Haberdashers'
Castle House School

B3 Reasonable Force / Physical Restraint Policy		
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Restraint of pupils at Castle House Preparatory School.

This policy was developed in September 2019 through a process of consultation with the teaching staff and governors. It was formally adopted by the governing body September 2019.

This document should be regarded as a complement to KCSIE Sept 2023, WTSC 2018 Dfe Use of Reasonable Force in Schools 2013 and DFE Circular number 10/98. (Section 550A of the Education Act 1996: The use of force to Control or Restrain Pupils)

What is Physical restraint?

Physical restraint occurs whenever a member of staff uses intentional force to restrict a child's movements against his or her will.

Physical restraint does not include the use of gentle physical prompting or guidance

- where the child is happy to comply,
- and where the aim is to assist him or her to take part appropriately in activities.

Physical restraint is non-punitive measure and solely used to prevent harm to people or property. Physical restraint is one of many possible options and should be used as a last resort. It must not be used as a form of punishment. It must not be used when a less severe response might have been effective.

When should we use physical restraint?

We should only use physical restraint when there are good grounds for believing that

- the child is placing him/herself in immediate danger, or the child is placing other people in immediate danger, or
- there is imminent danger of significant damage to property,
- the child is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline
- and other attempts to control the child's behaviour have failed or are judged inappropriate.

We should always consider first whether there is an effective alternative to using physical restraint.

What alternatives are there?
Staff will use their professional judgements as to whether an alternative course of action would avoid the risks of harm to people or property described above. Amongst those alternatives are - talking calmly to the child, - changing the activity the child is doing, - removing an antagonistic influence, - assertive body language - ignoring the behaviour.

These alternatives are discussed in greater detail in Appendix 1.

Procedure for using physical restrain†
1. Before restraining a child, the member of staff must give a clear verbal instruction to stop the dangerous or threatening behaviour. Physical restraint should only be used if this warning is ignored.
2. As soon as practicable, send for another adult, (normally for moral rather then physical support; also to act as a witness or help supervise other children).
3. There are two forms of restraint - total and partial.
Total restraint, in which the child is prevented from making any movement at all, will rarely, if ever, be used in a mainstream primary school. This is an extreme form of restraint and its aim is to prevent harm coming to the child or others in the vicinity. If total restraint is used, the child's vital signs, (breathing and circulation), must be checked. Reducing the level of restraint must be managed carefully and gradually.

Partial restraint describes a range of techniques which can be applied in degrees. For instance:
- A member of staff places him/herself between the child and the rest of the class to restrict the child's movement. If this is insufficient, the child is held firmly by the upper arm or is turned to face the corner of the room so as to effectively isolate him or her.
- The child is held in order to restrict movement where there is risk of hurting others or him/herself

The child is led by the arm from a situation into another room
When applying restraint
- use the minimum force necessary
- continue restraining for the shortest possible time
- hold clothing rather than limbs if possible, but care must be taken that the   child does not get twisted up inside the clothing,
- do not use painful or dangerous procedures such as locking body joints
- if limbs have to be grasped, holding near a joint reduces the risk of fracture or dislocation, but care needs to be taken as these tend to be areas in which children feel most pain

The Headteacher must be notified at the earliest opportunity. The Headteacher will undertake to inform the child's parents/carers, preferably by telephone or in person. They will be informed of their right to use the school's complaints procedure if they are not satisfied with the handling of the incident.

Every incident involving actual physical restraint must be recorded, using the form at Appendix 2. The form must be completed as early as possible, and on the same day. Copies are placed with the classteacher, Headteacher and the child's file.

Prevention of the need for physical restraint
Castle House Preparatory School has at its heart the Castle House Way which, if practised, will create an atmosphere where there is normally no need to use physical restraint. The need for physical restraint is likely to arise from factors in the child's environment which fall outside the school's ready influence.
Appendix 3 gives suggestions for preventing aggression.

Respecting the feelings of members of staff
No member of staff should be required to work with a child who makes them fear violence. The governors and Headteacher must respect any feelings of this nature that staff may express to them. Should a member of staff have doubts about their ability to deal with a situation effectively and safely, these doubts should be expressed to the Headteacher and dealt with as a matter of urgency. Similarly, governors and the Headteacher have a responsibility to preempt difficulties and to ensure staff are properly supported.

The legal position
Providing staff act in a professional, considered and informed manner, and that these actions are seen as being in the child's best interest, their actions will be supported.
When recording the incident, staff will need to show that a genuine danger was perceived; means other than force were attempted or judged to be insufficient; and that minimum force necessary was used.

Physical Restraint: Appendix 1
ALTERNATIVES TO PHYSICAL RESTRAINT
1. In many situations it is possible to distract the child by talking. Such talk would need to be reassuring and unthreatening. However anxious or irritated we ourselves may be feeling, we must try to communicate to the child a sense of calm. We can give assurances that the child will be given a cooling-off period, at the end of which we will listen to him or her. We can offer to try and understand why he or she is experiencing such strong feelings. Negotiation is preferable to force.
2. Sometimes a change of activity may be a feasible response. If the source of the child's behaviour is seen to be located in the work he or she is doing, or in the group he or she is in, it would be appropriate to divert the child towards something else. Normally, no reference would be made to the behaviour observed.
3. It may be appropriate to remove an antagonistic influence. Other children may be embarrassing or provoking the child, and it may be less troublesome to move them.
4. It may be more appropriate to move the other children in the vicinity rather that the distressed child. However, it is accepted that the movement of up to 30 children may not be the most effective solution, but it should be considered.
5. The use of assertive body language may avoid the need for physical restraint. This would include - taking the child gently by the hand or arm, - putting a comforting arm around the shoulders - standing in a doorway to prevent the child going through,
It is important to avoid body language that may be seen by the child as threatening. If he or she feels dominated or cornered it may provoke a panic response.
6. There will also be some occasions where simply ignoring the behaviour is judged to be the best response. In this instance the member of staff will give the child the impression that he or she is being ignored whilst actually monitoring the behaviour very closely indeed.

Physical Restraint: Appendix 2

Castle House Preparatory School

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT - INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Name of pupil ....Class...............Date.............

Member of staff who used physical restraint ....

Witnessed by ....Time & place of incident..........................

Events leading up to incident (mention what dangers were perceived and what strategies other than restraint were tried)

Brief description of the incident (mention what restraint was applied, timescale, significant damage)

Was it necessary to make an entry in the medical treatment book or on an accident form? Yes/No (If yes, give brief details)

Have parents/carers been informed?   Yes/No   By phone/letter/in person? (Normally the headteacher will do this)

Form completed by .... Position.......................................

Headteacher's signature .... Date ....
Copies to: Headteacher   Class teacher   Child's file

Physical Restraint: Appendix 3

DEALING WITH AGGRESSION
- Be both consistent and persistent. Don't change the rules of the game/activity once you have declared them.
- Don't provoke a crisis - try to see it looming up and divert the child.
- Ensure children have adequate outlets for potentially aggressive feelings through appropriate constructive play.
- Remember to praise the child when he/she is being co-operative and helpful, and to discuss inappropriate behaviour in a positive manner.
- In group situations, have some clear rules for sharing.
- Never reward aggressive behaviour - if feasible, try to ignore it. If you can't, deal with it promptly and firmly. Make it plain that using aggression to get their own way will not work
- Avoid boredom - a child with nothing to do will quickly find some mischief to fill his/her time.
- Always share your tactics with the parents/carers of the child.
- Don't answer aggression with aggression and get caught up in the child's anger. Keep calm and don't shout