

# Physical restraining of pupils



## Introduction

Bigland Green endeavors to provide a well-ordered, safe and secure atmosphere in order to prevent physical incidents. Any person who touches another person without his or her consent runs the risk of being accused of committing an unlawful act. Staff members working with pupils have a duty to safeguard their welfare. Sometimes, this obligation overrides a child's right not to be touched. The Law<sup>1</sup> allows teachers and others named by the Headteacher to use such force as is reasonable in circumstances to protect pupils from:

- committing any offence (or what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- causing personal injury, to or damage to property of, any person (including self) or;
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Force should not be used to prevent trivial misbehaviour. Proper account must be taken of those pupils who have particular special educational need (SEN) and/or disability. Examples of possible situations could include:

- a pupil attacks another pupil or a member of staff or involved in a fight;
- 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's actions likely to cause an accident or injury to self or others;
- a pupil absconding from a class or trying to leave school;
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an area, or;
- a pupil behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson.

## Definition of restraint and the aims of this policy

Physical restraint at Bigland Green is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting children from harming themselves or others or seriously damaging property. This policy on restraint should be read in conjunction with the school's discipline and behaviour policy. This policy aims to:

- protect every person in the school community from harm;
- protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful, and;
- provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with potentially challenging situations.

## A rationale for restraining pupils

Physical restraint should avert danger by preventing or deflecting children's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm themselves. It is only likely to be needed if a child is not able to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour. It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the school's policy on discipline and behaviour, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in *loco parentis* and should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and well being.

## Alternative strategies

There are some situations in which the need for physical restraint is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives (e.g. if a pupil is about to run across a road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives which could include:

<sup>1</sup> *The Education Act of 1996, and; Article 4 of the Education Order 1998*

- Repeating the instruction(s) until the pupil complies.
- Use of a distracter, such as a loud whistle, to interrupt the behaviour (such as a fight) long enough for other methods of verbal control to be effective.
- Withdrawal of attention (audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened.
- Other techniques designed to defuse the situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour (some incidents can be dealt with later when emotions are no longer running high).
- The employment of other sanctions consistent with the school's policy on discipline and behaviour.

## Use of physical restraint

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable minimum force in applying physical restraint. In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate or effective physical restraint should be a last resort. When physical restraint becomes necessary:

The staff member should	The staff member should not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tell the pupil what they are doing and why.</li> <li>▪ Use the minimum force necessary.</li> <li>▪ Involve another member of staff if possible.</li> <li>▪ Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this should be repeated).</li> <li>▪ Use simple and clear language.</li> <li>▪ Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow.</li> <li>▪ Relax the restraint in response to the pupil's compliance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Act in temper (involve another staff member if they fear loss of control).</li> <li>▪ Be involved in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil.</li> <li>▪ Involve other pupils in the restraint.</li> <li>▪ Touch or hold the pupil in <i>private</i> areas.</li> <li>▪ Twist or force limbs back against a joint.</li> <li>▪ Bend fingers or pull hair.</li> <li>▪ Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck.</li> <li>▪ Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil.</li> </ul>

## Actions after the incident

A member of the school leadership team (SLT) or the SENCo should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural IEP (individual education plan), which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the Learning Mentor and/or the SENCO (special needs co-ord).

All incidents should be recorded immediately on the *Report Form* (below). All sections should be completed so that in the event of any future complaint a full record is available. A member of the leadership team will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them an opportunity to discuss it.

## Risk assessments

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- Management of the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary).
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take.
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance).
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate.

Date approved	Signature	Review
4 December 2018		As required

# Pupil Restrain Report Form



**Bigland  
Green  
Primary  
School**

**PART 1:** to be completed by the staff member restraining the pupil

Date of incident		Time		Location	
Name of pupil involved			Name of staff involved		
Name of others involved (including witnesses)					
Description of the incident					
Reason for using force and description of force used					
Any injury suffered by pupils or staff (include details of first aid)					
Reasons for making a record of the incident					
Name of staff completing this report					Date

**PART 2:** to be completed by SLT member or Headteacher

Follow up, including post-incident support and actions taken					
When and how those with parental responsibility were informed and any views expressed					
Details of involvement of external agencies					
Signature of SLT member or Headteacher				Date	