



## USE OF FORCE AND RESTRAINT POLICY

**Reviewed by Safeguarding Committee: March 2016**

**Date of next review: March 2019**

At Handcross School, every child is special

### **Aims for the School**

- To make all children and staff feel safe, happy, respected, cared for and have a sense of belonging. To create a trusting atmosphere in which the spiritual life and personal qualities of the children will flourish and their growing confidence and independence nurtured.
- For there to be high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge **every** child to learn in every aspect of a broad curriculum. For the children to learn how to think independently, develop their imaginations and have fun. For every day to be used to the full.
- To have good working relationships between all who work in the school and a strong partnership with the parents, other schools and the community.
- To create an in/outdoor environment which is attractive, lively, stimulating, informative and which supports the children's learning.
- For the learning to be based on our knowledge of *how* children learn, the preferences and interests expressed by the children themselves and from stimuli within the locality.
- For exciting and memorable lessons to be well planned and resourced, with plenty of rich, satisfying, enjoyable, multi-sensory experiences, and for lessons to be suitably differentiated to meet every individual need.
- For the good and relevant use of IT to be fully exploited.
- To set short, medium and long-term goals which challenge and stretch each individual, and for progress to be carefully tracked.
- For teachers to accurately assess individuals at every stage of the learning so that the resulting interventions have a direct *impact on the children's learning*.
- For the children to be able to talk about their progress towards their targets, and for their achievements to be celebrated.
- For the children to be prepared to lead a life within a diverse and constantly changing society, in which they will respect British values, adopt a healthy lifestyle, achieve economic well-being, and make a positive contribution.

September 2016

### 1) Introduction

The key objective of this policy is to maintain the safety of pupils and staff; to prevent serious breaches of school discipline or to prevent serious damage to property. It is the belief of this school that force or restraint should only be used when there is no viable alternative, and then only to the minimum needed.

This policy sets out in which circumstances force might be used, by whom, and in what form, and also makes clear what recording and follow up action should happen afterwards.

### 2) Minimising the need to use force

At this school, we believe that a calm environment coupled with positive behaviour management strategies will result in very little need for force or restraint.

SEAL is used within PSHCE to teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings.

Force is used only when the risks involved outweigh the risks in not doing so.

It is unlawful to use force as a punishment.

### 3) Staff authorised to use force

All staff who deal with children have the authority to use force if necessary. These include the Headteacher, teachers, teaching assistants and midday assistants, although on occasion in an emergency this might also include other adults who are present, for example the caretaker or office staff.

Other adults who are responsible for children on a temporary basis, for example, with a group on a school trip, in line with common law also have the authority to use reasonable force for the duration of that activity if a child is at risk.

Permanent staff are informed of their authorisation at the commencement of their employment.

Adults who have temporary authorisation are informed prior to the activity taking place by their line manager, or by the teacher if this is for a class based or school visit activity.

#### 4) **Deciding whether to use force**

***There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force, so the following points should be taken into consideration:***

***Restraint should only be used if:***

- A child is causing personal injury to, or damage to property of, any person, including themselves.
- A child is significantly prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at school.

*(Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006)*

Staff should only use force when:

- The potential consequences of not intervening are sufficiently serious to justify considering the use of force;
- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means are low;
- The risk associated with not using force outweighs those of using force.

Staff should always be well appraised of children who present significant risk to themselves or others, and adequate risk assessments should be in place for both class based, but especially for out-of-school activities. All of these should be signed by the Educational Visits Coordinator.

Some examples of situations which might merit the use of force would be:

- Attack on a child/member of staff
- Criminal damage
- Fighting
- Serious risk of injury even if unintentional (eg: very rough play)
- Where child leaves the class or school without permission and this would lead to a serious risk of harm.
- Where a child won't leave the classroom when asked, and is seriously disrupting the lesson

#### 5) **Using force**

- Passive: blocking or impeding an action taking place.
- Active:
  - Leading by the hand / arm
  - Ushering with hand in the centre of the back
  - Restrictive holds

If there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, **any** necessary action should be taken.

6) **Staff training**

New staff are informed about restraint procedures and policy on induction. Only staff who have been trained in Team Teach methods should undertake any restraint.

7) **Recording incidents**

Records should be kept of any significant incidents where force has been used in the Child Protection folder, the 'serious incident' log.

Parents should be informed where and when the incident took place, although those involved may remain anonymous. This communication should initially be by phone, on that day. Then the parent(s) should be informed in writing of the incident, and should receive with the letter a copy of this policy.

8) **Complaints**

Should parents/ carers wish to raise a complaint about the use of force/ restraint, they should in the first instance discuss this with the Headteacher. If this does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, they should put their complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors, via the school office.

9) **Further information**

Any parent wishing to know more details about the Department for Education Guidance 'Use of reasonable force' July 2013 can find details at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

10) **Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if government guidance changes.