate it is essential that the signing system they use (British Sign Language or Sign Supporting English, SSE) is used to communicate with them and that the method of restraint does not prevent them from communicating. This includes the reason for the intervention and what is required from the pupil in order for the physical intervention to cease. This may mean that another adult will need to be present during the period of intervention.

Staff should remain calm and not give the impression they have lost their temper or are punishing the pupil. Two members of staff should stay with the pupil until s/he has calmed down. A member of the leadership team should be sought immediately.

Schools do not require parental consent to use force on a pupil. However, planning for pupils at risk of permanent exclusion, or where behaviour is significantly challenging and requires additional staff and /or resources, must take into consideration arrangements for restraint and/or physical handling. Parents/carers of these pupils are included in planning arrangements and will be made aware of and agree to the use of restraint with their child/ren. Records of the occasions when restraint had to be used will be kept as part of the pastoral support arrangement and be reported orally and in writing by the teacher/SLT member to the parent/carers on the day.

The written record of the incident given to parents/carers, which led to use of restraint must include:

- pupil name and date of birth;
- date of incident;
- description of behaviour that lead to the incident;
- clear reason why restraint had to be used, ie, description of the immediate risk to pupil and/or others;
- description of how the pupil was handled/restrained;

- length in minutes of use of restraint;
- names of staff involved and witness(es);
- name of teacher who was in charge during the incident.

The written record should be signed by all involved.

8. Types of physical intervention

These may include some of the following:

- physically interposing between pupils;
- blocking a pupil's path;
- holding;
- pushing;
- pulling;
- leading the pupil by the hand or arm;
- shepherding a pupil by placing a hand in the centre of their back;
- in extreme circumstances using more restrictive holds. (Staff would normally be specially trained for this).

Inappropriate force may include:

- holding a pupil by the neck, collar or in any way that might restrict breathing;
- slapping, punching or kicking a pupil;
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- tripping up a pupil;
- holding a pupil by his/her hair or ear;
- holding a pupil face down on the ground;
- a hold or touch that is considered indecent.

Staff should always try to deal with a situation through other strategies first. Possible consequences of intervening physically may increase the disruption or provoke an attack and need to be carefully evaluated. Physical intervention to enforce compliance is likely to be increasingly inappropriate with older pupils.

9. Reporting

It is important that a detailed, written report by all involved be made of any incident where force is used. Incidents should be reported to the Principal and/or the designated member of staff responsible for inclusion. An incident report form (see appendix 1) needs to be completed and parent/carers informed. If it seems likely that physical intervention using force will become necessary, it is essential to seek assistance from colleagues who can independently support the intervention, control the environment by removing onlookers and verify the nature of the intervention.

Any allegation of inappropriate restraint or excessive force will initially be considered under child protection procedures. The designated person for child protection in each Academy is the Principal. They will refer any allegations to the child protection advice line.

10. Complaints

It cannot be ruled out that any complaints regarding the application of force or the failure to restrain will be the subject of an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures, child protection procedures or by the police. In these cases it will be necessary to have regard to Section 98 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and determine whether the degree of force was reasonable in the circumstances. It will also need to take account of this policy, whether it had been followed and whether the pupil suffered significant harm.

11. Physical contact in other circumstances

Some physical contact may be necessary and proper to demonstrate exercises or techniques during sports and PE. It is proper in the administration of first aid.

Young pupils or those with SEND may require physical prompts to help or encourage where they may be wary of initiating activity. Usually care programmes will address any physical contact required as part of a personal care package. For pupils with physical or learning disabilities this may include intimate care, which is the subject of a separate policy. Touching may also be appropriate when a pupil is in distress and needs comfort. This must be the result of a staff member's own professional judgement. There may be some pupils where touching is unwelcome due to cultural background or abuse. Physical contact becomes increasingly open to question as pupils near and reach puberty. Staff should bear in mind innocent and well-intentioned physical contact can be misconstrued.

