



HOE VALLEY SCHOOL

STUDENT RESTRAINT

Person Responsible: Head Teacher
Date Adopted: September 2015
Date of last review: Spring 2024
Date of next review: Spring 2026

To be read in conjunction with the Behaviour for Learning and Exclusion Policies

1. AIMS OF THE POLICY

This policy outlines the processes the school will follow when a student requires restraint. It follows recommendations made from the DFE:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

2. VALUES

The school believes all students have the right to learn in a calm and safe environment. We believe that students have the right to learn and staff the right to work effectively. Threatening or violent behaviour will not be tolerated and will lead to exclusion from the school (see Behaviour for Learning policy).

3. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Rights

- Everyone has the right to learn and to work in a calm and safe environment
- Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity by other students, staff, parents, governors and other people working in school
- Everyone has the right to express their opinion appropriately, in a nonthreatening manner and upon the request of the responsible adult; opinions offered are expected to be considerate towards other people's feelings
- Teaching and non-teaching staff have the right to be able to fulfil their role and to be supported in promoting the achievement and welfare of school students.

3.2 Responsibilities

- Everyone has the responsibility to treat the building and its contents with care and respect
- Everyone has the responsibility to treat other members of the school community with respect at all times regardless of mood
- Everyone has a responsibility to enable others to feel physically and emotionally safe at school

- Everyone has a responsibility to listen to and respect that other people have an opinion and to pay due regard to their feelings
- Everyone has a responsibility to be prepared to work and to allow other students and staff to work too
- Teaching staff have a responsibility to provide well-planned, high quality learning opportunities for student. Both teaching and non-teaching staff have a responsibility to fulfil their role and to promote the achievement and welfare of students within a safe and supportive environment
- Students have the responsibility to focus on their own learning and not negatively impact upon the learning of others

4. DEFINITIONS

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 students. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a student 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 students and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of a classroom. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two students 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 student.

5. WHO CAN USE REASONABLE FORCE?

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Head Teacher has temporarily put in charge of students such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

6. WHEN CAN REASONABLE FORCE BE USED?

Reasonable force can be used to prevent students from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder. In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control students 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. 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 students from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- prevent a student behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- prevent a student leaving the classroom where allowing the student to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student, or to stop a fight in the playground
- restrain a student 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.

7. POWER TO SEARCH STUDENTS WITHOUT CONSENT

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, Head Teachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following “prohibited items”:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property

Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

8. STAFF TRAINING

The Pastoral Team will be trained in ‘Positive Touch’ and cascade this training to all other members of staff.

9. TELLING PARENTS WHEN FORCE HAS BEEN USED ON THEIR CHILD

The school will always report the use of force to parents as quickly as possible. The following pieces of information will be conveyed:

- student’s behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident
- degree of force used
- effect on the student or member of staff
- the student’s age

10. COMPLAINTS

All complaints about the use of force will be dealt with following the HVS Parental Complaints policy.

11. RECORD KEEPING OF INCIDENTS REQUIRING PHYSICAL RESTRAINT.

The School will record all incidents where a member of staff has had to restrain a student. This is centrally logged within the safeguarding database.