

Edmund de Moundeford V.C. Primary School

Use of Reasonable Force Policy March 2025

Introduction:

This policy sets out guidance on the use of reasonable force in our school for members of staff, volunteers, parents, governors and children.

This policy has been developed in line with DFE guidance, January 2013 entitled Use of Reasonable Force, Advice for Head teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies.

This document has been prepared to assist all staff and volunteers working within Edmund de Moundeford Primary School.

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools and colleges to use reasonable force to safeguard children and young people. The term reasonable force covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact, such as leading a student by the arm out of the classroom.

- Clearly understanding this policy and their duty of care responsibilities.
- All staff are provided with appropriate training to support them via The Norfolk Steps programme.

Definition:

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most at some point in their career that involves a degree of physical contact with pupils.

Reasonable force should only be used if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the child, following an analysis of the presented risks. The Education and Inspections Act (2006) (Par, 7, Chapter 1) stipulates that reasonable force may be used to prevent a child from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- Engage in any behaviours prejudicial to maintain good order and discipline at the school or among any of its students, whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom during a lesson or elsewhere in the school (this includes authorized out-of-school activities)
- All staff and volunteers should operate in an appropriate duty of care and within policy guidance.
- The application of any form of physical contact can place staff in a vulnerable position. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to seek alternative strategies wherever possible to prevent the need for physical intervention.

For example:

Sensory ladders

Zones of Regulation tools

Behaviour policy

Who can use reasonable force?

Where possible only staff with up to date Step up and on training should use restraint, however, if staff cannot wait for a trained member to arrive they have a duty to keep children from harm.

When can reasonable force be used?

School staff can use reasonable force to:

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

School staff cannot use reasonable force as a punishment. It is unlawful to use reasonable force as a punishment.

It should be noted that some students will refer themselves to designated areas (Their safe space) to 'sit quietly' and self-manage their behaviours. If this occurs we watch from a far and keep conversation to a minimal.

On occasions staff will refer students to use these dedicated spaces within the school to reduce the presented and potential risks.

Should this be necessary this will be done in line with the Use of Reasonable Force guidance from the DFE (2013) These areas are

not to be used as a punishment or sanction. While the pupil (s) are in these areas, they will be supervised by an adult at all times to ensure their safety. It is important when pupils use their safe spaces that this is recorded on CPOMS (Amount of time spent their and information as to why)

Monitoring of incidents.

Monitoring of incidents must be part of the work of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the senior Leadership Team (SLT) to developing trends and to engage necessary action/intervention, including therapeutic intervention or other agency involvement where needed.

Recording by all staff.

All incidents of physical restraint should be recorded using the schools recording system CPOMS.

Staff who have been involved in an incident involving reasonable force should have access to counselling and support, which is via our Norfolk wellbeing support of schools.

All incidents where there has been use of reasonable force or restraint will be reviewed and scrutinized by the senior leadership team for the school. Parents will be notified of this matter.

Sharing of this policy with parents.

Parents can view and read this policy on our school website or obtain a paper copy from the school office.

Policies will be mentioned in our newsletter from time to time.

If parents have a complaint or do not feel this policy is being followed correctly they must follow or school complaints procedure.

The following government guidance and Edmund-de-Moundeford School policies can be used for further guidance on this matter

- EDM Safeguarding Policy
- EDM Health and Safety Policy
- EDM Child Protection Policy
- DFE document *Use of Reasonable Force, Advice for Head teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies* (July 2013)