

Manor Junior School

Policy/Guidelines for Physical Restraint in School

Reviewed: 06.02.08
Governor review: 11.02.09
Review: Spring 2010

The 1996 Education Act permits the use of reasonable force to restrain a pupil in the event of extreme behaviour.

Restraint occurs when a member of staff uses physical force intentionally to restrict a child's movement against his or her will. It should rarely be used. Physical contact with pupils may occur under other circumstances such as providing physical prompts, giving support in PE, and supplying reassurance. The term restraint does not extend to these situations. Staff should not be inhibited in providing such contact when it is professionally appropriate to do so. The school's restraint policy is developed in relation to the school's policy on managing behaviour. Similarly, the restraint of an individual pupil should be viewed in relation to plans to improve the child's behaviour.

Reasonable force may be used in the following circumstances:

*in self defence where risk of injury is imminent
where there is a developing risk of injury or significant damage to property
where good order and discipline are compromised
when the activity occurs on the school premises or during an authorised activity
off the premises*

Aims

- **At Manor Junior School physical restraint will only be used in extreme circumstances**
- **Any force used should always be the minimum necessary to achieve the desired result and to prevent a pupil from:**

*injuring themselves or others
committing a criminal offence
causing damage to property
engaging in behaviour which is prejudicial to maintaining good order
and discipline*

Principles

When may pupils be restrained?

- Where possible staff should try to de-escalate the situation first. A physical intervention should only be used when other methods to manage the situation are inappropriate.
- In extreme circumstances (e.g. possession of weapons) it will be necessary to inform the Police
- Examples of situations which may require physical restraint are when a pupil is:

attacking a member of staff or another pupil
fighting with another pupil
engaged in or is on the verge of committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property
causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
running in school in a way in which he/she might cause injury to themselves or others
absconds from a class or tries to leave the school
behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

- In cases when the school is aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that may require physical restraint plans will be made which address:

possible strategies for de-escalating the problem
ways of managing the pupil e.g. strategies, holds to be used
informing parents about specific action to be adopted
briefing staff to ensure they are clear about strategies
ensuring additional support can be summoned if appropriate

Who may restrain pupils?

- Physical Restraint may be carried out by teaching staff and other designated members of staff

However should any individual lack the confidence or the desire to take such action, an alternative senior member of staff may be summoned.

- These arrangements apply at all times the school has responsibility for pupils and extend to times when pupils are at after-school clubs or are off-site on educational trips. The policy does not apply to situations after children have been dismissed and left the school premises or have been collected by parents and are in their care.
- Everyone has the right to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use a disproportionate amount of force to do so. In an emergency, e.g. if a pupil was at immediate risk of injury on someone else, any member of staff is able to intervene.

How may pupils be restrained?

- County guidance is to be followed
- A calm approach to a situation should be adopted

Prior to intervention the adult should summon assistance from colleagues (Senior management) e.g. when dealing with more than one pupil, or if they believe that they may be at risk of injury. Help is best summoned via another adult, but another child will suffice if no other adult is available

If a member of staff does not feel confident to intervene they should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally and to prevent the situation from escalating until help arrives

Staff should remove other pupils who may be at risk

The adult should, where practicable, inform the pupil to stop, and what will happen if they do not

Attempts should be made to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident

It should be made clear that physical restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary

- Physical intervention may take several forms:

Physically interposing between pupils

Standing in the way of a pupil

Holding, pushing, pulling

Leading a pupil away by the hand or gentle pressure on the back

In extreme cases more restrictive holds may be used

- No restraint may be used which may be considered to be indecent or which may be expected to cause injury to the child.

Staff must avoid touching or holding pupils in ways that could be construed to be abusive (ref. Child Protection Policy)

- Force which could cause injury includes:

holding around the neck

any hold that might restrict breathing

kicking, slapping or punching

forcing limbs against joints

tripping

holding by the hair

holding the pupil face down on the ground

What to do after an incident of restraint

- All incidents when restraint is used should be recorded as soon as possible (*within 24 hours*) and the Headteacher notified. *Reports should be recorded using the Restraint Incident Form and should include:*

name(s) of pupil(s) involved
location of incident
the reason force was necessary
description of the incident
steps taken to diffuse the situation
degree of force used and for how long
pupil(s) response and outcome of the incident
details of any injury suffered by anyone and damage to property
Statements from any witnesses should also be included

- Any staff injuries sustained will be recorded separately, in accordance with Health and Safety procedures.
- Pupils who have been restrained will be entitled to record their views when they have calmed down, and will be given assistance to do so if necessary (*in accordance with the Children's Act 1989*).
- Parents will always be informed of any incident with their child involving the use of physical restraint and will be given an opportunity to discuss the incident. *How and when parents are informed is the decision of the Headteacher.*
- Pupils or staff who are involved in a difficult incident will have access to support as required:

Debriefing
Counselling by Senior Management
Hampshire Employee Support Line (01962 846388)
Childline (020 72391000)
Child and Family Guidance

The Staffing and Finance Committee will review this policy annually.