

# Polisi Grym Rhesymol Reasonable Force Policy

Ysgol Gymunedol Trimsaran

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Cyngor **Sir Gâr**  
**Carmarthenshire**  
County Council



## Reasonable Force Policy

### **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 pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying school trips or playground supervisors.

### **When can Reasonable Force be used?**

It is not possible to detail every instance when the use of reasonable force is acceptable (or not). In principle, reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils 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.

### **Examples of when reasonable force can be used against pupils**

Remove disruptive pupils from the classroom if they have refused to follow an instruction to do so  
Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit  
Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom or school where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others  
Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight  
Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

### **Unlawful Use of Restraining Techniques**

**Force cannot be used as a form of punishment under any circumstances– this will always be viewed as unlawful and could result in criminal or civil action.**

**Certain restraint techniques present an unacceptable risk when used on children and young people and must never be used.**

These 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



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### **Staff training:**

All members of staff have been trained by the LA in appropriate physical restraint techniques including Team Teach physical intervention.

### **Team Teach Code of Practice and Protocol**

#### Reducing Risk, Restraint and Restriction

Physical intervention should:

- Best interests of the young person
- Minimum force for the shortest time
- Prevent injury, pain and distress
- Maintain dignity
- Reasonable and proportionate
- Action should be necessary
- Plans to reduce the use of restraint and restriction

Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent “side-effect” of ensuring that the service user remains safe.

### **De-briefing: Staff**

- The member(s) of staff involved in the restraint should be encouraged to consider the situation with the Headteacher or senior member of staff as soon as possible following the incident.
- The opportunity should be taken to evaluate the situation and could serve to debrief the member of staff and to inform future situations.
- Some settings may look to an external facilitator for de-briefing, counselling or support.

### **During the intervention/restraint:**

- a calm and measured approach should be adopted;
- staff should not give the impression that they have lost their temper or are punishing the child or young person;
- staff should summon assistance as soon as possible. Following the intervention/restraint it is advised that:
- any incident where a child or young person is putting himself, others or property at risk, requiring physical restraint, should be recorded and/or reported to a senior member of staff;
- parents should be informed of any incident involving their child or young person as soon as possible, no later than the end of the school day, either orally or in writing;
- parents should be given the opportunity to discuss the incident with the Headteacher or senior member of staff;
- the member(s) of staff involved should provide a written report as soon as possible, and should be reminded that the teaching unions are available for advice, should it be needed;
- schools should keep a hand-written record of all incidents, to include:
- the name(s) of the child(ren) or young person(s) involved;
- the date, time and place of the incident;
- names of key staff or child or young person who witnessed the incident;
- the reason that the physical restraint was necessary;
- how the incident began and progressed;
- details of the child’s or young person’s behaviour;
- what was said by each of the parties;
- the steps taken to diffuse the situation; the degree of force used;
- how and for how long the physical restraint was applied;
- the child’s or young person’s response;



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- the outcome of the incident;
- details of any injury or damage to property.

Subsequently there may be a Section 47 Children Act 1989 enquiry involving the Police and Social Services. the hand-written records will be required by the Police if an investigation is undertaken.

### **Searching Pupils on School Premises**

Where Head teachers and authorised staff have reasonable grounds for suspecting pupils may have a prohibited item, they have a statutory power to search pupils and/or their possessions without consent. They may also use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search without consent.

Prohibited items include knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm.

### **Other Contact with Pupils**

There are occasions when physical contact with a pupil is proper and necessary. Schools should avoid having any form of blanket “no contact” policy towards

#### **Examples of when physical contact with a pupil is proper and necessary:**

Holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school;

When comforting a distressed pupil;

When a pupil 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.

