

Long Furlong School

Use of Force/Restraint Policy

Rationale

All school staff members have a legal power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, damaging school property, and to maintain good order and discipline. This power 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 (details included in volunteer induction pack).

In schools, force is generally used for two different purposes – to control pupils and to restrain them.

- Control can mean either passive physical contact (e.g. standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path) or active physical contact (e.g. leading a pupil by the hand or arm, or ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back).
- When members of staff use 'restraint' they physically prevent a pupil from continuing what they were doing after they have been told to stop. The use of restraint techniques is usually used in more extreme circumstances, such as when two pupils are involved in a fight and physical intervention is needed to separate them.

Some examples of when reasonable force might be used are:

- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff, or another pupil, or to stop a fight between two or more pupils
- To prevent a pupil causing deliberate damage to property
- To prevent a pupil causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- To prevent a pupil behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson
- To prevent a pupil behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school sporting event or school visit
- To remove disruptive children from the classroom or another area point in the school premises where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- To 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
- To restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Policy Statements

- Force or restraint may be used where pupils (including those from another school) are on school premises, or are elsewhere under the lawful control or charge of a staff member (for example, on a school visit).

- The school will not seek to inhibit the ability of the staff to use force by adopting a 'no contact' policy. The power to use force helps ensure pupil and school safety, and the risk of a no-contact policy is that it might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a pupil, or prevent them taking an action needed to prevent a pupil causing injury to others.
- Force/restraint will only be used as a last resort. As stated in Long Furlong's Behaviour Policy, we want to create a safe, calm, orderly and caring environment where teaching and learning can take place effectively; this climate should lessen the risk and threat of violence of any kind.
- The judgement on whether to use force and what force to use should always depend on the circumstances of each case and – crucially in the case of pupils with special education needs and disabilities – information about the individual concerned.
- The school will draw up an individual risk assessment and Behaviour Plan where it is known that force is more likely to be necessary to restrain a particular pupil, e.g. a pupil whose special educational needs and/or disability is associated with extreme behaviour
- The school will offer training to staff in appropriate use of force and restraint techniques, seeking support from the Local Authority and outside agencies if necessary
- The Governing body will ensure that a procedure is in place for recording each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil, and for reporting these incidents to the pupil's parents/carers as soon as practicable after the incident. Staff will record instances where force or restrain has been used in the numbered and bound book. This book is kept in a secure place in school, and remains in school for the required number of years. The Governing body will take all reasonable steps to ensure that staff follow this procedure.
- If reporting the incident to parents/carers might be likely to result in significant harm to the pupil, the incident will be reported to the Local Authority,
- Determining whether an incident is significant will vary on a case by case basis. The school will consider factors such as the pupil's behaviour and the level of risk presented at the time, the degree of force used and whether it was proportionate in relation to the behaviour, together with the effect on the pupil and/or member of staff.
- Members of staff are not expected to put themselves at risk.
- The school acknowledges that it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment, as it falls within the definition of corporal punishment, which is illegal.
- The school acknowledges its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with Special Educational Needs

Sharing and monitoring this policy

The policy will be shared with all parents/carers via the school website and school newsletter.

The Headteacher will monitor the application of this policy and take appropriate steps to ensure that it is operating effectively.

The policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body on a 3-yearly basis to ensure its effective application.