

The Four Stones Multi Academy Trust

Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Version Control

Policy author: Chris Gibson and Nicola Stanfield
Policy approved by: Trust Board
Next policy review date: Autumn 2021

Version	Date	Details
1.0	9 th Dec 2019	Re-written so that there is one policy for The Four Stones Multi Academy Trust

This policy is in accordance with the DfE 'Use of Reasonable Force July 2013' guidance. As such, those acting in accordance with it will be positively supported in their actions.

We work to ensure each individual student is able to reach his or her potential. Every student is entitled to learn and every teacher is free to teach in an environment that is safe, secure and free from distraction. The guiding principles to achieve this are set out in our behaviour policy and protocols.

Our staff are committed to providing the highest standards in protecting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care. For the most part this is achieved through the fostering of good relationships and the normal application of the behaviour policy to support and intervene. However, in exceptional or extreme circumstances this may involve the use of reasonable force. We recognise that the use of force will be used infrequently to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to students, staff and property. It will be used as a last resort to maintaining a safe environment.

As best practice regarding reasonable force, this policy should be considered alongside other relevant school policies, especially those involving behaviour, health and safety and safeguarding.

1. What is the real use of reasonable force to control students?

Teachers and other persons authorised by the executive or associate headteacher to have charge of students may use reasonable force to prevent students:

- Causing injury to themselves or others.
- Causing disruption by engaging in behaviour, which is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline including potential damage to property or committing an offence.
- The use of force is only used for two main purposes to control or restrain students.

Staff must take the following into account:

- The individual circumstances of the incident, age, sex and development of the student including whether the student has a disability or special educational need.
- The degree of force must be proportional to the seriousness of the situation, behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent, and always be the minimum force needed.
- Everyone has the right to self-defence provided they do not use disproportionate degree of force.
- Force could not be justified for a trivial misdemeanor or a situation that could be resolved without it. The use of force should not be used as a punishment. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.
- Corporal punishment is illegal.

2. Who can use reasonable force?

All members of staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. The executive or associate headteacher can also apply permission to staff temporarily in charge of students such as unpaid volunteers and parents/carers accompanying students on a school visit.

3. Circumstances when reasonable force might be appropriate?

We recognise that some students may not be able to control their reaction to events as well as others and at times may place themselves or others at risk through their uncontrolled behaviour. As indicated reasonable force might be appropriate when:

- Action is necessary in self-defence or because of imminent risk of injury.

Examples:

- Student attacks a member of staff, another student, attempts self-injury, students are fighting.
- Student running in a classroom or corridor in a way that is likely to cause injury to self or others.

- Student leaving the classroom where allowing them would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others.
- There is a serious and developing risk of damage to property, including the student's own property.

Examples:

- Student is causing or about to cause deliberate damage or vandalism to belongings or fixtures/fittings.
- Student is causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, rough play, misuse of dangerous materials or objects.

- Where student's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline.

Examples:

- Student persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave the classroom.
- Student is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

Wherever possible early support from colleagues will be sought. Single handed intervention increases the risk of injury to both parties and does not provide the person intervening with the support of a colleague acting as a critical friend.

Strategies other than force will be considered.

Examples:

- Providing the disruptive student with a choice of locations to exit to
- Giving clear directions
- Allowing 'take-up' time thus allowing a 'face-saving' opportunity
- Removing the audience, ie requesting that other students leave the room
- Implementing Team Teach help protocols/script so that another member of staff takes over the strategic lead of the incident, if he/she feels it is appropriate to do so.

4. Procedures and practical considerations during specific incidents within the setting

Wherever practicable staff are expected to:

- Use a calm and measured approach
- Give clear direction to the student
- Seek assistance from other colleagues at as early a stage as possible
- Staff who become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a student have a responsibility to provide a presence, and to offer support and assistance should this be required
- Try to defuse the situation orally and prevent escalation
- Try to remove the student from the peer audience
- Attempt to communicate with the student throughout the incident
- In as calm a manner as possible, explain that the reason for intervention is to keep the student and others safe
- Make it clear that the reasonable force will stop as soon as the student calms and the risk assessment indicates it is no longer necessary
- If it is not possible to control the extreme student without risk of injury to yourself or others, remove the other student who may be at risk and summon assistance.

5. Application of force during specific Incidents

Methods that staff **may use** in appropriate circumstances where a risk assessment judgement supports this:

- Shepherding a student away by a light touch on the elbow or near the shoulder
- "Guiding" – remembering this is the positive application of force to control a student and would be used in rare circumstances, e.g. if the student is in extreme danger and no other alternative is available, or where reasonable force is used to assist a student's movement.
- Holding – for security and to reduce anxiety where there is potential risk, even if the student is not yet out of control. The purpose is to defuse or prevent escalation.
- When intervening staff should take care that their actions should in no way be capable of being interpreted as aggressive. All holds are devised to minimise the risk of injury. They should not cause pain.
- Where students are presenting with more challenging behaviour which may require more restrictive holds, it is important that these techniques have been delivered by appropriately qualified Team Teach instructors in line with Team Teach protocols.

Staff **may not** carry out action that might reasonably be expected to injure by:

- Holding a student around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the ability to breathe.
- Slapping, punching or kicking a student.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint.
- Tripping a student.
- Holding or pulling the student by the hair.

- Using reasonable force techniques deemed as presenting an unacceptable risk as outlined in the DfE 'Use of Reasonable Force July 2013' document. The techniques that should not be used are:
 - the 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing;
 - the 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest; and
 - the 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

Other considerations for **non-urgent situations** where the risk to the people or property is not imminent:

- Consider carefully whether positive handling is the right course of action.
- Try to deal with the situation through other strategies before using force.
- Try to defuse and calm the situation to establish good order; the use of positive handling could lead to an escalation of the problem.
- Take into account the age, understanding, personal characteristics of the student and whether they have a special educational need or disability.
- The use of positive handling to enforce compliance is likely to be increasingly inappropriate with older students.
- Never use force as a substitute for good behaviour management.
- In non-urgent situations force should only be used when all other methods have failed.

6. Reporting and Recording Incidents

A log will be kept on any occasion when the use of force has been required. The relevant member of staff will verbally report the matter to a senior member of staff as soon as possible but within 1 hour. The incident will be recorded, in writing in the Bound and Numbered Book, by the member of staff at the earliest opportunity but within 24 hours.

All incidents that result in reasonable force (where a student has to be held) will be recorded in detail using the Bound and Numbered Book within 24 hours. A Risk Reduction Plan (RRP) needs to be put in place or reviewed accordingly. A copy of the RRP will be placed in the student's file.

A senior member of staff will inform parents/carers about the incident by the end of the school day. However, if parents/carers cannot be reached a letter may be sent to inform them of the incident and offer them the opportunity to discuss the matter.

The log will be reviewed termly by a senior member of staff to consider control measures and possible training or further training needs etc.

Should an injury occur as a result of an incident at school, immediate steps will be taken to secure appropriate medical attention. This will be reported and recorded in accordance with The Four Stones Multi Academy Trust's Health and Safety Policy.

7. Debriefing Following Serious Incident

Students and members of staff will be checked for any sign of injury and first aid will be administered if required.

The student will be given time to become calm while staff continue to supervise/observe him/her. When the student regains complete composure, a senior member of staff and staff involved in the reasonable force will discuss the incident with the student and try to ascertain the reason for it.

All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff will provide support to the member of staff involved.

8. Other Procedures Concerning Incidents

Help, support and reassurance will be given where appropriate to any persons involved.

Where possible an attempt will be made to help the student modify their behaviour.

The student should apologise and this should be meaningful and appropriate. If this cannot be undertaken then other consequences/sanctions reparations and monitoring should take place.

9. Planning for Incidents and meeting training needs

If we are aware that a student is likely to require reasonable force on more than one occasion in a half term we will plan how to respond in line with Team Teach protocols and guidance. This can include involving the parents/carers to ensure they are clear about what specific action we might need to take and obtaining medical advice if the young person has any

specific health needs. An RRP will be drawn up, in consultation with all concerned and will be reviewed on a half termly basis.

Staff involved will, through risk assessment, have identified their training needs in this area. In cases where it is known that a student will require reasonable force appropriate training will be provided.

10. Arrangements for Informing parents/carers

As indicated for some students there may be the need to use specific techniques to routinely manage their challenging behaviour. This will be recorded in their risk reduction plan. Such arrangements will be fully discussed with parents/carers, on an individual basis, in advance of their implementation. All intervention will be routinely recorded and monitored.

All parents/carers will be informed, if deemed necessary, after an incident where positive handling is used with a student.

11. Physical Contact with Students in other Circumstances

Staff must be sensitive to matters relating to culture and gender issues and any known individual characteristics or special circumstances relating to students.

Some physical contact may be necessary eg during PE lessons, sports coaching, demonstrating how to use a musical instrument, when comforting a distressed young person, when a student is being congratulated or praised or if a member of staff has to administer first aid or medication.

Physical contact must always be age appropriate and done openly.

12. Complaints

Any complaints against this policy will be through the school's 'Complaints Procedure'.

Risk Reduction Plan

Name of Student:..

Plan Number:..

Date:

Positives: What is the student good at and what do they like doing?	Triggers: What situations have led to problems in the past?	Successful approaches: What proactive interventions have been effective in preventing the student's anxiety rising?

Describe any modifications to the environment or student routines that can be implemented to prevent anxieties

--

Expected Practice

Strategy	What does the practice look like?
Firm clear directions	
C.A.L.M. talking/stance	
Summoning Assistance	
Verbal/Symbolic guidance	
Limited Choices	
Reminders of consequences	
Distraction	
Diversion	
Humour	

Describe any additional strategies that have worked in the past or should be avoided

Strategy	Try	Avoid	What does the practice look like?
Negotiation			
Reassurance			
Planned ignoring			
Contingent touch			
Take up time			
Withdrawal offered			
Withdrawal directed			
Change of face			
Success reminders			
Others			

From your risk assessment, what is the likelihood of a student harming himself or herself, another student or adult in the event of an incident. Please Identify risk in each case.

	Self-Harm	Harm to other student	Harm from another student	Harm to staff
Low				
Medium				
High				

Description of behaviour	Self Harm	Harm to other student	Harm from another student	Harm to Staff

Prior to intervention all staff must make a dynamic risk assessment in relation to the incident and their confidence and competence in using physical intervention techniques.

Has the student any medical issues that require the reconsideration of any Team Teach Holds? YES/NO

If YES, has there been any discussion with relevant health professionals and please outline any concerns that they had?

Preferred physical intervention approach for dealing with above incidents

Potential incident (see risk assessment)	Specific Location	Preferred Physical Intervention Strategy

Appropriate personal safety response, Arm Responses	Two Person Holds and Escorts
Neck Responses	Single Person Holds and Escorts
Clothing, Hair and Bites	Holds for smaller student, Seated hold required,
Steer Away	Separating Fights

Advanced dedicated modules	
Full Shield (adv. certificate required)	Everyday objects used as weapons
Front Ground Recovery, (adv. certificate required min 3 persons required, observer for student)	

**Follow up
Debrief and repair following the incident**

Are there any factors to consider when debriefing? E.g. Communication aids, staff etc.

Hear Explain Link Plan	
---------------------------------	--

Multi-Agency Involvement (where the risk assessment indicates a high risk)

Agency	School	Parent/ Guardian	Social Worker	Child Protection Officer	Local Authority Officer	Other
Name						
Signature						
Date						

Date	Evaluated	By	Action

Name and signature of person completing this form _____

Date _____