

Standard Operating Procedure 	Physical Intervention Policy
Owner	E Franciosa
Effective Date	October 2017

Edmonton County School has a strong commitment towards every child's personal safety and well-being.

In law, school staff have a power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.

Edmonton County School recognises that there may be a need to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to its pupils, staff and property. The school is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for children's safety and welfare will deal appropriately with all incidents involving aggressive behaviour or bring a pupil under control with anyone in their care, and will only use physical intervention as a last resort in line with DfE advice. If used at all it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil.

The right to use reasonable force to restrain a pupil is detailed in https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf

Our approach to best practice

In the following situations staff must judge whether or not physical intervention would be reasonable or appropriate:

- Where there is a risk to the safety of staff, children or visitors
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property
- Where a pupil's behaviour is prejudicial to good order and discipline
- Where a pupil is committing a criminal offence

Staff will view physical intervention or restraint of pupils as a last resort to ensure the safety of the child, other children and/or school staff. The maintenance of a safe environment for everyone involved is paramount. If a pupil is behaving aggressively, or has lost control of his/her own actions, every effort will be made by staff to manage the behaviour positively to prevent a deterioration of the situation.

All staff will understand the importance of responding to the feelings of the child which lie beneath the behaviour as well as to the behaviour itself.

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.

Notes:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

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 headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

Physical Intervention/Restrain Approaches which can be regarded as reasonable in appropriate circumstances

The following approaches are regarded as reasonable in appropriate circumstances.

- Holding for security and to reduce anxiety where there is potential risk, even if the pupil is not yet out of control. This is best used when the pupil is anxious or confused. *Its purpose is to defuse or prevent escalation.* Staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted by the pupil as aggression.
- Physically interposing between pupils

- Blocking a pupil's path if he/she is in danger of running away in the school building or entering an inappropriate area of the school
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a pupil away from a situation
- In extreme cases using restrictive holds to prevent physical danger to the pupil and/or others using all techniques from the Positive Approach training programme

In exceptional circumstances, where there is immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of 'reasonable force'; for example, to prevent a pupil running out of school, running off a pavement into a busy road, or to prevent a pupil from hitting someone, or throwing something that would cause physical harm or danger.

Our practice: specific guidelines

Staff who may need to intervene with a child will seek assistance from other members of staff who have been fully trained in the "Positive Approach Programme" led by the local authority and refreshed regularly. Staff must always use the minimum force and restrain for the minimum amount of time.

Staff will be aware of the need to tell the pupil being restrained, in a calm and reassuring manner, that the reason for the intervention is to keep the child and others safe.

Normally the child should be told that the adult intends to restrain them and that when the behaviour changes the restraint will cease.

For example:

'Gemma. Stop kicking me. If you do not stop kicking me I will hold your legs until you stop.'

'Nathan. Stop hitting Mohammed. If you do not stop hitting him, I will hold your arms until you stop.'

All staff who become aware that another member of staff is having to intervene physically with a child will have a responsibility to provide a presence, and to offer support and assistance should this be required. A child's behaviour may be adversely affected by the presence of an audience (similarly other children may be adversely

affected by another child's extreme behaviour). Wherever possible, the audience will be removed, or if this is not possible, the pupil will be removed from the audience.

Once the restraint has taken place pupil and member(s) of staff will withdraw to a quiet, but not completely private, place. At least two members of staff must be present.

Reporting and Recording an incident

The Head of Primary or Deputy Head of Primary, or if not immediately available a senior member of staff will be informed of an incident involving any physical intervention. The Head of Primary must be informed without delay.

The parent/s of the child will be contacted Head of Primary, Deputy Head of Primary or senior member of staff, and be asked to come into school as soon as possible to be informed of the incident and/or written formally.

All incidents will be recorded in detail by the staff member/s involved. Any photographic evidence should be stored in a safe place and form part of the record of the incident.

Procedures for managing pupils with identified challenging behaviour and/or significant learning needs

Any pupil who falls into the above category, and who routinely require control or physical intervention, will have a clear plan for physical intervention agreed in advance with parents/carers. The plan, which may form part of a Pastoral Support Plan should be updated on a regular basis.

A risk assessment will be carried out by school staff, and updated on a regular basis.

All details of any possible physical intervention will be discussed fully with parents/carers in advance. If there is a need for physical intervention this will be recorded and dated by the appropriate member/s of staff, including the type of intervention used. Any departures from the agreed plan will be recorded and discussed with parents/carers.

Authorisation of staff to use physical intervention

We recognise that physical intervention will be used infrequently, that is, as a last resort to maintaining a safe environment.

All staff are, by the nature of their roles, authorised to use reasonable actions as appropriate where a child or other children are at risk of danger or harm. Staff trained in *Positive Approach* techniques be called as a matter of urgency to support serious incidents.

Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually with staff and governors

As part of their statutory monitoring role governors will be informed of the number of any physical interventions annually.

In the event of the use of force or restraint leading to injury of a member of staff or a child, or the serious breakdown of order in the primary phase, the Executive Headteacher must be informed without delay.

The Executive Headteacher may initiate an inquiry and the outcomes reported to the Executive Headteacher.