

GRIFFIN PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Behaviour for Learning Policy

September 2019

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Griffin Behaviour for Learning Policy

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Griffin Primary School is a place of excellence where students can achieve full potential in their academic, creative, personal, physical, social, moral spiritual and cultural development.

Our Vision and Aims:

- All students will be high achievers who fulfil their potential .
- All students and adults have the right to be treated equally and with respect .
- Students will take pride in what they do and be inspired to become lifelong learners.
- Everyone has the right to learn and work in a happy, enjoyable and safe environment.
- The partnership between school, family and our local community is strong and effective.
- Students develop as healthy citizens who are equipped to participate fully and responsibly in a 21st century world

Staff Responsibilities

This document outlines a plan that will encourage a high standard of behaviour for learning and life, as well as ensuring the appropriate degree of seriousness is attached to incidents through the fair and consistent use of both the sanction and the staff members who are involved.

Core strategies for ensuring outstanding behaviour at Griffin Primary are:

- *Quality first teaching* (inclusive, challenging, fun & inspiring) supported by outstanding planning and forensic assessment.
- *Effective feedback and achievable targets* that encourage positive learning and 'can do' attitudes
- *Good relationships with parents* built up by being available in the playground at the start & end of the day and by informing them of good behaviour as well as poor behaviour.
- *Rewards* – e.g. actively noticing good behaviour (praise), lining up points leading to class rewards, house points/dojos, golden book award, positive messages to parents (postcards, newsletters.)
- Negotiating class rules, which stem from the PATHS Golden Rule (treat others how you wish to be treated.)
- with the students at the beginning of a school year using PATHS lessons and
-
- Using the PATHS programme to teach students how to express and regulate their emotions, understand and relate to others' emotions and resolve conflict in a peaceful way.
- Using role play/drama and circle time to help students develop strategies to deal with situations that arise and giving the student strategies to deal with a situation if it should arise again.
- *Remembering a teacher's own role in the behaviour of a class* & being aware of the reason that may lie behind behaviour e.g. through inappropriate activity or timetabling, teacher tiredness, excitement over planned events, breaks in routine, accessibility of resources, building positive & quality relationships,
- Knowing that an extremely agitated or angry student will not listen until they have calmed down.
- Knowing that humour can be an extremely powerful behaviour management tool.
- Staff giving explicit direction and being clear with reasons for actions and consequences for actions e.g. *'I have moved you because you were disturbing other students. If you continue to talk I will sit you on your own but if you can work quietly on your own for xxx minutes, then you will be able to return to your seat.'*
- Balance of reward & sanction – not punishing a whole class for the actions of individuals.
- *Building positive and respectful relationships* between teachers & students.
- By not engaging students in protracted discussion about incidents but simplifying them in relation to school expectations e.g. *'I understand that you are upset but you are disturbing the learning of other students and I cannot allow you to do that' 'You kicked someone and even though you were provoked it is still unacceptable'*.
- To clearly set the expectation that respect means students not raising their voice at you or answering back.
- By refusing to engage in shouting matches.

- By utilising *choice direction* e.g. 'You can either complete this work now or you can complete it at playtime, it is your choice.'
- By listening but being clear that your decision is final.
- Avoiding an over reliance on 'time out' in other classrooms as this admits a teachers inability to cope, undermines their authority, severely restricts learning opportunities and quick re-integration and can cause greater disruption to other classes. A class teacher needs to assert initial authority over a situation, setting behaviour expectations to other students. The exceptions to this are Stage 4 and 5 behaviours (Sanctions).
- Actively discouraging students from leaving the classroom during lesson times – working with students so they use the bathroom during break times.
- At times it might be appropriate to send students to the toilet with an escort. NB: students in KS2 should not be using the toilet during lesson times – unless there is a clear medical reason with evidence on file.
- All students are expected to enter and leave assembly silently and to walk around the school on the left in single file.
- Ensuring that when a sanction is used it is fair and appropriate for the action.
- *Knowing the students as individuals.* This means where they are in their learning, how they learn, what sort of people they are, and the best way to support them encouraging confidence, self-esteem and positive relationships with other students and adults.
- *Helping students become independent and active learners,* encouraging them to think for themselves, develop their own opinions, and to organise their time and resources effectively, with support from adults in class.

The Parents'/Carers' Responsibilities

For students to achieve their full potential it is essential that there are links and clear communications between home and school. Central to this is the understanding that teachers, parents and carers *all* want their students to succeed and be safe and happy within and beyond school.

Parents/ carers can support their daughter/ son to adhere to the expectations of the school community by:

- *Explaining to your child what school is for:* a place for learning where she/ he will be learning and interacting with other people and that means sharing – books, equipment, adult attention and co-operating with others.
- *Helping your daughter/ son with her/his learning.* Please talk and show an active interest in what your child has done at school, sharing reading books, ensuring homework is completed, looking after and returning borrowed books or resources (books are expensive and we may have to charge to replace damaged or lost books) and attending parent meetings and open evenings to discuss your child's progress with the class teacher.
- *Supporting the school.* Any worries or concerns should be shared first with the class teacher. It is not always appropriate to voice your concerns in front of your daughter/ son or other students in a public place. Make an appointment. We are always willing to listen and come to a shared understanding.

- *Acting on messages from the school.* This may mean praising your child at home for actions at school or discussion and sanctions at home to support those imposed at school as well as understanding that undermining your child's teacher in front of your student will create further situations that may be very difficult to repair.
- *Understanding that students also learn from watching the behaviour and actions of their parents/ carers and siblings.* If the parent/carer criticises the school or acts in an antisocial way, the student will do the same, and this will affect his/her learning. Parents/carers who do not cooperate reasonably with school staff or who become abusive will be asked to leave the school premises and will not be allowed back until the situation has been resolved.
- *Sending your daughter/ son to school on time,* every day when she/ he is fit enough to come, to notify school if she/ he is not fit enough to come, and to collect him/her if they do not go home on their own.
- *Sending your daughter/ son to school ready to learn.* students need to concentrate to learn, and therefore need to be fit and well, to have had enough sleep, to have eaten, and to be suitably dressed.
- *Communicating with the school any special medical needs,* or any special circumstances at home that may affect your child's learning.

Please note: During the school day all parents/carers and visitors must report to the school office before contacting any other member of the staff or students. It is not acceptable for parents/ carers to approach staff when they are teaching. Equally, it is inappropriate for parents/ carers to approach support staff directly about their child's behaviour without first consulting the class teacher, Deputy or Head of School. Additionally, it is inappropriate for parents/ carers to canvass and seek the views of other parents/ carers in relation to behaviour issues specific to their student.

Students' Responsibilities

Examples of the behaviour we require from students in and out of the classroom are:

- To cooperate with other students and staff
- To take responsibility for their own actions
- To develop self-control
- To be polite and well mannered
- To be honest
- To follow the PATHS golden rule
- To respect the feelings of others, and learn to sort out difficulties without using physical or emotional violence
- To respect other students' and the School's property
- To listen when asked and wait their turn
- To work hard, not waste time and allow other students to do the same (this is an important aspect of Equal Opportunities)
- To try to produce their best in all aspects of school life.

SMSC and Behaviour for Learning and Life

At Griffin we value SMSC as an integral part of the curriculum to teach students key social skills, and awareness of others and of the world around them, that they need in order to be happy and successful individuals, both now and in the future. We do this through our weekly SMSC themes, PATHS and Learning Powers.

a. **Weekly themes**

Each week our Monday whole-school assembly introduces a news related SMSC theme for the week ahead. Students have two 30 minute sessions in class to either explore this further through planned activities to help them develop their understanding or to work on an SMSC topic related to their ICB theme. Students are rewarded for demonstrating their understanding of SMSC around the school.

b) **PATHS**

The PATHS scheme is followed from Reception to Y6 and is taught during 2 SMSC lessons per week. Paths is a programme designed to facilitate the development of self-control, emotional awareness and interpersonal problem-solving skills. The programme consists of a variety of lessons, and additional

materials and posters/charts, which are displayed in classrooms. These sessions are then referred to, as appropriate, during other lessons throughout the week, e.g. when resolving a conflict or catching someone achieving the skill that was taught, to reinforce these skills so that they become habit.

c) **Learning Powers**

At Griffin we give students opportunities to learn in different ways and therefore we adopt learning powers which are applied to our learning. These are 8 strategies, which support students in being successful learners:

- Concentrate
- Don't give up
- Be cooperative
- Be curious
- Have a go
- Be creative
- Make it better
- Enjoy learning

Each week a learning power is applied and students show us how their learning has improved and been enhanced by using a learning power. Then during a weekly assembly a student from each class who has shown particular excellence in applying a learning power is rewarded and their piece of work is displayed on the Learning Powers display in the main corridor for all students to see.

The learning powers have been adapted for EYFS and KS1 to include a character. Stories with a moral are read to the students - this has helped with the context and modelling how we can achieve the learning powers in our own lessons. The characters are: Concentrate Clam; Don't give up Dolphin; Be cooperative Crab; Be curious Clownfish; Have a go Humpback Whale; Be creative Coral; Make it better Barracuda; Enjoy learning Lobster.

Promoting Good Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

a. **Whole-school Approach**

At Griffin Primary we recognise the importance of addressing social emotional and mental health needs in response to the challenges that children face growing up. At a universal level, children in all classes are taught about their emotions in age appropriate ways. In particular; how to label, understand, express and manage these feelings. Classes use emotion thermometers and diaries to help children understand and express how they feel. In addition to this, the whole school partakes in 'The Pause' after lunch time for 5 - 10 minutes to explore relaxation techniques such as yoga, breathing exercises, visualisation techniques and other forms of expression. KS2 classes have worry boxes in class for children who may be

concerned about voicing their worries and there is a 'Listening Post' monitored by the Senco and Outreach Service manager for any worries that children may have at home or at school.

b) Nurture Group

If a child is displaying significant social emotional and mental health difficulties, they may be invited to join our Nurture Group for a period of time, dependent on their level of need. This is a small group led by HLTA's and managed by the Senco where the children have access to a small but stimulating environment, where they can access a broader curriculum, which focuses on their social and emotional development. They explore their feelings within a trusted and safe environment and build up key relationships with the adults that work in the Nurture Group. They also engage in practical activities such as cooking and gardening, which help to develop life skills as well as social skills amongst their peers. The aim of Nurture Group is to help children access the mainstream classroom more successfully through learnt strategies to help them manage their emotions. In order to help this, all children in Nurture Group access the classroom in the morning and have agreed targets to work towards. These targets are then discussed daily within Nurture Group and reflected upon in a calm and safe environment.

Reward Systems

The most effective form of behaviour management is one which notices where good behaviour is occurring and promotes it. Staff are expected to do this frequently through their praise of students. Griffin holds a weekly whole school assembly (Golden Leaf Award) where positive behaviour and hard work of students from each class is celebrated and a message is sent home to their parents via a postcard. Golden leaves are also put on display after each assembly.

Within each classroom there is an expectation that there will be reward systems related to individual, group and whole class achievements including stickers, achievement charts and extra playtime – these are negotiated and agreed at the start of the year between the class teacher and students. As a PATHS school, the PATHS Golden Rule: 'treat others how you wish to be treated' is displayed in every class, as well as any other rules classes decide upon linked to this. It should be referred to as appropriate throughout the year.

At Griffin we also use class dojos across the school to reward students who are using their learning powers to encourage behaviour for learning and life. Although the Dojo categories remain the same across the school, each class decides on their own rewards linked to Dojo points together at the start of the year or term.

Students who have achieved their personal best in a particular piece of work, in keeping with our motto 'Give you best and get the best,' are sent to the Head of School to discuss their learning and to receive the 'Head of School Star Award' stamp on their work. Displays around the school are also used to celebrate students who have reached their best.

Sanctions

Staff members have the right to confiscate items such as jewellery, mobile phones, toys and sweets and keep them in a safe place until the end of the day/school term/until collected by a parent/ carer.

The wearing of inappropriate clothing or shoes as outlined in The Uniform Policy will result in a letter home. Repeated uniform violations will require the involvement of the Head of School/Deputy Head.

The grid below outlines a hierarchy of sanctions and record keeping to guide teachers in consistency of approach across the School.

Stage 1 and 2 incidents are low level and are dealt with by TAs and teachers. These are not recorded. Stage 3/4 incidents are recorded on ScholarPack and are communicated to parents/carers via a stage 3/4 letter. Stage 3 letters are issued following all stage 3 incidents and are pink, then red then orange. After this if another incident occurs in the same term, then this will be escalated to stage 4 and a letter is sent home requesting a meeting with parents/carers. If a stage 4 incident occurs then a meeting with parents/carers will be requested immediately via the letter. Stage 5 incidents may lead to an exclusion letter being sent home. Parents will always be notified immediately by LG, usually by phone call, if a stage 5 incident occurs due to the extremely serious nature of this.

Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) are used as a last resort at Griffin and occur when:

- Students pose a serious risk to others' safety (stage 4 or 5 incidents)
- Staff need time to put together a different plan/provision for the student or to seek further support from outside agencies to help them to be successful.
- When all other options/consequences have been exhausted and the behaviour has not improved.
- All Exclusions must be agreed by the Executive Head

An Internal Exclusion may be used as an alternative to FTE and requires a student to be excluded from all contact with peers during the school day including breaktimes & assemblies and to be supervised by Deputy Head/ Head of School with the parent/ carer informed of actions.

	Behaviour	Appropriate Sanctions	Comments
Stage 1	Aggravations Calling out Not putting hand up to talk Interrupting other students Wandering about classroom Running in the school building Ignoring minor instructions Silly noises/Minor Annoyances Pushing in the line Talking during silent work Minor Playground Incidents	Tactically ignore/praise another student showing the appropriate behaviour Eye contact Reminders Statement of inappropriate behaviour and consequences for repeating it (given by adult) Change of seating Verbal warning	Not recorded. No other staff members involved. <u>Dealt with by:</u> Class teachers/TAs Peer Mentors TAs on duty deal with playground incidents After 3 repetitions within a small time frame then move to stage 2
Stage 2	Less Serious <i>Repeated stage 1 behaviour</i> Eating sweets in school Refusal to work/Unacceptable output Deliberate disruption Accidental damage through carelessness Cheek, off hand comments Minor challenge to authority Minor, non directed swearing Repeatedly annoying other students Playground skirmish Being in a building unauthorised Spitting	Sanctions as in stage 1 Verbal warning Move to amber traffic light Separation from the rest of the class within classroom Discussion with CT/TA about the behaviour (using PATHS resources.) Verbal apology 5 Minute playground cool down period Repair/clean up of damage.	Not recorded. No other staff members involved. <u>Dealt with by:</u> Class teachers/TAs Peer Mentors TAs on duty deal with playground incidents After 3 repetitions within a small time frame then move to stage 3
Stage 3	More Serious <i>Repeated Stage 2 Behaviour</i> Deliberately throwing small objects with intention of harming or breaking them. Harming someone Damage to school/student property Leaving class without permission Repeated refusal to do set tasks Deliberate rudeness to adults Harmful/offensive name calling/directed swearing at another student More serious playground incidents/ fighting Bullying	Move to red traffic light (2, 5, or 10 minutes loss of break) KS2 - Move to 'Reflection' - completion of reflection sheet and/or unfinished work (break, lunch or end of day) Writing a letter of apology Informal contact with parents/carers by class teacher 5-10 Minute playground cool down period	Incidents recorded on Scholar Pack. Stage 3 letter completed by teacher/TA and sent home the same day (1st incident pink, 2nd incident orange, 3rd incident red.) <u>Dealt with by:</u> Class teachers/TAs TAs on duty deal with playground incidents LG running lunchtime reflection Repeated incidents within a short time frame to be reported to LG Phase Leader.
Stage 4	Very Serious <i>Repeated Stage 3 Behaviour</i> Fighting in the classroom Serious fighting & intentional physical harm to other students/adults Throwing large dangerous objects Serious challenge to authority Verbal abuse/swearing to any staff or parent Bringing the school into disrepute e.g. on public transport, road. Vandalism/Graffiti Stealing Persistent bullying Racist incidents	Separation from the rest of the class - LG removal from classroom with work Internal exclusion Formal telephone call/contact/ letter/ meeting with parents/carers (LG) Possible recompense for damaged property from parent/carers School 'community service' e.g. clearing dining hall Behaviour chart monitored by AHT/DH (copy sent home at end of week)	Requires immediate involvement of Deputy/ Head of School. Incidents recorded on Scholar Pack. Stage 4 letter completed by teacher/TA (incident description) and given to HoS to send home. If persistent, place on SEND register and/or involve outside agencies e.g. PRU, EP

	Truancy	Withdrawal from whole school events e.g. trips if behaviour is unsafe Possible fixed term exclusion up to 15 days Possible permanent exclusion Exclusion from site at lunchtimes Withdrawal from playground	
Stage 5	Extremely Serious <i>Repeated Stage 4 Behaviour</i> Extreme danger or violence Very serious challenge to authority Extreme verbal or physical abuse to any staff Running out of school Possession of a weapon considered to be dangerous	Parents/carers informed immediately by DH/HoS and meeting set up. Internal exclusion, possibly at another School within GGL. Immediate exclusion - fixed term or permanent.	Requires immediate involvement of Deputy/Head of School. Incidents recorded on Scholar Pack. Parental contact recorded Scholar Pack. Exclusions letter sent home if appropriate. Parallel Procedures for official out of school activities (PRU)

Appendix 1

Griffin Primary School Behaviour Chart

Name of student:

Class (Year) :

Week:

Target(s)

Date:

	Session 1 9.00-10.15	Break 10.30- 10.45	Session 2 10.45- 12.15/30	Lunch 12.15/30- 1.30	Session 3 1.30-2.30	Session 4 2.30-3.30	Comments
Monday							
Tuesday							
Wednesday							
Thursday							
Friday							

Recommendations: *(to be followed up formally with parent/carer)*

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Position: _____

Appendix 2 - Additional Guidance

Sexualised Behaviour

Whilst it is normal for students to exhibit curiosity with regards their own bodies and physical development it is essential that clear boundaries are set to protect all students from abuse and to reflect cultural and societal expectations. It is appropriate to discuss incidents with the student, suggest alternative games, make a record of event and inform the Designated Member of Staff. **If a student discloses inappropriate serious sexual behaviour involving other students or adults it is the legal duty of the adult to inform the designated safeguarding lead immediately.** Repeated or serious sexualised behaviour will result in a referral to social services and/or student protection agencies

USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

1. WHAT IS REASONABLE FORCE?

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most school staff at some point in their career that involves a degree of physical contact with students.
- Force is only used either to control or restrain, when needed. This can range from guiding a student to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of a classroom.
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two students are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the student.

1. WHO CAN USE REASONABLE FORCE?

- All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.
- This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the head teacher has temporarily put in charge of students such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

3 WHEN CAN REASONABLE FORCE BE USED?

- Reasonable force can be used to prevent students from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder.
- The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.
- The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

2 Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- remove disruptive students from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a student behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a student leaving the classroom where allowing the student to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student, or to stop a fight in the playground and restrain a student at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Schools cannot:

- use force as a punishment – **it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.**

4 POWER TO SEARCH STUDENTS WITHOUT CONSENT

- In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, the Head of School and authorised staff (Leadership Group) can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following “prohibited items”³:
 - knives and weapons
 - alcohol
 - illegal drugs
 - stolen items
 - tobacco and cigarette papers
 - fireworks
 - pornographic images
 - any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence,
 - cause personal injury or damage to property.
- **Staff should never search students alone** – always in a pair and the person searching should be the same sex as the student being searched. Staff should also decide the risk involved and should not hesitate to call the police if the risk is deemed too high. Advice can be sought from the Head of School or Deputy Head if necessary. **Note:** *There is a limited exception to this rule. You can carry out a search of a student of the opposite sex to you and without a witness present, but **only** where you reasonably believe that there is a risk that **serious harm** will be caused to a person if you do not conduct the search immediately and where it is **not reasonably practicable** to summon another member of staff.*
- Force **cannot** be used to search for other items banned under school rules.

3 Section 550ZB(5) of the Education Act 1996

5 COMMUNICATING THE SCHOOL’S APPROACH TO THE USE OF FORCE

- Every school is required by law to have a behaviour policy. Griffin Primary School makes this known to staff, parents and students.
- We acknowledge our legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students and students with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

- Schools do not require parental consent to use force on a student.
- We do **not** have a 'no contact' policy. There is a real risk that such a policy might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a student, or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a student causing harm.
- We hope this guidance makes it clear about when force might be used. We will use it properly and in line with the guidance. This should minimise any complaints.

6 STAFF TRAINING

- The Head of School will consider whether members of staff require any additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities and should consider the needs of the students when doing so. Key staff will undertake training and train others as appropriate.

7 TELLING PARENTS/ CARERS WHEN FORCE HAS BEEN USED ON THEIR CHILD

- We will speak to parents/ carers about serious incidents involving the use of force and will record such serious incidents on Scholar Pack (school system).
- In deciding what is a serious incident, staff should use their professional judgement and consider the:
 - Student's behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident;
 - Degree of force used;
 - Effect on the student or member of staff; and
 - The students age.

4 Physical control in Care Medical Panel - 2008

8 WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT COMPLAINS WHEN FORCE IS USED ON THEM?

- All complaints about the use of force will be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated.
- Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.
- When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is **not** for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.
- Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. The School should refer to the "Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff" policy where an allegation of using excessive force is made against a member of staff. This guidance makes clear that a person must not be suspended automatically, or without careful thought.
- We must consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate.
- If a decision is taken to suspend a member of staff, the school will ensure that the member of staff has access to a named contact who can provide support.

- Governing bodies should always consider whether a member of staff has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against the member of staff.
- As employers, schools and local authorities have a duty of care towards their employees. It is important that schools provide appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident.

9 WHAT ABOUT OTHER PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH STUDENTS?

- It is not illegal to touch a student. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a student is proper and necessary.
- Examples of where touching a student might be proper or necessary:
 - Holding the hand of the student at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school;
 - When comforting a distressed student;
 - When a student is being congratulated or praised;
 - To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;
 - To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching;
 - To give first aid.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES

Safeguarding Policy

Learning & Teaching Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Inclusion Policy

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

I'm worried that if I use force a student or parent/ carer could make a complaint against me.

Am I protected?

Yes, if you have acted lawfully. If the force used is reasonable all staff will have a robust defence against any accusations.

How do I know whether using a physical intervention is 'reasonable'?

The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the teacher concerned. Whether the force used is reasonable will always depend on the particular circumstances of the case. The use of force is reasonable if it is proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent. This means the degree of force used should be no more than is needed to achieve the desired result. School staff should expect the full backing of their senior leadership team when they have used force.

What about school trips?

The power may be used where the member of staff is lawfully in charge of the students, and this includes while on school trips.

Can force be used on students with SEN or disabilities?

Yes, but the judgement on whether to use force should not only depend on the circumstances of the case but also on information and understanding of the needs of the student concerned.

Do I have to restrain students if I don't want to?

There is a power, not a duty, to use force so members of staff have discretion whether or not to use it. However, teachers and other school staff have a duty of care towards their students and it might be argued that failing to take action (including a failure to use reasonable force) may in some circumstances breach that duty.

Are there any circumstances in which a teacher can use physical force to punish a student?

No. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment. This is because it would fall within the definition of corporal punishment, which is illegal.

LEGISLATIVE LINKS

The Education Act 1996

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>

Education and Inspections Act 2006

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents>

DfE Use of reasonable force:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f0077153/use-of-reasonable-force/use-of-reasonable-force-advice-for-school-leaders-staff-and-governing-bodies>