



LEIGHTON PARK
FOUNDED 1890

Physical Restraint Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard the well-being of students and staff when an incident requires the use of physical intervention. Its intention is to develop and encourage consistent and safe practices in the use of physical restraint. Staff should not hesitate to act in an emergency provided they follow this guidance; however, they should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of their professional colleagues.

Definition

Physical Restraint is the positive and reasonable application of force in order to protect/prevent a student from causing injury to him/herself or others or seriously damaging property. It may also be used to prevent a student from engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its students, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere.

Injury means 'significant injury'; this would include: actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of, or injury to, themselves or others by wilful or reckless behaviour, and self-poisoning.

It must be shown that, on any occasion where physical restraint is used, there were strong indicators that if immediate action had not been taken injury would have followed.

Further advice and instruction is available on this matter from the Deputy Head. Any member of staff who wishes to have some specialist training in this area should request this from their line manager.

Guidance: During an incident

In any application of physical restraint, the minimum reasonable force should be used to calm the situation. Help should be summoned from colleagues; other students should never be involved in restraint.

The students should be approached calmly but firmly. Where possible, explain the consequences of refusing to stop the behaviour and continue to communicate with the student throughout the incident; it should be made clear that the physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measured approach is needed and a teacher must never give the impression that he/she has lost his/her temper, or is acting out of anger or frustration or to punish the student.

The method of restraint employed must use the **minimum force** for the **minimum time** and must observe the following requirements:

Restraint must NOT

- Involve hitting the student
- Involve deliberately inflicting pain on the student
- Restrict the student's breathing
- Involve contact with sexually sensitive areas

During any incident the restrainer should:

- Offer verbal reassurance to the student
- Cause the minimum level of restriction of movement
- Reduce the danger of any accidental injury

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

- Physically interposing between students
- Blocking a student's path
- Holding
- Pushing
- Leading a student by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a student away by placing a hand in the centre of the back, or (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

DO

- be aware of any feelings of anger
- summon help
- continue to talk to the student in a calm way
- provide a soft surface if possible
- be aware of any accessories worn by you or the student
- hold the student's arms by his/her side

DON'T

- try to manage on your own
- stop talking even if the student does not reply
- straddle the student or hold them face down on the ground
- push arms up the back
- touch the student near the throat or head/hold or pull a student by the hair or ear
- put pressure on joints
- trip up a student

Recording Incidents

It is important that a written report is kept on any occasion when force is used; the member of staff concerned should advise the Head or Deputy Head immediately following the incident and provide a written report as soon as possible afterwards to the Head or Deputy Head. Records of such incidents will be stored centrally by the Head's PA. The report should include:

- the name(s) of the student(s) involved
- when and where the incident took place
- the name(s) of any other staff or students who witnessed the incident
- the reason that force was necessary
- how the incident began and progressed
- the student's response and the outcome of the incident
- details of any injury suffered by the student/another student/member of staff and any damage to property.

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from their professional association or a senior colleague when writing a report.

Author: Eddie Falshaw, Deputy Head
Sign off: Matthew Judd, Head
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