

OUR CO-OPERATIVE ACADEMIES TRUST

Guidelines on the use of force to control or restrain pupils



Origin:

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- Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives all school staff members a legal power to use reasonable force to prevent:
 - Students committing a criminal offence
 - Students from injuring themselves
 - Students from damaging school property
 - Students from causing disorder

However, force should only be used as a last resort.

Force should only be used as a protective measure. The judgement on whether to use force and what force to use should always depend on the circumstance of each case (this is crucial when dealing with students with SEN / disabilities)

Decisions about whether to use force often have to be made quickly, with little time for reflection. Nevertheless, staff need to make the clearest possible judgement about:

- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means
 - The seriousness of the incident
 - The relative risks associated with physical intervention
- In the event of an incident staff should initially attempt to diffuse the situation by:
 - Appearing confident
 - Appearing calm
 - Creating space around the student / incident
 - Speaking clearly and slowly
 - Avoiding sudden movements
 - Giving clear, assertive instructions
 - Avoiding threats
 - Encouraging reasoning by asking open questions

ALWAYS SEND FOR ADDITIONAL HELP AND SUPPORT AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY

- If a member of staff decides that use of force is the only appropriate action then they must consider the following:
 - Size of the student
 - Gender of the student
 - Strength of the student
 - Level of violence offered
 - Any weapons involved
 - Any alcohol or drugs involved
 - History of previous incidents
- All incidents of restraint must be recorded on the incident record forms held by James King (Assistant Principal for Behaviour for Learning).
- All members of staff are reassured that if they follow the guidance stated above, they will have a robust defence against any false allegations of unreasonable or unlawful conduct. Equally it is the employer who is sued and not the individual member of staff.
- The full document – “The use of force to control and restrain pupils” is available online at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications.