
POLICY ON THE USE OF FORCE TO RESTRAIN OR CONTROL PUPILS

Policy Custodian: Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Approving Body: MTS Senior Leadership Team

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the School Safeguarding Policy.

Introduction

The school policy is that the use of force should be avoided at all costs and should be used only when all other options have been explored. Staff will be made aware if it is known that a particular pupil is likely to be confrontational and aggressive; they will have advised on strategies to deal with incidents that may occur.

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.

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.

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.

In any incident the teacher should first tell the pupil to stop (unless there is an immediate danger) and what will happen if he does not. If restraint becomes necessary, as the incident progresses the teacher should continue to communicate to the pupil and indicate that restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measured approach is essential and teachers should never give the impression that they have lost their temper. Teachers should not intervene when to do so would put themselves at risk (when facing a bigger pupil, a pupil carrying a weapon or where there are a number of pupils involved). In this situation other pupils should be removed and help should be summoned.

Actions that may be taken are:

Though it is generally the rule that all forms of physical contact between teacher and pupil should be avoided there will be occasions when it is both appropriate and necessary. This can involve demonstration of techniques in sports, P.E. or other lessons, the administration of First Aid or when a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. Teachers need to use their own professional judgement to decide when this is appropriate. Staff should also remember that the most innocent and well-intentioned contact can sometimes be misconstrued, particularly by pupils who are in their adolescent years.