



Little Hill Primary School

Giving Children a Flying Start

Physical intervention and Restraints

Head teacher Name	Signature	Date
Reviewed by Full Governors/Committee/Individual Governor or Head teacher.		
Governor Name/Responsibility	Signature	Date
To be reviewed...		

LITTLE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY FOR PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS/RESTRAINT OF PUPILS

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A. Principles

- Physical intervention should be avoided wherever possible.
- Any physical contact should be only the minimum required.
- There are occasions when physical intervention is appropriate.
- Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Incidents should be recorded and reported to the Headteacher, or in other settings the Head of Service or Centre.

B. Prevention: Avoiding the Need to Use Force

1. It should be a last resort to use force to restrain or control pupils. It is important to try to stay calm and in control, avoid confrontation and de-escalate potential conflict. The school's behaviour policy sets out the sorts of strategies and approaches which staff should use to decrease the likelihood of challenging behaviour occurring and to defuse incidents and avoid the need for physical intervention. All staff are referred to those policies. This includes the use of normal incentives and sanctions and agreed approaches with individual pupils who have been involved in incidents causing concern, and it is important for all relevant staff to be aware of any specific arrangements for individual pupils.
2. When justifying the use of force, staff will need to show that they first took reasonable steps to deal with a difficult situation without using force. Any force used should be reasonable and the minimum required for the shortest possible time to restore order. The use of restrictive physical interventions should be minimised by employing primary and secondary preventive strategies, such as those described in paragraph 5.1 of DfES Circular LEA/0242/2002, eg Positive Handling Plans.

C. The Power to Use Force

3. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996, under the heading *Power to Restrain Pupils*, allows teachers and other authorised staff of a school to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:
 - (a) committing any offence;
 - (b) injuring themselves or others;
 - (c) causing damage to property;
 - (d) engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs during a teaching session or otherwise.
4. The power to restrain pupils came into force on 1 September 1998. It applies on the school premises or elsewhere, eg on a field trip or other authorised out of school activity. DfEE Circular 10/98 gives guidance on the legislation.

5. Under the common law, reasonable force can be exercised by any person to prevent someone committing an offence or causing injury or damage to property. This covers the situation where it appears necessary to restrain a pupil at the school or a person other than a pupil at the school. For comment on the interpretation of the term 'reasonable force' see paragraph 10(vi) below.
6. Staff have a duty of care both to themselves and to others. The duty of care includes taking reasonable measures to prevent harm. If restraint of a pupil appears necessary but a member of staff feels unable to intervene effectively, he/she will need to seek urgent assistance (for example by shouting or sending a pupil for help) and may need to explain subsequently what action he/she took and why.
7. There may be rare occasions where it appears necessary to restrain a pupil/student. In such circumstances physical restraint is a form of control which is legally defensible, when other alternatives have been employed or considered, or when staff believe it is their duty of care and make the professional decision to intervene, or when the urgency of the situation does not allow for other methods to be employed. It may be appropriate to employ physical intervention to prevent a significant risk of harm, eg:
 - to prevent a pupil running toward a busy road;
 - to prevent a pupil self-injuring;
 - to prevent a pupil injuring another person;
 - to prevent a pupil committing an offence.
8. It is important to note that corporal punishment is not allowable and that the legislation is not intended to encourage the use of inappropriate force.
9. The legislation does not make staff immune to complaints or charges that they have acted inappropriately, and staff should be aware that they may need to justify their actions if they have used physical intervention. Any complaint or allegation that staff or other adults have acted inappropriately towards children will be dealt with through the relevant procedure, eg local child protection procedures or the school's disciplinary procedure.

D. Definitions

10. The following definitions apply to the power to restrain pupils contained in Section 550A of the Education Act 1996.
 - (i) The words '**any pupil at the school**' appear in the law on restraint. This includes all registered pupils of the school, and other persons who are at the school for the purposes of education. The LEA interprets this broadly, to include for instance young persons not over school leaving age who are participating in youth activities both on- and off-site, and children involved in induction activities both pre-school and cross-phase.
 - (ii) A '**member of the staff of a school**' is defined in law as any teacher who works at the school or other person who the Headteacher has authorised to have lawful control or charge of pupils at the school.
 - (iii) '**Committing any offence**' includes behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility.
 - (iv) '**Damage to property**' includes the pupil's own property.

- (v) Regarding **'maintaining good order and discipline'**, examples of types of incident are given in Sections 14 and 15 of DfEE Circular 10/98.
- (vi) There is no legal definition of **'reasonable force'**. Reasonableness can only be judged in accordance with the circumstances. Relevant factors would include whether the response matched the circumstances, the degree of force used, the seriousness of any disciplinary breakdown, and evidence that less intrusive methods had been attempted initially. The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to the behaviour of the individual to be controlled and the nature of the harm that person might cause. The minimum necessary force should be used. The age, cultural background, gender, stature or medical history of the child are also relevant. There is comment on forms of physical intervention in paragraphs 21-27 of DfEE Circular 10/98.

E. Authorisation of Staff

- 11. Teachers have the power in law to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. Other people may also have this power, but this only applies to those who have been authorised by the Headteacher to have lawful control or charge of pupils. DfEE Circular 10/98 suggests that this might include classroom assistants, case workers, midday supervisors, specialist support assistants, education welfare officers, escorts, premises officers or voluntary helpers.

F. Using Force to Prevent Injury to the Pupil and/or Others, or Serious Damage to Property

- 12. As a general rule, physical intervention should be avoided. If physical intervention seems absolutely necessary, staff should follow the guidelines below in order to reduce their own vulnerability to complaint and to ensure the protection of pupils.
 - (a) Staff should have good grounds for believing that restraint is necessary
 - (b) Such physical intervention should only be used after other less intrusive methods have been attempted or considered.
 - (c) If possible call for urgent assistance, at least to gain the presence of a credible adult witness, e.g. Red Card, send child to neighbouring classroom.
 - (d) Tell the pupil that you are restraining him/her to avoid the pupil harming him/herself, others or property. Where other potential witnesses are present it is helpful if they hear you give this explanation.
 - (e) Such physical interventions should be acts of care and control, not punishment. Only reasonable force should be used. The duration of such intervention should be the minimum necessary.

- (f) Where past experience indicates that such physical intervention will be needed with a particular pupil, for instance because of particular emotional or behavioural difficulties, the strategies to be used should be clearly specified and made known to relevant staff. They should be included in a management plan (eg a pupil's Individual Education Plan, or Positive Handling Plan). The potential hazards should have been systematically considered, for example through a risk assessment. In such cases it is also important that broader preventive strategies and forms of positive behaviour management are in operation. Such a plan should detail specific strategies and techniques to be used, and, if appropriate, techniques not to be used. Such strategies or approaches should be discussed with parents/guardians and relevant professionals, made clear in writing, and reviewed regularly. They will be implemented under the supervision of an identified member of staff, who will monitor the incidence and method of interventions used (see also section H below, Risk Assessment).
- (g) Physical interventions can be defined in two broad categories:
- Non-restrictive (associated with a lower level of risk);
 - Restrictive (where a higher level of risk is present).

Examples from these two categories are provided in DfES Circular LEA/0242/2002 as follows:

a) Non-Restrictive	Manual guidance to assist a person walking.	Use of a protective helmet to prevent self-injury.	Removal of the cause of distress, eg adjusting temperatures, light or background noise.
b) Restrictive	Holding a person's hands to prevent them hitting someone.	Use of arm cuffs or splints to prevent self-injury.	Forcible seclusion or the use of locked doors.

Restrictive physical interventions can be employed to achieve a number of different outcomes:

- to break away or disengage from dangerous or harmful physical contact;
- to separate the person from a 'trigger', for example, removing one pupil who responds to another with physical aggression;
- to protect someone from a dangerous situation – for example, the hazards of a busy road.

- (h) Whilst an effective risk assessment process should minimise the need for physical interventions, emergency use of restrictive physical interventions may be required when pupils behave in unforeseen ways. Even in an emergency, the force used must be reasonable, in terms of both intensity and duration and the specific circumstances of the situation. Before using restrictive physical intervention in an emergency, the person concerned should be confident that the possible adverse outcomes (eg injury or distress) will be less severe than the adverse consequences of not intervening.
- (i) Staff may need support and/or counselling after such an incident. (Central County Council services should be available.) It may also be equally important to offer the pupil(s) support and the opportunity to discuss the incident.
- (j) DfEE Circular 10/98 gives examples of situations where reasonable force might be necessary to control or restrain pupils. In general if a person is at immediate risk of injury from a pupil's action, or serious damage is about to occur, then it might be necessary to intervene. Care should be taken not to use excessive force and to guard against the possibility of injury or asphyxiation. Adults need to be sensitive to issues of gender and to their own strength and body weight. Actions which would normally be considered unjustifiable, including:

- holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe;
- slapping, punching or kicking a pupil;
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;
- tripping up a pupil;
- holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear;
- holding a pupil face down on the ground.

Higher levels of risk are associated with:

- the use of clothing or belts to restrict movement;
- holding someone who is lying on the floor or forcing them onto the floor;
- any procedure which restricts breathing or impedes the airways;
- seclusion, where a child is forced to spend time alone and unsupervised in a room against their will;
- extending or flexing the joints or putting pressure on the joints;
- pressure on the neck, chest, abdomen or groin areas.

- (k) Special consideration must be given to those needing constant or high levels of supervision. This might include children who lack an awareness of danger, either to themselves or others. Such children will need to be the subject of risk assessments and Positive Handling Plans.

G. Action Following an Incident

13. Incidents where force has been used to restrain or control pupils are to be reported as soon as practicable to the Headteacher in writing with details of:

- pupil(s) involved;
- date/time/place;
- reason for force being used;
- how the incident occurred and progressed;
- the pupil's response;
- outcome;
- details of any injury or damage;
- identities of witnesses.

(A sample pro-forma is attached as Appendix 2).

The Headteacher will keep such written information securely and monitor the use of restraint.

14. The Headteacher may need to be the first to exercise judgement on whether the restraint used was reasonable, having made initial enquiries, although other procedures will apply if queries or complaints arise.
15. The parent/carer/guardian will be advised of an incident involving their child, either immediately or at the end of the day, according to the seriousness of the incident. If there is the possibility of a claim for compensation, the complainant must be referred to the LEA (Administration Service) without delay.
16. Staff and children should be given separate opportunities to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment, when those involved have had an opportunity to regain their composure. Debriefing staff and pupils may help in identifying exactly what happened, the effect on the participants, and possible ways of preventing the need to use force in the future.
17. If injury or severe distress is suspected, prompt medical attention must be arranged, via First Aid procedures initially.
18. Where a member of staff is assaulted or suffers injury as a consequence of using reasonable force or restraint, the member of staff is advised to contact their professional organisation or trade union. Assaults on staff which result in physical injury will be reported without delay by the Headteacher to the LEA and the Health & Safety Executive if appropriate (using form F2508).

H. Risk Assessment

19. Employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare of staff and children. This carries a requirement to assess risks, including the use of physical interventions.

Where it is foreseeable that a child might require a restrictive physical intervention a risk assessment should be carried out which identifies the benefits and risks associated with different intervention techniques. Such a risk assessment should lead to the clear identification of the intervention techniques to be used for the child in question, to be described in the child's record and/or Positive Handling Plan, and made known to the parent and relevant staff. A risk assessment for this procedure should be drawn up (see Appendix 3).

20. The potential consequences for all parties if physical intervention is not used must be weighted against the likely consequences if no action is taken. Relevant factors include:
- (a) Age of pupil – whatever action is taken must consider issues of age-appropriateness.
 - (b) Gender of pupil – it is important to be sensitive to situations which are best dealt with specifically by either male or female staff.
 - (c) Gender of staff – which should be taken into account in the risk assessment process.
 - (d) The safety of both the pupil and the member of staff concerned.
 - (e) The potential for causing distress – to either the pupil or the member of staff.
 - (f) Ensuring that physical intervention is not used unnecessarily.
 - (g) Maintaining working relationships between staff and pupils.
 - (h) Ensuring that physical intervention is not used *habitually*.
 - (i) Ensuring that whatever action is proposed or taken maintains the duty of care.

I. Training

21. The school ensures that there are members of staff trained in restraint (e.g. Team Teach). Further training is given to staff as pupils join the school who represent a higher risk of the need of restraint being necessary.

J. Communication

22. For the benefit of all parties, it is important that the school's policy and actions are clear and transparent, known and understood by staff and governors, children and parents, and other relevant professionals whose advice on some aspects of physical intervention and some children is invaluable. We wish to minimise people feeling they have been treated in a way they did not expect. We believe that effective communication helps to avoid problems and to safeguard children and staff.

K. Review of Policy

23. This policy will be reviewed every two years by the governing body.

POWER TO RESTRAIN PUPILS: LITTLE HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

AUTHORISATION OF STAFF: LIST OF POSTS

List of persons authorised to have control or charge of pupils and who therefore have the power to restrain pupils under Section 550A of the Education Act 1996.

- school teachers (including licensed and agency teachers) in day schools;
- other staff in schools or Education Departments who have substantial opportunity for access to children (eg premises officers, support staff);
- Education Welfare Officers and Educational Psychologists;
- escorts of vulnerable children;

Points for consideration by the individual school or service:

- (i) The LA does not recommend that force should be exercised by volunteer helpers, as such people are not covered or protected by contracts or conditions of service in the same way as employees. The school adopts this view which means that such people are not be authorised to have control or charge of pupils.
- (iii) For a person in school who is not normally under the school's management, there may need to be negotiation with their employer(s) regarding authorisation. Those concerned may wish to seek advice from their professional association/trade union.

Before authorising a person who is not normally under the school's management, the Headteacher should contact the person's employer or manager.

LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY

RESTRAINT OF PUPILS – INCIDENT REPORT

DATE OF INCIDENT:	TIME OF INCIDENT:
NAME(S) OF STAFF INVOLVED:	
NAME(S) OF PUPIL(S) INVOLVED:	
NAME(S) OF OTHER STAFF/PUPILS WHO WITNESSED INCIDENT:	
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT: (Please be objective and factual, outlining how incident began and progressed, details of pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, steps taken to defuse/calm situation, degree of force used, how applied, and for how long.) Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.	

...cont/d

REASON THAT RESTRAINT WAS NECESSARY:

DETAILS OF ANY INJURY SUFFERED BY THE PUPIL, ANOTHER PUPIL, OR MEMBER OF STAFF, OR ANY DAMAGE TO PROPERTY:

SIGNED:

.....

DATE:

.....

Little Hill Primary School
Physical Intervention and Restraint - Identification, Assessment and Management of Risk

Name of Child:		Name of Assessor:	
Class:		Signature:	
Name of Teacher:		Date:	

Use this table to identify persons at risk, potential outcomes, and their probabilities, and the overall risk ratings.
(Overall Risk equals Potential Outcome numerical value multiplied by the Likelihood numerical value).

Persons at Risk		Potential Outcome	Numerical Value	Likelihood/Probability	Numerical Value	Risk Rating	
C	Child	Minor Injury	1	Unlikely	1	1-5	Low
T	Teacher	Injury needing medical attention	2	Low possibility	2	6-12	Medium
OA	Other Adults	Injury - off work/school	3	Possible	3	12+	High
OC	Other Children	Serious injury/long-term sickness	4	Probable	4		
PV	Public/Visitor	Fatality	5	Near certainty	5		

Hazards identified (N.B. serious and imminent danger requires immediate action)	Person(s) at risk	Potential outcome	Likelihood/ Probability	Risk Rating	Risk L/M/H
ACTION REQUIRED					

Hazards identified (N.B. serious and imminent danger requires immediate action)	Person(s) at risk	Potential outcome	Likelihood/ Probability	Risk Rating	Risk L/M/H
ACTION REQUIRED					

Hazards identified (N.B. serious and imminent danger requires immediate action)	Person(s) at risk	Potential outcome	Likelihood/ Probability	Risk Rating	Risk L/M/H
ACTION REQUIRED					

Use continuation sheets as required.

Little Hill Primary School
Physical Intervention and Restraint - Identification, Assessment and Management of Risk

Continuation Sheet – Page _____ of _____

Hazards identified (N.B. serious and imminent danger requires immediate action)	Person(s) at risk	Potential outcome	Likelihood/ Probability	Risk Rating	Risk L/M/H
ACTION REQUIRED					

Hazards identified (N.B. serious and imminent danger requires immediate action)	Person(s) at risk	Potential outcome	Likelihood/ Probability	Risk Rating	Risk L/M/H
ACTION REQUIRED					

Hazards identified (N.B. serious and imminent danger requires immediate action)	Person(s) at risk	Potential outcome	Likelihood/ Probability	Risk Rating	Risk L/M/H
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ACTION REQUIRED					

Hazards identified (N.B. serious and imminent danger requires immediate action)	Person(s) at risk	Potential outcome	Likelihood/ Probability	Risk Rating	Risk L/M/H
ACTION REQUIRED					

**Department for Education
Advice on the Use of Reasonable Force in Schools
2011**

About this guidance

1. This is non-statutory advice from the Department for Education. It is intended to provide clarification on the use of force to help school staff feel more confident about using this power when they feel it is necessary and to make clear the responsibilities of school leaders and governing bodies in respect of this power.
2. This advice replaces *The use of force to control and restrain pupils – Guidance for schools in England*.

Expiry/review date

This advice will be reviewed in autumn 2011 after the Education Bill, currently before Parliament, receives Royal Assent.

What legislation does this guidance relate to?

Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Who is this advice for?

This advice is aimed at governing bodies, headteachers and school staff in all schools¹.

Key points

1. School staff have a legal power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
2. Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.
3. Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.

¹ All schools include Academies, Free Schools, independent schools and all types of maintained schools.

The Use of Reasonable Force

- The term '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 student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. 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. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force (Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006).

This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

- Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder
- in a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them
- the decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

Exemplification

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Schools cannot:

- use force as a punishment - it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.
- Every school is required by law to have a behaviour policy and to make this policy known to staff, parents and pupils. The governing body should notify the headteacher that it expects the school behaviour policy to include the power to use reasonable force.
- There is no legal requirement to have a policy on the use of force but it is good practice to set out, in the behaviour policy, the circumstances in which force might be used. For example; it could say that teachers will physically separate pupils found fighting or that if a pupil refuses to leave a room when instructed to do so, they will be physically removed.
- Any policy on the use of reasonable force should acknowledge their legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with Special Educational Needs.
- Schools do not require parental consent to use force on a student.
- Schools should not have a 'no contact' policy. There is a real risk that such a policy might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a pupil, or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a pupil causing harm.
- By taking steps to ensure that staff, pupils and parents are clear about when force might be used, the school will reduce the likelihood of complaints being made when force has been used properly.

A panel of experts ^(Physical Control in Care Medical Panel – 2008) identified that certain restraint techniques presented an unacceptable risk when used on children and young people. The techniques in question are:

- the 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing
- the 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest
- the 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

Staff Training

Schools need to take their own decisions about staff training. The headteacher should consider whether members of staff require any additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities and should consider the needs of the pupils when doing so.

Some local authorities provide advice and guidance to help schools to develop an appropriate training programme.

It is good practice for schools to speak to parents about serious incidents involving the use of force and to consider how best to record such serious incidents. It is up to schools to decide whether it is appropriate to report the use of force to parents.¹

In deciding what is a serious incident, teachers should use their professional judgement and also consider the following:

- the pupil's behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident
- the degree of force used
- the effect on the pupil or member of staff
- the child's age.

¹ In a Written Ministerial Statement, published on 23 June 2011, the Minister of State for Schools announced that he has asked Charlie Taylor, the Government's Expert Adviser on Behaviour, to review the implications for schools of the requirement to record and report the use of force in schools, as set out in section 246 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. In particular, Mr Taylor has been asked to make sure that the accompanying guidance provides the best possible advice to schools on establishing 'light touch' systems while still providing protection for pupils and staff. It remains the intention to commence this requirement from 1 September 2011, subject to the outcome of Mr Taylor's review. This advice will also be updated to reflect the outcome of Mr Taylor's review.

Concerns and Complaints

- All complaints about the use of force should be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated.
- Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.
- When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.
- Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. Schools should refer to the "Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff" guidance where an allegation of using excessive force is made against a teacher. This guidance makes clear that a person must not be suspended automatically, or without careful thought.
- Schools must consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate.
- If a decision is taken to suspend a teacher, the school should ensure that the teacher has access to a named contact who can provide support.
- Governing bodies should always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against the teacher.
- As employers, schools and local authorities have a duty of care towards their employees. It is important that schools provide appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident.

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.

Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:

- holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school
- when comforting a distressed pupil
- when a pupil is being congratulated or praised
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching
- to give first aid.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. I'm worried that if I use force a pupil or parent could make a complaint against me. Am I protected?

A. Yes, if you have acted lawfully. If the force used is reasonable all staff will have a robust defence against any accusations.

Q. How do I know whether using a physical intervention is 'reasonable'?

A. The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the teacher concerned. Whether the force used is reasonable will always depend on the particular circumstances of the case. The use of force is reasonable if it is proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent. This means the degree of force used should be no more than is needed to achieve the desired result. School staff should expect the full backing of their senior leadership team when they have used force.

Q. What about school trips?

A. The power may be used where the member of staff is lawfully in charge of the pupils, and this includes while on school trips.

Q. Can force be used on pupils with Special Educational Needs or disabilities?

A. Yes, but the judgement on whether to use force should not only depend on the circumstances of the case but also on information and understanding of the needs of the pupil concerned.

Q. I'm a female teacher with a Year 10 class - there's no way I'd want to restrain or try to control my pupils. Am I expected to do so?

A. There is a power, not a duty, to use force so members of staff have discretion whether or not to use it. However, teachers and other school staff have a duty of care towards their pupils and it might be argued that failing to take action (including a failure to use reasonable force) may in some circumstances breach that duty.

Q. Are there any circumstances in which a teacher can use physical force to punish a pupil?

A. No. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment. This is because it would fall within the definition of corporal punishment, which is illegal.