

Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Written in accordance with 'Education and Inspection Act' 2006 and
The DFE Guidance 'Use of Reasonable Force' July 2013.

School Commitment

At Whetley Academy we aim to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all our pupils to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential.

We prioritise the health and safety of all our pupils, families and staff members.

Appropriate Physical Contact

There are certain occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary. Examples include:

- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised with a handshake or a pat on the shoulder.
- Administering First Aid.
- Holding the child's hand when on an external visit.
- Comforting a distressed pupil.

All staff members have up to date Child Protection training and have agreed to follow the policy and procedures.

Minimising the Need to Use Reasonable Force

In line with our behaviour policy we are firmly committed to creating a calm and safe environment which minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of reasonable force.

We will only use force as a last resort and strongly believe in de-escalating any incidents as they arise to prevent them from reaching a crisis point. Staff members are trained and supported in delivering positive behaviour management strategies ensuring there is a consistent and fair process throughout school.

Staff members will only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved by not using force.

Staff Authorised to Use Reasonable Force

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006, all members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. It also applies to students and volunteers whom the Head of Academy has temporarily put in charge of pupils.

Deciding Whether to Use Reasonable Force

Under English law, members of staff are empowered to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from hurting themselves and others, from damaging property or from causing disorder.

All members of staff will make professional judgements about when, how and why to use reasonable force. To help staff in making decisions about using reasonable force the following considerations may be useful:

- Whether the consequences of not intervening would have seriously endangered the wellbeing of a person;
- Whether the consequences of not intervening would have caused serious and significant damage to property;
- Whether the chance of achieving the desired outcome in a non-physical way was low;
- The age, size, gender, developmental maturity of the persons involved.

Staff are also expected to remember that physical intervention is only one option and for behaviours involving extreme levels of risk it may be more appropriate to gain support from other agencies, including the police.

Staff will be kept informed and have a duty to inform others about the plans around specific pupils who can present risks to themselves and others. This may include information about SEN or personal circumstances.

Using Reasonable Force

When using force, members of staff should only use the minimum amount of force required in achieving the required outcome. Reasonable force includes a broad range of actions from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm, through to more extreme circumstances, such as breaking up a fight. Examples of when reasonable force may be used are to:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom when they have refused to follow instruction.
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or visit.
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupt 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.
- Conduct a search without consent for prohibited items such as knives, weapons, stolen items, alcohol and drugs.

Schools cannot use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Staff should, where possible, avoid any type of intervention that is likely to injure a pupil, unless in the most extreme of circumstance where there was no viable alternative. Also staff should avoid using force unless or until another member of staff is present to support, observe or call for assistance.

Staff Training

All members of staff have received up to date training and have read, understood and agreed to follow this policy.

There are currently two members of staff at Whetley Academy who have received up to date Team Teach training from an accredited trainer. Other staff at the Academy are able to contact these members of staff if assistance is needed.

These courses provide participants with an insight into recent legislation and guidance that could impact on policy and practice, as well as a range of physical and non-physical strategies to help manage the risks posed by children and young people's behaviour.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

The EAB will ensure that a procedure is in place, and is followed by staff, for recording and reporting, significant incidents where a member of staff has used force on a pupil. The record must be made as soon as practicable after the incident. The method of reporting is that the incident will be logged in a bound and numbered book and the incident logged on CPOMS. All use of reasonable force incidents must be reported and fully discussed with parents/carers.

Post Incident Support

Following the use of physical intervention staff and pupils will be supported, the immediate physical needs of all parties will be met and staff will ensure that positive relationships are maintained.

Complaints and Allegations

All complaints and allegations will be dealt with thoroughly and speedily. If a child/parent/carer makes an allegation against a member of staff it should be referred immediately to the Head of Academy who will then contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss next steps. If the allegation is made against the Head of Academy, members of staff must contact the Chair of the EAB who will refer to the LADO.

We will also make clear to pupils that they have a right, and are able, to question/complain about the use of reasonable force.

We will ensure that mechanisms are in place for pupils, parents/carers and staff to voice the opinions, comments or concerns.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed by the School Leadership Team and EAB at least annually or as required.

Date: March 2017

Review Date: March 2018

Signed by Chair of EAB Steve Allan _____

