



## HOE BRIDGE SCHOOL

# PHYSICAL RESTRAINTS POLICY

### Statement

Hoe Bridge School is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all staff and pupils on both the Hoe Bridge and Greenfield sites. A comprehensive Behaviour Policy, allied with an Anti-Bullying Policy, is in place and the guidelines that follow are written to support staff in ensuring that pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour, whilst unusual, are presented with opportunities to behave appropriately through:

- Positive behaviour management
- Conflict resolution strategies
- Calming strategies
- Anger management solutions

Our pupils are young and so this is very much a last resort and should be treated as such.

*“Corporal punishment is prohibited for all pupils in Independent Schools”* – School Standards and Framework Act 1998. However, the 1996 Education Act allows all teachers to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils, if appropriate.

Hoe Bridge School seeks to implement this policy through adherence to the procedures outlined below. The school is committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory, in accordance with the UK Equality Act (2010).

This policy applies to all members of our school community, including those in our EYFS setting. At Greenfield School, we follow guidance set out in the latest Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

Safeguarding is central to our practice, to protect children from harm, supporting their well-being and emotional development.

The policy should read in conjunction with Greenfield School's:

- Behaviour, Rewards, Sanctions and Exclusions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- SEND Needs

The policy is reviewed annually by the Hoe Bridge Senior Management Team or as legislation changes and events require. The next date for review is July 2026.

## Procedures

### **What is meant by reasonable force?**

There is no precise legal definition of "reasonable force" so it is not possible to state, in fully comprehensive terms, when it is appropriate to use physical force to restrain or control pupils or the degree of force that may reasonably be used. It will always depend on the circumstances of each case. However, there are three relevant points to consider:

- The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident 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 clearly 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 consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result
- Whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could reasonably be employed, might also depend on, amongst other things, the age, level of understanding of the pupil, and any physical disability he/she may have.

### **When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?**

In a situation where other behaviour management strategies have failed to resolve the problem, or are inappropriate (e.g. in an emergency), there are a wide variety of circumstances in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to restrain or control a pupil. They will fall into two broad categories:

- where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury to others.
- where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property.

Examples of such situations are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil.
- pupils are fighting.
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects.
- a pupil absconds from school (this will only apply if a pupil would be at serious risk if not kept in school).

**What might be regarded as constituting reasonable force?**

Physical intervention can take a number of forms. It might involve staff:

- physically interposing between pupils.
- blocking a pupil's path.
- leading a pupil by the arm.
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back.
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds, including holding, pushing and pulling.

**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, or to prevent a pupil hitting someone, or throwing something.**

However, staff should never act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- holding a pupil round the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the pupil's ability to breathe.
- slapping, punching, kicking, or using any implement on a pupil.
- throwing any object at a pupil.
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint.
- tripping up a pupil.
- holding a pupil face down on the ground.

Staff should also avoid touching or holding a pupil in any way that might be considered indecent.

### **Recording of incidents where reasonable force has been used.**

A report of any incident where reasonable force has been used needs to be made as soon as possible. It should include the following information:

- 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 a member of staff).
- briefly, 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 obvious or apparent injury suffered by the pupil, or any other person, and of any damage to property.

Immediately following any such incident, the member of staff concerned must:

- report it immediately to a member of the Senior Management Team.
- provide a short, written factual report as detailed above as soon as possible afterwards.

Little School Staff will inform the Nursery Manager or Head of Pre-Prep of all incidents involving a pupil in the EYFS. The Nursery Manager or Head of Pre-Prep will record these incidents on the Physical Intervention Log.

All reports will be uploaded onto CPOMS by the Deputy Head/DSL following instruction/discussion from the Head. All pupil records are kept up until the pupil reaches the age of 25 years old.

### **Reporting to Parents**

Parents will always be informed immediately should any form of physical restraint be used with their child in order to safeguard their child or any others.