



AFIA Students Restraint Policy

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PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

AFIA is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing of students and staff and, in line with relevant legislation, and it only permits physical restraint by reasonable and non-injurious means. Physical restraint shall only be used in emergency situations and only after less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and always with extreme caution. Physical restraint is used only when immediately necessary for the minimum time necessary to prevent injury to self or others, or very serious damage to property. The policy authorizes staff to use physical restraint as a positive strategy to de-escalate potentially dangerous situations and to regain control of a student who has temporarily lost control of him/herself.

For the purpose of this policy document, physical restraint is defined as the positive application of force in order to protect or prevent a student from causing injury to him/herself, or other students, or staff. Injury means 'significant injury'; this would include actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of, or injury to themselves or others, by willful or reckless behaviour, and self-poisoning.

The purpose of this Policy is to minimise the effect of challenging behaviour, and to ensure the safety of students and staff.

The Physical Restraint Policy adds to existing behaviour management policies and procedures. This policy deals specifically with the use of physical restraint.

Any incident involving the use of restraint is recorded in writing and the relevant staff member must inform the CEO / Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Use of physical restraint must not be used in the following circumstances:

- As a means of punishment
- As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with an Academy rule or staff directive, disrespectful verbal comments that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious or physical harm

Implementation of the Physical Restraint Policy is the responsibility of the SLT of the Academy; in their absence, responsibility lies with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

WHAT IS A REASONABLE FORCE?

The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involves a degree of physical contact with students. Force is usually

used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a student to safety by the arm through 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.

As mentioned above, schools/academies generally use force to control students and to restrain them. 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. Academy 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 injury to the student.

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. In the Academy, force is used for two main purposes: to control students or to restrain them determined by the extreme circumstances outlined above. 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 Academy can use reasonable force to:

- Prevent a student leaving the classroom where allowing the student to leave would risk their safety and that of others
- Prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student, or to stop a fight
- Restrain a student at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

The Academy has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs.(if applicable)

PROCEDURES GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Staff should not hesitate to act in an emergency, provided they follow the guidelines in this policy. However, they should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be

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Contact should be made with the parents as soon as practically possible to explain the seriousness of the incident.

What happens if a student complains when force is used on them?

The Academy will investigate all complaints about the use of force thoroughly, speedily and appropriately.

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.

Power to search students without consent

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described in this policy, delegated members of the Senior Leadership Team can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following 'banned items':

- knives and weapon
- 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