

Policy Context

This Policy has been written to recognise that the use of reasonable force is one of the last, in a range of strategies available to secure student safety and well-being. In turn this is also to maintain good order and discipline.

Our policy on restraint is tailored in conjunction with our Safeguarding, Health and Safety Policies, staff charter and Keeping Children Safe in Education- Part 1.

The main aims of this policy are to:

- To protect every person in Eat That Frog centres from harm
- To protect all students against any form of physical intervention that is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive, or harmful
- To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations

The Legal Framework

Policy Statement: Use of Reasonable Force in Schools

This policy is informed by **non-statutory advice** from the Department for Education. It aims to **clarify the appropriate use of reasonable force** within our setting. The purpose of this guidance is to ensure that all staff:

- **Feel confident** in exercising their legal powers to use reasonable force when necessary, and
- **Understand their responsibilities** when doing so.

Additionally, it outlines the roles and **responsibilities of senior leadership team and centre managers** in supporting and overseeing the appropriate and lawful use of this power, ensuring it is always exercised **safely, proportionately, and in the best interests of students.**

This enables teachers and other members of staff in the setting, authorised by Directors and senior leadership team, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a learner from:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to a person or damage to the property of any person.
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the setting or among its learners, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Definition of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the student from harming themselves or others or seriously damaging property.

Alternative Strategies to be Used Before Restraint

Restraint must only be used in the event where the need for physical restraint is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives (for example when a learner is about to run across a road and is in imminent danger).

However, in many circumstances there are alternatives available these include but not limited to:

The use of assertiveness skills such as:

- Repetitive instruction in which an instruction is repeated until the learner complies
- use of a distracter, such as a loud whistle, clapping or flashing lights to interrupt the behaviour long enough for other methods of verbal control to become effective
- withdrawal of attention – others in the room

Or other techniques designed to defuse the situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour (in these cases the incident can be dealt with later when emotions are no longer running high) or the use of other sanctions consistent with the learner induction/ground rules on student acceptable behaviour.

Use of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the learner to regain self-control.

It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment or aggressive conduct. Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint when all other strategies have been exhausted. Although there is no absolute definition of what constitutes to reasonable force, this depends upon the particular situation and the learner to whom it is being applied.

Force deemed **not acceptable** to use include:

- 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
- The 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

As a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a Learner's path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the learner and another learner or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary. In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate and effective physical restraint should be a last resort.

When physical restraint becomes necessary

YOU MUST:

- Tell the learner what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the learner what they must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language

- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the learner's compliance

YOU MUST NOT:

- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the learner
- Attempt to reason with the learner
- Involve other learner's in the restraint
- Touch or hold the learner in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the learner in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the learner
- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)

Examples of when it might be appropriate to use reasonable force.

- A learner attacks a member of staff, or another learner
- Learner's fighting
- A learner is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- A learner is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which they may cause an accident likely to injure themselves or others
- A learner absconding from a class or trying to leave the setting (NB this will only apply if a learner could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or in the setting)
- A learner persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an area
- A learner behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson.

Actions After an Incident

Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the learner.

A member of the SLT including Inclusive Learning Manager should be informed verbally of any incident as soon as possible and all interventions should be recorded on CPOMS.

The SLT/Centre Manager will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the learner involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents/guardians informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behaviour plan, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the Inclusive Learning Manager. Any behaviour plan should always be discussed and agreed with the parent/guardian.

It is also important to assess the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

A member of the SLT/Centre Manager will contact parents/guardians as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

The incidents must be written and reported immediately and stored within CPOMS.

Risk Assessments

All Post-16 learners have individual Risk Assessments written in line with EHCP requirements.

If we become aware that a learner is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises.

Such planning will address:

- Management of the learner (For example reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict)

- Involvement of parents/guardians to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the setting might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate

Complaints

This restraint policy, adhered to by all staff, should help to avoid complaints from Learners, Parents or Guardians.

In the event of a dispute about the use of force actioned by a member of staff will lead to an investigation. This might include either disciplinary procedures or the Police and social services department under child protection procedures.

The investigation will be conducted alongside the guidance set by the Department for Education's Use of Reasonable Force in Schools.

Date	Page	Details of the change	Agreed by
Dec 21	All	Reviewed – no change	Board Meeting
Dec 22		Reviewed – no change	Board Meeting
Dec 23		Reviewed – no change	Board
Apr 25	All	Reviewed – Changes to SENCO and Safeguarding Files. Added Inclusive Learning Manager and CPOMS. SMT to SLT. Pupil to Learner/student. School to Setting. Legal framework removed as NI Orders and replaced with Department for Education's Use of Reasonable Force in Schools summary.	
Next review date Dec 25			