

Physical Intervention Policy

The law says we may use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances.

The three circumstances in which the use of force might be appropriate are:

1. Self defence
2. To prevent injury
3. To prevent significant damage to property.

We term these circumstances a “significant incident”.

Force can only be “reasonable” if the circumstances warrant both the use of it and the degree of force that is, in fact, used. The minimum amount of necessary to deal with the situation is all that may be used.

This can include:

1. Blocking a pupil’s path
2. Holding/pushing/pulling: provided the point of contact between the teacher and the pupil is appropriate e.g. the arm or centre of the back.
3. Leading a pupil by the arm
4. Shepherding a pupil by the hand in the centre of the back
5. If absolutely necessary, more restrictive holds may be used.

In all cases, it is the school policy that the teacher confronting a difficult situation shall:

1. Immediately send another pupil for the nearest colleague.
2. Not endanger the rest of the class or leave them unsupervised.
3. Request the presence of Headteacher or Managing Director as soon as is practicable.
4. Enter the incident in the prescribed form in the Incident book, which is kept for this purpose in the Headteacher’s Office.

It is school policy to inform the parents of the pupil/pupils concerned as soon as is practicable after any significant incident and ask them to attend a meeting in school with the Headteacher. At this meeting parents will be asked to sign the Incident Book – to record that they have been made aware of the incident.

Teachers should be mindful of the need to safeguard their own position by:

1. ensuring there is an adult witness to all discipline procedures which are necessitated by a significant incident.
2. ensuring that both the teacher directly involved, and any adult or child witnesses make a full statement as soon as practicable after the incident signing and dating it.
3. ensuring that a full record is kept of the meeting with parents which should be held as soon as possible after the incident, and that all parties present at the meeting should sign the record. An Incident Book is kept in school for this purpose.

The school is aware of the guidance issued by Departments for Health and Education in July 2013.

This guidance relates to pupils who display severe behavioural difficulties associated with learning difficulties and is unlikely to be relevant to pupils at Calder House.

However, it is to be noted that the underlying principles are:

1. The use of force should be avoided wherever possible.
2. There are occasions where the use of force is appropriate.
3. When force is necessary it must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.

Incidents where the use of restrictive physical intervention has been used MUST be recorded in the Incident Book and countersigned by the Headteacher or in her absence by the Managing Director within 8 hours or as soon as practicable whichever is the sooner. It is not considered necessary to develop a written protocol, as incidents requiring restrictive physical intervention are likely to occur only very rarely.

Descriptions of non-restrictive and restrictive physical intervention are given at the end of this document. Planned and unplanned intervention should be distinguished: planned intervention will always involve the Headteacher or in her absence the Managing Director or Director of Studies. Unplanned intervention may involve any member of staff and will arise in an emergency situation as a result of unforeseen events.

In all cases any physical intervention must be proportionate to the behaviour of the individual to be controlled and the harm they might cause.

Situations, which might give rise to the need for physical intervention, include:

1. To separate a pupil who responds to another with physical aggression
2. To protect a pupil from a dangerous situation
3. To disengage from a pupil who is hurting or about to hurt a member of staff
4. To prevent behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline within the school – including restraint where property is being damaged or about to be damaged

The full Department for Education guidance is available in the School Office in the child protection folder. This is kept by the Headteacher.

Restrictive physical intervention (restraint):

Restrictive physical intervention is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting a young person from harming him/herself or others or seriously damaging property. This would not normally be appropriate in a school setting.

Non-restrictive intervention:

Holding - holding would discourage a child from harming him/herself, others or property. Young people may be successfully engaged by a hand placed firmly on the arm or shoulder to reinforce the attempts of teachers/adults to reason with them or to emphasise the concern felt for them. Teachers may also firmly encourage a young person to move away from a situation by placing a hand on their arm or around their shoulders and moving them away.

Obstructing - the use of a teacher's physical presence without touching to obstruct or restrict a child's movement. An example of obstructing would be to restrict a child's movement around a room or building to prevent him or her picking up an object to use as a missile.

Non-restrictive physical interventions should not be used as a matter of routine but only if absolutely necessary to the situation, in order to safeguard the child or another person. Holding should involve no more than a hand placed on an arm or shoulder or leading a child by one or both



hands and/or possibly by the flat of one hand placed against a child's back in order to guide him/her to some other place or activity. An example of holding would be to avoid external danger.

(Updated and reviewed October 2017)

