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Restraint Policy

What is this policy for?

This policy is intended to clarify the powers of teachers, support staff and lunchtime assistants to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

- ◆ Committing a criminal offence.
- ◆ Injuring themselves or others.
- ◆ Causing damage to property, including their own.
- ◆ Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in the classroom or elsewhere.

This policy does not authorise the use of corporal punishment in any circumstances.

Nor is it intended to encourage the use of inappropriate force.

Staff should also refer to the whole school positive behaviour and discipline policy.

The vision for restraint

At Hutton CE Primary we believe restraint is only used as a last resort in order to keep children safe from themselves or another child. Usually this should be by a trained member of staff.

We want every child to:

- ◆ Feel safe
- ◆ Develop a positive sense of moral responsibility, self-discipline and excellent behaviour.
- ◆ Develop respect and sensitivity for others.

When is restraint used?

Planned Incidents

If the school becomes aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that may require physical control or restraint, a pastoral support plan (PSP) will be made of how to respond if the situation arises. The plan will address:

- ◆ Managing the pupil (e.g. strategies to de-escalate a conflict)
- ◆ Parental involvement by informing them clearly about what specific action the school may need to take
- ◆ Briefing staff to ensure that they know exactly what action should be taken
- ◆ Summoning additional support if required. Trained staff will usually deal with these situations.

Unplanned Incidents

Not all situations which may require the use of reasonable force are foreseeable. There are a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force may be necessary to restrain or control a pupil. They fall into three broad categories:



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- ◆ Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury.
- ◆ Where there is a developing risk of injury or significant damage to property.
- ◆ Where a pupil is behaving in a way which compromises good order or discipline.

Examples of situations which fall into the first two categories are:

- ◆ Pupils fighting
- ◆ Pupils engaged in, or on verge of deliberately committing vandalism
- ◆ Pupils at risk of or causing injury or damage through accident or rough play.
- ◆ A pupil running through buildings which may cause accidental injury to self or others
- ◆ A pupil absconds from class or tries to leave school.

Examples of situations which fall into the third category are:

- ◆ A pupil persistently refuses to obey an instruction
- ◆ A pupil is behaving in a way which is seriously disrupting a session.

How is restraint used?

Reasonable Force

There is no legal definition of "reasonable force". However, there are three relevant considerations;

- ◆ The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the incident warrants it. Therefore physical force could not be justified to prevent a trivial misdemeanour or in a situation which could clearly be resolved without the use of force.
- ◆ The degree of force involved must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences that it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result, for the shortest time possible.
- ◆ Whether it is reasonable to use force and the degree of force that could be employed might also depend on the age/size of the pupil concerned.

Before intervening physically, an adult (as defined in the rationale) should, wherever practicable, **summon assistance by sending another child as a messenger to our trained support staff.**

Staff should tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and what will happen if he/she does not. The adult should continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident to make it clear that the physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

A calm and measured approach is needed when restraining or controlling a pupil physically. Adults should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, are acting out of anger or are attempting to punish a pupil.

The adult needs to continue to try to defuse and contain the situation until assistance arrives.

Physical intervention might involve:

- ◆ Physically interposing between pupils
- ◆ Blocking a pupil's path
- ◆ Holding



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- ◆ Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- ◆ Shepherding a pupil away by placing a guiding hand on the back
- ◆ Using more restrictive holds (in extreme circumstances)

Physical intervention should **not** involve:

- ◆ Holding a pupil around the neck, by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe
- ◆ Slapping, punching, kicking or tripping a pupil
- ◆ Holding/pulling by the hair/ear
- ◆ Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- ◆ Holding a pupil's face down on the ground
- ◆ Touching or holding a pupil in any way which might be considered indecent.

How do we measure success in restraint?

Success is when restraint has not had to be used- either because the children are not exhibiting such behaviour or because any incidents of misbehaviour are talked down before restraint is necessary.

Resources

The biggest resource is trained staff who are used to dealing with these situations. We have an online safeguarding system on which any incidents must be recorded.

Recording Incidents

Any adult who has had to use reasonable force to restrain or control a pupil should tell the headteacher as soon as possible and write a detailed account of the incident. The account should detail:

- ◆ Name of pupil and when/where the incident took place
- ◆ Names of any staff or other adults or pupils who witnessed the event
- ◆ The reason the force was necessary
- ◆ A description of the incident detailing the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, steps taken to defuse the situation, the degree of force that was used and for how long
- ◆ Pupil's response and the outcome of the incident
- ◆ Details of and injuries suffered by any party or damage to any property.

Staff are reminded that responsible, caring adults don't lose control, even when they lose their temper. A child's bad behaviour is a problem to be solved not a personal attack on their authority.

Safety & Risk

In the majority of cases staff should use verbal commands to ensure children behave and if they feel the situation is escalating – call for trained support. They do not need to place themselves in danger. They can instruct the other children to get help and to move away from an incident to ensure they do not get accidentally hurt.



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Community Involvement & Collaborations

All staff should feel supported in being able to deal with challenging behaviour. Therefore they should always seek support from their school community and colleagues. Always use the following principles.

10 principles for coping with difficult behaviour

- ◆ **Don't panic** – try to appear calm, even if the situation seems hair-raising, but recognise your feelings and seek support when possible.
- ◆ **Distract rather than react** – try to ignore undesirable behaviour or distract the child with interesting alternatives.
- ◆ **Reward rather than punish** – offer praise and time and attention. Use “time out” if necessary. Never use sarcasm/belittlement as this can lower self-esteem.
- ◆ **Teach by example** – show that adults can be honest and dependable and concerned about children's welfare. Show that adults will listen to children and take what they say seriously.
- ◆ **Be consistent** – never make promises you can't keep. Always carry through what you are going to do.
- ◆ **Always make a distinction between children and their behaviour** – reassure them that you will go on liking them whatever they do: it's their behaviour you don't like, not them. Recognise that children's misbehaviour is not a personal affront to you.
- ◆ **Be honest** – with children about what is happening. Share their pain and fear. Don't try to pretend that “everything is all right” when it obviously isn't. Accept the child's feelings, but restrain them from hurting someone else.
- ◆ **Treat children with respect** – be willing to apologise if you lose your temper or over-react.
- ◆ **Be tolerant** – but be prepared to define limits and stick to them.
- ◆ **Improve children's self-esteem** – create opportunities for them to succeed and demonstrate competence. This will help them feel good about themselves and in control.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy is reviewed annually and ratified by Governors. Any time the restraint policy has had to be implemented senior staff (including the SENDCO) discuss the incident and how it was handled. Support and feedback is offered to all staff involved.

Policy written: April 2020

Policy review: April 2022

Ratified by the Local Governing Body and signed by chair or vice-chair:

15/3/21



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LGB Chair