

BENTLEY ST PAUL'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY FOR USE OF REASONABLE FORCE AND
RESTRAINT



'Growing together in faith, love and trust, we will succeed.'

Date of Policy: February 2016

Date of Review: February 2018

Date Ratified by FGB:

At Bentley St Paul's we believe in equality and mutual respect. All children have the right to feel safe and secure within both the classroom and playground. Where children's behaviour and actions put this in question or they pose a danger to themselves or others around them it may be necessary to restrain with reasonable force.

Physical Restraint

Objectives

- To protect staff and students
- To prevent serious breaches of school discipline
- To prevent serious damage to property
- To reduce the likelihood of actions by staff being successfully challenged in the courts

What is reasonable force?

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.

Minimising the need to use force

It is important to have a calm, orderly and supportive school climate that minimises the risk and threat of violence of any kind.

Wherever practicable, staff will issue a warning to a student that force may have to be used before using it.

Staff authorised to use force

All teachers and members of staff, who have the Head's authorisation to be in control of or take charge of students, automatically have the power to use force.

Deciding when to use force

Staff can use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- a. Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student himself); or
- b. Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any students receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Any force used must be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent.

The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified:

- Student attack on staff or student
- Students fighting
- Damage to property
- Rough play
- Use of dangerous objects
- Absconding if likely to involve safety

Using force

Wherever possible, staff should tell the student to stop and be calm and measured. They should not give the impression of acting out of anger, frustration or punishment. *Force should cease quickly.* Examples include:

- Standing between students
- leading by the arm, hand on the centre of the back and finally
- appropriate restrictive holds.

The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

When exercising the power to use force, we must also take proper account of any special need and/or disability that a student might have.

Staff working with special needs students will have an awareness of situations that may provoke difficult behaviour, preventative strategies and de-escalation techniques. They will know of any previous incidents and handling strategies that are recommended.

SLT may be called – though not necessarily waited for. They should be involved in post-incident follow up.

It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Always avoid touching or restraining in such a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct. Sometimes physical contact may be proper or necessary – such as sport and first aid.

Staff training

There may be particular needs for staff that work closely with students with additional needs or disability; however, training will be offered to all staff. Staff should be made aware of this policy and procedures during their Induction.

Recording and reporting incidents

Systematic records of any serious incident are kept using the specific form (See Appendix 1)

It is very important to have *a witness* to what happened. After any recordable incident, parents should always be informed.

Post-incident support

First aid and emotional support will be offered for staff and students. Punishments such as exclusions and pastoral support programmes may follow.

Dealing with complaints and allegations

Parents and students have a right to complain about actions taken by school staff and should contact the Head-teacher.

Monitoring and review

Members of the Governing Body, the Learning Support Department, the Pastoral Committee and the SLT will review this policy every 2 years.

Bentley St Paul's C of E Primary School

Record of Incident Form Details of student or students on whom force was used by a member of staff
Name
Class
Date, time and location of incident
Names of staff involved (directly or as witnesses)
Details of other students involved (directly or as witnesses), including whether any of the students involved were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social reasons.
Description of incident by the staff involved, including any attempts to deescalate and warnings given that force might be used.
Reason for using force and description of force used

Any injury suffered by staff or students and any first aid and/or medical attention Required.	
Follow up, including post-incident support and any disciplinary action against students.	
Any information about the incident shared with staff not involved in it and external agencies	
When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the incident and any views they have expressed.	
Has any complaint been lodged (details should not be recorded here)? YES/No	
Report compiled by: Name and role	Signed Date
Report countersigned by: Name and role	Signed Date