

VICTORIA PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL



Policy on the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Educational Settings.

Date	Policy Reviewed	Policy Amended	Added to Website
November 2019	November 2019		November 2019
	May 2021	May 2021	May 2021

VICTORIA PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Use of Restraint & Seclusion in Educational Settings

Introduction:

Victoria Park Primary School has established a Pastoral Care Policy towards the pupils in its charge. In addition, it takes reasonable steps to safeguard the welfare of its staff and pupils by promoting good behaviour and discipline on the parts of its pupils.

The Education Order (NI) enables a member of staff to use reasonable force in the circumstances to prevent pupils from:

- a) committing an offence,
- b) causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person or self or
- c) displaying behaviour, which is unacceptable to proper school discipline either in or out of class.

The right to use reasonable force to control or restrain a pupil applies:

- a) when a member of staff is on the school premises
- b) elsewhere when in charge of the pupil
- c) to all school staff with the authority of the principal (volunteers would only be expected to alert the member of staff in charge).

Reasonable Restraint:

Reasonable restraint cannot be precisely defined but three areas should be considered before reasonable force is applied:

- i) the **use of force** is only reasonable when prevention of the incident cannot be resolved without force
- ii) the **degree of force** must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident
- iii) the use of restraint must be in keeping with the physical strength of the pupil as defined by age, sex or disability of the child.

Predicting the Need for Restraint

Initially it is assumed that all good behaviour management strategies have been exercised.

In order that staff may make the correct decision at short notice the school will have considered, in advance, circumstances when they should and should not use reasonable force.

Staff will employ strategies, which have been given as guidance by the Education Authority

Need for Restraint

The use of reasonable force can be considered when:

- a) the school's behavioural management strategies have failed, when self-defence is necessary or when there is a risk of injury,
- b) when an imminent risk is predicted, when significant damage to property is likely.

Examples of the above include: a pupil attacking a member of staff or other pupil, pupils are fighting, a pupil causing or at risk, injury or damage by accident, rough play or use of dangerous objects etc., running in an inappropriate situation, a pupil absconding especially from the school.

- c) where a pupil is compromising good order and discipline.

Examples of the above include: a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave the classroom, a pupil whose behaviour is seriously disrupting a lesson.

Conduct During the Application of Restraint

Having considered and applied all possible alternatives members of staff should:

- i) inform the pupil what action he/she will be taking
- ii) continue by word and action to diffuse the situation
- iii) secure the well-being of all other pupils, if necessary by removing them from the area
- iv) send for assistance.

Physical Intervention

Physical Intervention could include:

- standing between pupils,
- blocking a pupil's pathway,
- holding,
- leading pupil by the arm,
- shepherding pupil by placing hand in the centre of the back or,
- in extreme cases, using more restrictive force.

Unacceptable Restraints

Staff should never act in a way that might lead to injury of the pupil. It would be therefore unacceptable to hit, slap, punch, twist limbs, hold inappropriately, or throw an object as means of constraint. Avoidance of holding or touching indecently goes without saying.

Not all possible situations can be included in any school policy. However, it is understood that all adults will act in good faith in cases of extreme emergency.

Physical Contact

Teachers should use their professional training and judgements when physical contact is appropriate such as in PE lessons when coaching techniques or consoling a pupil in distress.

Reporting of the Use of Reasonable Force

- the Principal, Vice-Principal or Senior Member of staff should immediately be informed
- school policies on recording incidents will apply and the appropriate report form should be completed when the situation has been diffused
- parent/guardian of the pupil should as soon as possible be contacted and informed of the incident

Record of the Use of Restraint

The report on the use of Reasonable Force will contain:

- date of incident
- outline of events preceding incident
- outline of incident including reason for use of reasonable force
- action taken to subdue the incident and to support the staff/pupils involved etc.
- record of any injury/treatment
- names of other involved adults and
- signatures of reporting members of staff.

Children with Special Educational Needs

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005 (SENDO) places duties on educational settings not to directly discriminate against a pupil because of their disability, or to treat disabled pupils less favourably than it treats, or would treat, a pupil to whom that reason does not or would not apply (unless justified) and to make 'reasonable adjustments' to all policies, procedures and practices to ensure that a disabled pupil is not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to those who are not disabled.

The school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) should keep staff informed about pupils with special educational needs who may require individual support with regard to their physical management. Staff should discuss any concerns they have about physical management with the SENCO and/or Principal.

Seclusion

Current guidance does not seek to define seclusion or indicate what forms of seclusion, if any, are permissible, and in what circumstances.

Children should never be locked in a room or left unaccompanied and must be able to leave when they want to.

Guidance, sport and resources on behaviour support and emotional wellbeing in the re-engagement of young people into settings following periods of Covid-19 restrictions can be found at:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/information-for-children-and-young-people>

<https://www.eani.org.uk/information-for-educational-settings>

<https://www.eani.org.uk/information-for-parents-and-families>

Primary Aged Pupils	Post Primary Aged Pupils
Locality East Tel: 02890566292	Locality East Tel: 02890792061
Locality North Strabane/Derry/Londonderry/Coleraine Tel: 02871383975	Locality North Tel: 02894482262
Mid & East Antrim Tel: 028 94482316	Locality South West Tel: 02838314452
Locality South West Tel: 02838314455	