



Context.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 establishes the power of teachers and other staff to use **reasonable force** to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following;

- Self injuring
- Causing injury to others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline.

Ryecroft Primary Academy recognises that there is a need, reflected by this act, to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to its' pupils, staff and property.

This Positive Handling Policy should be considered alongside other relevant policies in the school, specifically those involving behaviour, bullying, child protection and health and safety.

Purpose of policy.

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in our school.

At Ryecroft Primary Academy it is recognised that the vast majority of our pupils respond positively to the Behaviour Policy that operates in school. This ensures the well being and safety of all pupils and staff in our setting.

It is also recognised that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where extreme challenging behaviour is compromising the safety and well being of the pupil themselves and/or other staff and pupils in school.

Ryecroft Primary Academy acknowledges that physical handling techniques are only part of a whole school approach to behaviour management and should be used **only as a last resort** in line with the DFES advice.

There must also be recognition of the distinction between appropriate physical contact used in everyday situations to support, encourage, guide or comfort and the use of physical intervention to disengage pupils whose behaviour is posing a threat to themselves or others.

Implications of the policy.

Types of incident where the use of physical handling techniques may be necessary are:

- **Action where a pupil places him/herself at risk.**
- **Action where a pupil places other pupils or staff at risk.**
- **Action leading to serious damage to property.**
- **Action where a pupil is compromising good order and discipline.**

Staff have a responsibility to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention.

“Reasonable force” will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk. See:

(“Use of Reasonable Force – Advice for Headteachers, staff and Governing Bodies.” DFE July 2013)

Strategies for dealing with challenging behaviour.

As endorsed in the school’s Behaviour Policy, staff utilise consistent positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order.

Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to pupils, staff or property.

Before any physical intervention:

- Try to de-escalate the situation by explain that you understand how they feel and want to help
- Try to distract the pupil
- Provide choices so that the pupil can see a way out
- Remind pupils of strategies they can employ/have practised
- Suggest a safe place to go and calm down

Where this doesn’t work and unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and there is a risk of harm, some or all of the following approaches should then be taken according to the circumstances.

- Ask the pupil to behave appropriately, clearly stating the desired behaviour.
- Tell the pupil that physical intervention will take place if inappropriate behaviour continues.
- Intervene in a measured way using physical intervention – reasonable force used to prevent a child harming him/herself, others or property.

Training in physical intervention has been delivered by ‘React UK’ an accredited training organisation recognised by Delta Trust.

The Reach UK approach includes an understanding of personal space, body language and a personal safety curriculum as well as safe physical handling techniques.

Use of Positive Handling Techniques.

The use of restraint requires skill, judgement and knowledge of non-harmful methods of control. Reasonable force would include those methods taught and practised in React UK Positive Handling training.

The degree of physical intervention employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent.

Any physical intervention should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. In all cases, the person exercising the restraint must be authorised by the Headteacher and have received appropriate and approved training.

Physical Control

This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, for example guiding or leading a pupil by the arm or shoulder with little or no force. The important factor within these situations is the compliance of the child as a result of the intervention.

Physical Intervention

This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. The methods used will be the approved techniques accredited by the React UK organisation (**see Annexe A: Restrictive Techniques**). It is important to note that the use of “reasonable force” should be seen as a last resort.

Positive Handling Plans.

Where appropriate, Positive Handling Plans are written for individual children and these will be attached to the child’s Individual Education Plan.

Risk assessments are completed against each child when physical restraint may need to be used in the context of identified target behaviours.

Health and Safety

When using reasonable force/physical intervention, the pupil’s health and safety must always be considered.

Physical handling should involve the minimum amount of force necessary to resolve the situation.

Recording.

In the event of an incident where physical restraint is required, it will be recorded in the ‘Bound and Numbered’ incident book within 24 hours and entered onto Cpoms. If possible, all staff and children involved will undertake a de-brief meeting with the Head teacher. The parents/carers should be informed of the incident as soon as possible.

A Health and Safety /Incident Form will be completed and returned to the Authority in situations where injury has occurred to either members of staff or pupils.

The Head teacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure.

Complaints.

The availability of a clear policy about reasonable force and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them.

Any complaints about staff will be investigated through the School's Complaints Policy. If necessary the complaint will be dealt with by the Staff Disciplinary Procedures and/or Child Protection Procedures.

Monitoring Incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use reasonable force, this will always be recorded and documented following agreed procedures. Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Head teacher to the needs of pupils whose behaviour may require the use of reasonable force.

Regular monitoring of incidents will take place and the results used to inform planning to meet the needs of individual pupils and the school.

A Register of False Accusations made against staff will be maintained as an additional safeguard for staff working in this difficult area.