



Wheatcroft C P Policy

Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) to Care for Pupils

Background:

All employees at Wheatcroft Community Primary School recognise the importance of developing and maintaining positive relationships with pupils, staff and their families. We strive to provide quality teaching and learning opportunities, which underpin the good social and emotional development of all pupils. This policy should be read in conjunction with our policies on: Child Protection, Behaviour, Attendance, Equalities, Teaching and Learning, Thrive and Special Educational Needs (SEN).

Rationale:

The vast majority of pupils at Wheatcroft Community Primary School behave very well and make progress in whatever the setting. However, in order to fulfil our duty of care to all pupils, prevent harm and maintain a safe and secure learning environment, as a last resort, we may, on a very small number of occasions, need to physically care for (restrain) a pupil for his/her own safety and the safety of others.

This policy covers those situations where incidents are foreseeable and school has planned interventions which are agreed and supported by parents/carers; and are monitored through care or individual pupil plans.

It does not cover emergency situations which cannot reasonably be planned for in advance.

Principles:

We may restrain a pupil, if that pupil is at risk of causing significant harm to himself /herself, or to other pupils /adults. **However, to be lawful, the force used needs to be the minimum necessary and be in proportion to the consequences that it is intended to prevent.**

What is Reasonable Force?

- 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 (reasonable force may also constitute non-contact methods of restraint, such as, but not limited to, standing in a doorway to prevent entry/exit).
- Force is usually used to either 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.

- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- 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.

Staff to which this power applies is defined in section 95 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. They are:

- any teacher who works at our school, and
- any other person whom the head teacher has specifically authorised.

When can reasonable force be used?

We must never use restraint as a punishment, to physically overpower a pupil who is not putting themselves or others of serious risk of harm or as a threat to manage behaviour. It should only be used in the following circumstances to prevent pupils from

- i) committing a criminal offence;
- ii) causing personal injury to themselves or others, or damage to property;
- iii.) prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school.

Examples include to

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- 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;
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves **or others** through physical outbursts.

We must always take account of any SEN and/or learning disability that a pupil may experience. We have two key duties under the Equality Act 2010:

- a) not to treat a disabled pupil less favourably, for a reason relating to his/her disability, than someone to whom that reason does not apply, without justification, and
- b) to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage to pupils who are not disabled (reasonable adjustments duty).

Key staff have received up to date training on the use of RPI in January 2024 and, where possible, these members of staff will be called upon to undertake any physical intervention that is required to take place. Senior Leaders keep a record of all staff who have had training and ensure that opportunities for future training are provided. It is the responsibility of each member of staff to make an assessment of the particular circumstances. Staff will need to know the contents of this policy and decide whether they feel they are capable of managing the situation alone and if physical intervention is required.

Where it is possible, more than one member of staff should be involved and, ideally where a member of staff is physically managing a pupil of the opposite sex, a member of staff of the same sex as the pupil should be present from the earliest time possible.

At the conclusion of any incident, the pupil and member/s of staff involved should be offered support to reflect on the circumstances and mediate a best way forward.

All incidents of restraint must be recorded on the school management information system, CPOMs, in the behaviour log. Incidents are reported to parents as soon as reasonably possible, but always within 24 hours and are monitored regularly (half-termly) by the Senior Leadership Team, and reported on to the governing body each term.

Responding to complaints:

The use of RPI can lead to allegations of inappropriate or excessive use. In the event of a complaint being received in relation to the use of force by staff, the matter should be dealt with in accordance with agreed procedures for handling allegations against members of staff.

Please refer the Department for Education (DfE) guidance on the Use of Reasonable Force 2013.