



## Contents

1. Statement of Intent.....	3
2. The use of force – When can reasonable force be used?.....	4
3. Principles for using Reasonable Force in Avanti Schools.....	7
4. Recording the use of Force.....	8
5. Dealing with complaints and allegations regarding the use of force.....	9



1.3.2. The School adheres to government non-statutory guidance and does not adopt a 'no contact' approach, as this breaches the 'duty of care' towards a pupil that all our staff hold within a school setting, or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a pupil causing harm. This guidance is based upon a number of principles. In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, this policy acknowledges that all cpupils have a

The appropriate use of language, gestures and communication support aids, positive tone of voice and non-threatening body stance  
Verbally or responding by gesture, including British sign language or Makaton sign language, PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) or tactile communication systems) to acknowledge the child's distress/anger and attempting to calm the heat of the moment; listening and/or observing and reassuring

Asking/requesting in different forms, onlookers to ignore an escalating situation and in some circumstances

Asking/requesting them to leave the scene

- 2.4. Physical intervention to control or restrain a pupil should be used as a last resort and should take into consideration the following: pupil need, age and stage of development;
- 2.5. When the use of physical force is necessary to address challenging behaviour, it must be reasonable, proportional in the circumstances and maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned. It should be used in a manner which is consistent with the statutory duty upon schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and their staff.
- 2.6. Staff do not have a duty to physically intervene if it would harm them at any risk.
- 2.7. The degree of force that may be used depends on all the particular circumstances. When considering what constitutes 'reasonable force' there are five relevant considerations:
  - 1) The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it.
  - 2) It should be possible to show that, unless immediate action had been taken, there were strong indicators that hurting themselves or others, damaging property, or causing disorder would follow.
  - 3) The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of such physical force, and therefore should be in proportion to the incident.
  - 4) Force can be used to physically restrain a student to bring them under control. It should only employ a minimum amount of force - i.e. the minimum force needed to avoid injury, damage to property or to prevent a breakdown in discipline - for the shortest period of time.
  - 5) The degree of force used will also be dependent on the age, understanding, physical maturity, developmental stage, sex of the student and whether the student has a special educational need. The decision to physically restrain a student must take account of these circumstances and be based on an assessment of the risks associated with the intervention, compared with the risks of not employing a physical intervention. Schools have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs (SEN).
- 2.8. The decision whether to use controlling or restraining force on pupils is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned. When a student needs physical intervention as part of his/her daily management plan, a designated member of staff will complete the Risk Assessment with the parent/ guardian and student.

- 2.9. The purpose of any intervention is to restore safety. Physical intervention i.e. to control or restrain, should not be continued for longer than is necessary.
- 2.10. Physical interventions should never be used in anger and staff should make every effort to avoid any injury to the pupil. Brief periods of withdrawal away from the point of conflict into a calmer environment may be more effective for an agitated pupil than holding to control a pupil or restrain them.

Some examples of situations where reasonable force might be used are:

	Examples
Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury	<p>A pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil pupils are fighting</p> <p>A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school – this will only apply if a pupil could be seriously at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school</p>
Where there is a risk of significant damage to property	<p>A pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, significant damage or vandalism to property</p> <p>A pupil is causing, or is at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects</p>

- 3.1. Prevention should be the primary consideration. As the use of force should only be a last resort, staff and volunteers should minimise the possibility of force being needed by creating a calm, orderly and supportive school climate that lessens the risk and threat of violence of any kind. Steps to avoid these situations should be taken and the adult should be able to demonstrate that those steps were taken.
- 3.2. All staff in The Trust need to be aware of strategies and techniques they can take to defuse and calm a situation. Leaders should take steps to ensure training for staff who may need to use reasonable force over the course of their work. Staff and new staff should be given a

Intervene early

Try to maintain eye contact

If necessary summon help before the problem escalates

If possible, remove the audience from the immediate location

Slowing one's pace

Lowering the voice

Breathing more deeply

Initially matching the pitch and volume of the child's emotional display (shout, cry etc)

and then regulate it down

Talking slowly, firmly, and quietly in an unhurried and unflustered way

Providing clear predictable and consistently held boundaries



5.1. Parents/carers and students have a right to complain about actions taken by school staff, including any use of force. If a specific allegation is made against a member of staff then the Trust will follow procedures set out in the Trust's Complaints Policy, with reference to the following Guidance:

Use of Reasonable Force – July 2013  
 Keeping children safe in education, Department of Education 2020 and  
 Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2012)

5.2. 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 can provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.

5.3. Any allegations against staff should follow the procedures set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including making contact with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where necessary.

5.4. Trustees should always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against the teacher.

5.5. As employers, the Trust has 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 an incident of use of force.

(directly or witnesses)		witnesses)	(directly or
(including any triggers):	<input type="checkbox"/> Move calmly and confidently <input type="checkbox"/> Slowing one's pace <input type="checkbox"/> Make simple, clear statements <input type="checkbox"/> Lowering the voice <input type="checkbox"/> Intervene early <input type="checkbox"/> Breathing more deeply <input type="checkbox"/> Try to maintain eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Matching pitch and volume <input type="checkbox"/> If necessary summon support <input type="checkbox"/> and regulating down		

	<p><i>(i.e where did you hold / how did you move the student away)</i></p>