



# Schools for Every Child

## Use of reasonable force & touch

*We are an education Trust that is committed to running dynamic, ever-improving schools. We work to make sure that every child feels they belong in their school where they feel safe and inspired by learning. For us, learning is an adventure. It is a privilege and a responsibility for all who work with us to ensure that the journey through school is exciting, challenging, caring and enriching, and that every child experiences joy, wonder, calm and success.*

Approval Level	CEO
Author	CEO - DfE model adapted
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Trust/Template/School level	Trust
Review cycle	Biannual

*“The purpose of governance is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance”. (DfE)*

### Approval History

Committee Approval	Status	Next Review Date
N/A	Review in progress <b>Live Policy</b>	September 2027

## Use of Reasonable Force & Touch

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/444051/Use\\_of\\_reasonable\\_force\\_advice\\_Reviewed\\_July\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf)

**Schools for Every Child acknowledges the** Use of reasonable force. Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies published in July 2013

This is non-statutory advice from the Department for Education.

It is intended to clarify the use of force to help school staff feel more confident about using this power when necessary and to clarify the responsibilities of headteachers and governing bodies in respect of this power.

### Key points

- School staff have the power to use force, and lawful use of this power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
- Suspension should not be an automatic response when a staff member has been accused of using excessive force.
- Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.

It is the reasonability of the headteacher in each school to ensure that staff are aware of this policy and are trained in a way that they deem is appropriate.

### **Safe Touch Statement**

At Schools for Every Child we believe that used in context and with empathy, touch supports the development of natural human interactions. We also believe that it can be key to developing fundamental social, behavioural and attention skills. We recognize that whilst for some pupils, physical support may be essential for their development, for others it may not. At Schools for Every Child, touch must only occur if it is in the pupil's best interest. We believe that pupils must be able to differentiate the attachment that is appropriate for them to form with staff and the attachment that they share with their parents or siblings. Therefore, touch used by staff must never encourage or promote intimacy between the staff member and the pupil. At Schools for Every Child we recognize that some pupils show discomfort or dislike of being touched and ensure that these feelings are respected and in these cases, touch does not occur.

Staff may use reasonable force in the following situations:

- **Removing Disruptive Children:** To remove disruptive children from the classroom if they refuse to follow an instruction to leave.
- **Preventing Disruption:** To prevent a pupil from behaving in a way that disrupts a school event, trip, or visit.
- **Ensuring Safety:** To prevent a pupil from leaving the classroom if doing so would risk their safety or disrupt others' behaviour.

- **Preventing Attacks or Fights:** To prevent a pupil from attacking a staff member or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground.
- **Self-Harm Prevention:** To restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.
- **Conducting Searches:** To conduct a search for prohibited items, such as knives and weapons, if you are the headteacher or an authorised member of staff (refer to guidance on searching pupils and confiscation for the list of items).

This list of examples is not exhaustive.

### **Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)**

Reasonable force can be used on pupils with SEND, but staff should consider the pupil's specific needs. If a pupil's behaviour necessitates repeated use of reasonable force, a behaviour plan should be developed.

- **Risk Assessment:** Conduct a risk assessment.
- **Behaviour Plan:** Collaborate with parents to create a behaviour plan outlining the types of physical interventions that will be used in extreme circumstances.

### **How to Use Reasonable Force**

1. **Warn the Pupil:** Inform the child of your intentions and offer them a chance to avoid the use of force by stopping the behaviour.
2. **Apply Force Appropriately:** Use no more force than necessary.
3. **Stay Calm:** Maintain composure and do not react to any abusive or highly-emotional language from the pupil.
4. **Release Gradually:** Allow the pupil to calm down, and release the hold once restraint is no longer necessary.
5. **Post-Incident Discussion:** Discuss the behaviour that triggered the situation with the pupil.
6. **Documentation:** Complete an incident report and inform parents if necessary.

### **Unacceptable Techniques**

Certain restraint techniques present an unacceptable risk and should not be used on children:

- **Seated Double Embrace:** Forcing an individual into a sitting position by two staff members while a third monitors breathing.
- **Double Basket-Hold:** Holding an individual's arms across their chest.
- **Nose Distraction Technique:** A sharp upward jab under the nose.