

USE OF REASONABLE FORCE AT THE SJCA

What is reasonable force?

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
- Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to 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, staff can use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- School 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 injuring the pupil.

In accordance with the DoE Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2013):

- **Reasonable force** can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
- In a school, reasonable force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- 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.
- 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 headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

When reasonable force is used SJCA staff are required to:

- Fill out the attached log;
- Complete and sign the attached restraint documentation form;
- File a copy of the form in the student's educational record;
- Forward copies to the deputy head and headteacher.

Best Practice states that there will be:

- Debriefing with staff involved in the incident.
- Inform parents/carers immediately that reasonable force has been used.
- Referral to DCC, first aid or medical profession, if required

SJCA REASONABLE FORCE DOCUMENTATION FORM

Date of Incident: _____

Student's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Events leading up to the incident:

Where was the student? _____

What was he/she doing prior to behavior that resulted in Reasonable Force being used?

What time of the day was it? _____

Who was with him/her? _____

Precipitating Event Immediately Preceding the Behavior that Prompted Use of Reasonable Force:

Other Interventions Tried by Staff Prior to Reasonable Force:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provided Choices | <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Redirection | <input type="checkbox"/> Calming Techniques |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clear Demands | <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Interaction | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Removal of Other Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Removal of Student to another Location | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Exclusion | <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

Behavior that Prompted Use of Reasonable Force: (Describe what the student was doing that was dangerous to self or others.)

- Threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self.
- Threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to others.
- Threat of imminent, serious property destruction.

Explain if required: _____

Observed by: (Name (s) of staff): _____

Length of Time that
Reasonable force was used: _____

Type of Reasonable Force
Used: _____

NAME AND SIGNATURE OF PERSON(S) IMPLEMENTING REASONABLE FORCE

Name	Signature

Name and Signature of DSO Informed of the Use of Reasonable Force:

Print Name

Signature