



STANBRIDGE LOWER SCHOOL

The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils and Physical Intervention Policy

Reviewed February 2015

1. INTRODUCTION/RATIONALE

1.1 The key feature of this policy is to maintain the safety of all pupils and staff at Stanbridge Lower School.

1.2 Physical intervention is only used as a last resort after all other approaches have been tried in accordance with our Behaviour Policy, or in cases of clear danger/extreme urgency when a pupil is in immediate risk of injury, on the point of injuring someone else or on the point of seriously damaging someone else's property.

2. AIMS AND PURPOSES

2.1 Children and young people need to be safe and aware of how they should behave at Stanbridge. Our pupils nearly always respond well to school rules and conventions. Situations in which interventions are needed are relatively few, however children need to know we are able to control them safely and confidently when they lose control and need help to regain it.

2.2 All our staff at Stanbridge need to be safe and confident in how they manage inappropriate behaviour. All staff understands and uses our Behaviour Policy consistently to ensure inappropriate behaviour is kept to a minimum. They need to be clear about the options available to them when all the normal systems fail, or there is a clear emergency in which, for example talking calmly to someone in danger is irrelevant. They need to be free of undue worries about the risks of legal action against them if they use appropriate physical interventions and need to know that we offer support if they are challenged.

2.3 Parents need to know that their child and those who are teaching their child are safe and free from disruptive influences or danger. They also need to know that they will be properly informed if their child is the subject of physical intervention and they need to know the nature of the intervention and the rationale for its use.

2.4 This policy connects to and is consistent with our Behaviour Policy, Health and Safety, and Child Protection policies.

3. MINIMISING THE NEED TO USE FORCE

3.1 Our Behaviour Policy helps us at Stanbridge to create and maintain a calm environment that minimizes the risk of incidents that might require using force.

3.2 We our PHSCE curriculum to teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings.

3.3 Our Behaviour Policy helps children to reflect on their behaviour and de-escalate a problem/incident as they arise.

3.4 All the staff at Stanbridge understand that they only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force.

3.5 Risk assessments and positive handling plans are put into place for individual pupils as the need arises.

3.6 Planning is also undertaken to see if trigger situations can be avoided and other positive strategies employed to lessen the likelihood of such incidents occurring.

4. STAFF AUTHORISED TO USE REASONABLE FORCE

4.1 At Stanbridge the following staff have the authority to use reasonable force (the minimum necessary) on the school premises or during school activities:

- The Head Teacher
- The Senior Teacher
- All teaching staff
- The Family Liaison Officer
- The Senior Lunchtime Supervisor
- Other lunchtime staff
- LSA's
- Pre-school Leader and Assistant (when the Leader is not present)
- After School Club Leader and Assistant (when the Leader is not present)

4.2 In addition temporary authorisation is given to all other staff and parent helpers on school trips, or to coaches working in school if no other member of school staff is available to help.

5. DECIDING WHETHER TO USE FORCE

5.1 At Stanbridge, we take the view that staff are not expected to put themselves in danger and that removing other children and themselves from a source of danger is a proper thing to do. We appreciate the integrity of our staff and value their efforts to rectify situations that are difficult and in which they exercise their duty of care for their pupils. However, we do not require them to go beyond what is reasonable.

5.2 It is also acceptable for any member of staff to decide that they will not use physical intervention for personal reasons.

5.3 Staff should only use force when the potential consequences of not intervening are sufficiently serious to justify considering use of force, the chances of achieving the desired

result by other means are low and the risk associated with not using force outweighs those of using force.

5.4 Staff should minimize the highest risks, for example by calling the police if a pupil is suspected of having a weapon and seems likely to resist a search. The Head Teacher delegates powers of search to the Senior Teacher, who should always have a witness present if he/she needs to carry out this duty. If the pupils suspected of carrying a weapon resists, the Senior Teacher and Head Teacher should call the police and not put themselves in any danger.

6. USING FORCE

6.1 Only the minimal use of force necessary should be used to achieve the desired result.

6.2 Staff should always give a clear oral warning to the pupil that force may have to be used. Staff should state what force will be used. Staff must be aware that restraint that is likely to injure a pupil (particularly anything which constricts breathing) must not be used even in extreme circumstances.

6.3 Where ever possible staff should not use force unless or until another responsible adult is present to support, observe and call for assistant

6.4 Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff:

- Physically interposing between two pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Holding
- Pushing
- Pulling
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back, or in extreme circumstances, using more restrictive holds (to prevent a child hitting someone, or throwing something or injuring themselves)

6.5 It is unacceptable and likely to be illegal or grounds for disciplinary action for staff to use any physical intervention designed to cause pain or injury including:

- Any form of corporal punishment, slapping, punching or kicking
- Holding by the neck or collar, or otherwise restricting the ability to breathe
- Holding by the hair or an ear
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping up a pupil or holding an arm out at neck or head height to stop them
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground or sitting on them
- Shutting or locking a pupil in a room, except in extreme situations whilst summoning support
- Staff should also avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

7. PLANNING FOR PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

7.1 Where we think a pupil might require physical restraint or intervention we plan in advance and know who will do what. We draw up a detailed plan.

7.2 This plan includes helping pupils to avoid provoking situations, helping them find success and minimize frustration and develops our own skills. It also helps us see better where we can head off difficulties when we spot them early enough.

7.3 The plan will include:

- Involving the parents and the pupil to gain their views and to ensure that they are clear about what specific action the school might need to take
- A risk assessment that considers carefully the likely outcomes to the pupil and others of undertaking intervention or not
- Managing the pupil (eg reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, at what stage and what type of intervention/holds to be used)
- Identifying key staff who should know exactly what action they should be taking. Any member of staff who may have to use a physical intervention should always be fully briefed about the child in question and it is best if they are well known to the child.
- Ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate
- Identifying training needs and updates.

8. STAFF TRAINING

8.1 We recognize that the training of staff is vital in this area if we are to adopt best practice and maintain a record of safe management of all school situations. We therefore provide our staff with

- General training on behaviour management, for all staff
- Training on avoiding and coping with crisis/difficulty/physically challenging events.

8.2 Staff will be trained by professional associations and people and we recognise that training should be renewed and developed every 2 years.

9. RECORDING INCIDENTS

9.1 It is important that a record of incidents involving the use of restraint is kept.

9.2 The Head Teacher or in the absence of the Head Teacher, the Senior Teacher should be informed immediately of any incidents involving the restraint of pupils.

9.3 Witnesses should also give a full report of the incident.

9.4 The following points should be used to record all incidents of restraint. The master copy should be given to the Head Teacher as soon as possible after the incident. It will contain

- Date, time and location of incident

- Names of staff involved (directly or as witnesses)
- Details of other pupils involved (directly or as witnesses), including whether any of the pupils involved were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social.
- Description of incident by the staff involved, including any attempts to de-escalate and warning given that force might be used
- Reason for using force and description of force used
- Any injury suffered by staff or pupils and any first aid and/or medical attention required
- Reasons for making a record of the incident
- Follow up, including post-incident support and any disciplinary action against pupils
- Any information about the incident shared with staff not involved in it and external agencies
- When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the incident and any views they have expressed
- Has any complaint been lodged
- Signatures of report writer and counter signature.

9.5 All records must be signed and dated by the member of staff and countersigned by the Head Teacher, or in the absence of the Head Teacher, by the Senior Teacher.

9.6 The Head Teacher or Senior Teacher should as soon as possible

- Discuss the incident with the pupil as soon as possible
- Interview staff involved and any other witnesses
- Inform the pupils parents/carers and social worker (if relevant)
- Record any disagreements expressed by the pupil or adults about the event
- Take any appropriate further action, liaising with the LEA, governors, or unions and acting within the LEA's Child Protection Procedures and policy.

9.7 All incidents should be reported to the Governors' Resources Committee as they occur without identifying the pupil concerned.

9.8 Parents should be informed of any incident involving their child and given sufficient opportunity to discuss it, usually on the same day.

10. POST INCIDENT SUPPORT

10.1 Post incident support is important for all concerned, both staff and pupils. This could be offered in the form of

- Talking with a senior person in school
- Meeting immediate physical needs
- Rebuilding relationships
- Support from outside agencies

11. COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS

11.1 If a parent, pupil or member of staff has a complaint or allegation it should be referred to the Head Teacher.

11.2 All complaints will be dealt with in line with our Complaints and Misconduct procedure, following procedures set down in the LEA's Personnel Handbook.

12. Review procedures

12.1 The school's policy will be reviewed when:

- 2 years have elapsed.
- A new designated member of staff or Governor responsible has been appointed.
- There has been a significant change in staff, pupils or the law.
- The school wishes to review the policy.

**R J GODWIN
Head Teacher
February 2015**

This policy has been read, discussed and its implementation agreed by teaching and support staff.

This policy was ratified by the full governing body.

Date of Meeting:

Signed Chair of Governors.