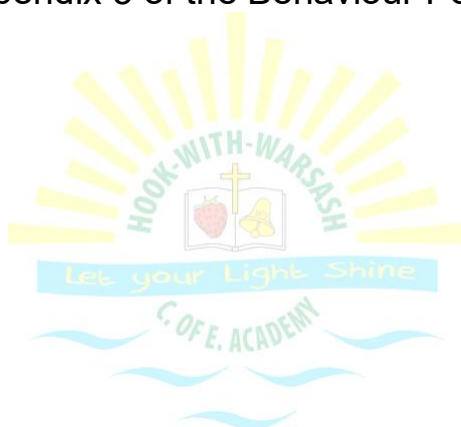


Hook-with-Warsash Church of England Academy

Policy for the Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils

Appendix 3 of the Behaviour Policy



Signed:

Chair of Governors _____

Headteacher _____

Reviewed: **November 2025**

Date to be Reviewed: **November 2026**

Statutory Review Period: Annual

Pupil Discipline Curriculum & Early Years Policy

“Let Your Light Shine”

To provide an inspirational environment based on Christian values where individuals can excel and flourish academically, socially and emotionally, preparing them for life’s journey.

HOOK-WITH WARSASH C of E ACADEMY
POLICY FOR THE USE OF FORCE TO CONTROL OR RESTRAIN PUPILS

Rationale

At Hook-with-Warsash C.E. Academy our core Christian values are at the heart of our school ethos and form the basis of the behaviour policy. It is a key way that we realise our vision of 'Let your light shine'. We are all God's children and are valued by God and each other. This informs the support children receive and the strategies we implement to change behaviours and reduce anxieties which lead to the need to control and restrain pupils.

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.

Aims and values which guide this policy:

- to provide a secure environment in which all individuals are valued;

Planning for incidents

When the Academy becomes aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that may require physical control or restraint this policy will be adhered to.

Authorised staff

- all teachers within the Academy are able to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils (ie no more force than is necessary – see below);
- all classroom assistants, special needs assistants and the senior mid-day supervisory assistant are able to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils (ie no more force than is necessary- see below);
- reasonable force may be used to prevent pupils from:
 - hurting themselves or others;
 - significantly damaging property,
 - ~~-causing serious disorder;~~
 - ~~-compromising the maintenance of good order and discipline in school;~~
 - ~~-committing an offence;~~
- 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, including any previously identified specific needs and characteristics of the individual pupil.

Force

This can range from guiding a pupil to safety to more extreme circumstances where a pupil needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury to him or herself or to others. **Force must be proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent.**

Control

This 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 out of a classroom.

Restraint

To use physical contact to bring a child under control.

Action in self-defence or in an emergency

Everyone has the right to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so. In an emergency, for example, if a pupil was at immediate risk of injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff is able to intervene.

Types of incidents

There are a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a pupil. They will fall into three broad categories:

1. Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury;
2. Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property;
3. Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Examples of situations that fall within one of the first two categories:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- pupils are fighting;
- a pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- a pupil is running in a corridor in a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident or be likely to injure him or herself or others;
- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave the Academy where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of other;
- a pupil is at risk of harming him or herself through physical outbursts.

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom;
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson (NB in these circumstances it is anticipated that the Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher would be summoned to the classroom);
- a pupil is behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit.

There is no legal definition of ‘reasonable force’. It will always depend on all the circumstances of the case. Within the Academy the following guidelines apply:

- The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if it is believed by the individual that the circumstances of the particular incident is severe enough to warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore, physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that could be resolved without force.
- The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequence it is intended to prevent. Any forces used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.
- 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

Power to search pupils without consent

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, the headteachers and other senior members of staff may use such force as is reasonable, given the circumstances, to conduct a search for the following “prohibited items”:

- sharps;
- alcohol;
- drugs;

- stolen items;
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks;
- pornographic images;
- mobile phones;
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Practical considerations

Before intervening physically, a teacher should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if he or she does not.

Communication must continue with the pupil throughout the incident, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed. A member of staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish a pupil.

A teacher should not intervene in an incident without help if the teacher believes he or she may be at risk of injury. In those circumstances the teacher should remove other pupils who might be at risk, and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or where necessary phone the police. The teacher should inform the pupil(s) that he or she has sent for help. Until assistance arrives the teacher should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

Application of force

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff:

- physically interposing between pupils;
- blocking a pupil's path;
- holding;
- leading a pupil by the hand or arm;

Where a circumstance dictates that more restrictive holds are necessary only staff with restraint training should engage in this.

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an 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 young pupil running off a pavement on to a busy road.

~~In other circumstances staff should NOT act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:~~

- ~~• holding a pupil around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe;~~
- ~~• slapping, punching or kicking a pupil;~~
- ~~• twisting or forcing limbs against a joint;~~
- ~~• tripping up a pupil;~~
- ~~• holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear;~~
- ~~• holding a pupil face down on the ground;~~

Always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

Always consider carefully whether physical intervention is right.

Always try to use other strategies rather than force.

The possible consequences of intervention physically, including the risk of increasing disruption or actually provoking an attack, need to be carefully evaluated.

Physical force should never be used either as a substitute for good behaviour management or as a punishment.

Reporting incidents

It is essential that there is a detailed, contemporaneous, written report of any occasion where force is used. The report should be written as soon as possible afterwards. It should include:

- the name(s) of the pupil(s) involved, and when and where the incident took place;
- the names of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident;
- the reason that force was necessary (e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil, another pupil or member of staff);
- how the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long;
- the pupil's response, and the outcome of the incident;
- details of any injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil or a member of staff and of any damage to property.

This is recorded on CPOMS and if the Headteacher deems it to be a significant incident the staff member involved will be asked to complete the form in Annex 1, which will also then be uploaded onto CPOMS.

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from a senior colleague or a representative of their professional association when compiling a report. A copy of the report should be retained.

The Headteacher or the most senior member of staff on the site at the time should be informed immediately following any such incident.

The parents of the pupil involved are to be informed of the incident and have the opportunity to discuss it. The Headteacher, or head of site, to which the incident is reported, will consider whether that should be done straight away or at the end of the school day, and whether parents should be told orally or in writing.

Complaints

- The possibility that a complaint might result in a disciplinary hearing, or a criminal prosecution, or in a civil action brought by a pupil or parent, cannot be ruled out;
- Any complaints about the use of force will be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated in line with the Academies Complaints Procedure;
- In the event of a complaint, it would be for the disciplinary panel or the court to decide whether the use and degree of force was reasonable in the circumstances. However, where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action;
- In the event of an initial investigation leading to the conclusion that there is a serious case to answer, suspension of the member of staff involved may be warranted until the allegation is resolved.

As the employer, the Governing Body has a duty of care towards the members of staff that it employs and will always:

- ensure that if a decision is taken to suspend a teacher, he or she will have access to a named contact who can provide support;

- consider whether a member of staff has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take any disciplinary action against the member of staff;
- provide appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is involved in an incident in which physical force is used, regardless of whether or not any formal allegation or complaint is made following the incident.

Other physical contact with pupils

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary and examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary are:

- holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to Collective Worship, when walking together around the Academy or on an outside visit;
- when comforting a distressed pupil;
- when a pupil is being congratulated or praised;
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;
- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching; and
- to give first aid.

However, there may be some children for whom touching is particularly unwelcome. For example, some pupils may be particularly sensitive to physical contact.

A Low Level Concern policy is in place when staff are unsure about the physical contact being displayed.

Reviewed: ~~November 2024~~ October 2025

Date for Review: ~~November 2025~~ October 2026

ANNEX 1

RECORD OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Name of Pupil:

DOB:

Class:

Where did the incident occur?

When did the incident occur? Date/Time

Describe the incident:

Was anyone else involved? (give names)

Did anyone else see what happened? (give names)

What behaviour was the pupil presenting that warranted restraint?

Was there damage to property or an assault on a pupil or staff during the incident?

What did you do to try to defuse the situation before using restraint?

(i) How was the pupil restrained? (describe)
e.g. two people escort; one person wrap; supine control

(ii) For how long?

(iii) By how many staff members?

~~(iv) Were they authorised?~~ If a child is a danger to themselves, another or property you don't need authorisation.

Was anyone injured? YES / NO
If yes, give details

Was this recorded in the accident book? YES / NO

Was the pupil checked for injuries by a member of staff who was not involved in the incident? YES / NO
If yes, by whom?

Implications for future planning
What do you think this behaviour was about?
e.g. attention; emotional release; task escape mechanism; other

What would you do differently next time to avoid the need for physical restraint?

Are other staff aware of the need for a planned response to the pupil?

YES / NO

**The incident was reported by:
(include position)**

**Parent/Carer was informed by:
Telephone, Letter (with pupil) Letter (post), personally**

When were they informed? Time/Date

**Incident form completed by:
(Include post)**

Date: