

Build-a-Future

Main Road, West Ashby, Horncastle, Lincolnshire, LN9 5PT 01507 524015



Company Reg N°: 4521396

Physical Restraints: Guidance & Procedures



This document is informed by:

The use of reasonable force; advice for Headteacher, staff and governing bodies (July 2013) which all schools and academies must have regard to.

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1 Introduction

The Education Act 1996 recognised that, in certain circumstances, necessary reasonable force to control or restrain a learner can be used by a Principal or by other staff authorised by the Principal.

1.2 National guidance reinforces the fact by establishing the power of teachers and other staff who have lawful control or charge of learners to use reasonable force in order to prevent a learner causing injury to themselves or others or causing damage to property.

1.3 Whilst always a last resort and to be avoided wherever possible, staff must neither feel that they must make a physical intervention nor feel that they will be unsupported if they do.

2 Application

All staff must be aware that any physical intervention including use of force may lead to a complaint, including an allegation of assault. This guidance aims to support their defence in that staff who follow this guidance, use a proportionate response to a situation and do not resort to an emotional or angry response are in a very strong position to demonstrate reasonableness.

2.2 Learners and parents/ carers need to be aware that, in the very rare circumstances described, BAF does have the right to use reasonable and proportionate physical restraint and may do so quite legally. This guidance is a key document in refuting any complaint from a parent/ carer or learner.

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2.2 The overriding purpose of this guidance is to protect young people from coming to harm as a result of their own, or another learner's, behaviour whilst also providing adequate protection to members of staff.

3 Procedures

The use of any degree of force is only lawful if it can be regarded as reasonable in the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour. Where force is applied it should reduce rather than provoke further aggressive reaction. If a person has done only what he or she honestly and instinctively believes was necessary at the time to protect themselves or others, then this would be potent evidence that only reasonable force was used.

3.2 The number of staff involved should be the minimum necessary to control / restrain the learner whilst minimizing risks of injuries to all parties.

3.3 The circumstances where physical intervention, as a last resort, may be appropriate are

- Self defence.
- Risk of injury or significant damage to property.
- Where the learner is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.
- Where there is risk of harm to self or others.

3.4 The nature of the intervention, which must be proportionate, may include

- Escorting, guiding, shepherding away from a situation to a certain place.
- Holding with a degree of force in relation to the level of cooperation and compliance being displayed by the young person.
- Restrictive physical intervention where reasonable force is applied to prevent movement or mobility or to disengage from dangerous or harmful physical contact.

3.5 Staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. The following should not be used

- Pushing the learner.
- Holding round neck or collar or in any other way which might restrict airway or circulation.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against the joint.
- Holding by hair or ears.
- Holding face down to the ground.
- Ground recovery holds should not be employed by any member of staff without appropriate training.

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3.6 In a very small number of cases, a risk assessment linked to the challenging behaviour of a learner may be required. This may include references to restraint and may lead to an agreed behaviour management plan which will be communicated to the learner, parents and staff.

3.7 Authorisation and Training

Due to the completely unpredictable nature of events which may lead to physical restraint being required and the size of the BAF site, the Principal may authorise a number of members of staff to take appropriate action, including as a last resort physical intervention, to deal proportionately with a situation. No member of staff should feel, though, that they should place themselves at unnecessary risk or take an action they do not feel competent to take.

3.7.2 At least one member of the senior management team should attend relevant training on physical intervention. Training can also be made available to other members of staff through attendance at LA courses or by use of staff training days. An up to date record of staff authorised to use physical intervention strategies should be kept by the Principal along with a record of any training provided.

3.8 Recording and Reporting Procedures

All incidents must be reported and recorded using the Incident Forms held in the main office. Any witness statements should be gathered and stored with this record. Parents/ Carers should be informed of any incident as soon as possible after the event. All staff and learners involved in an event should be provided with support (e.g. time to collect themselves before continuing their duties) and must have access to a first aider for any sign of injury. All injuries must be recorded and reported following the correct medical incident reporting procedures.

3.9 Monitoring

The use of physical intervention must be monitored, and this information used for improving BAF processes. All injuries must be recorded and reported as part of this monitoring process.

4 Conclusion

It is very rare that incidents requiring physical intervention occur at BAF but, in order to ensure the safety of all members of BAF community, it is essential that all staff, learners and parents/ carers are provided with this clear framework within which the rights of all BAF members can be protected.