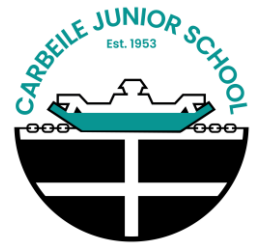


CARBEILE JUNIOR SCHOOL

USE OF REASONABLE FORCE POLICY



PH – Feb 2025

1. Introduction

This policy is designed to provide guidance to all staff at Carbeile Junior School on the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions in line with the "Use of Reasonable Force and Other Restrictive Interventions in Schools Guidance for Schools in England" (February 2025). The policy aims to ensure that staff act in a manner that is lawful, reasonable, and proportionate in the event of situations that may require the use of force to protect pupils, staff, or others, and to maintain an environment conducive to learning.

Understanding when to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions

The decision on whether it is reasonable to use force and/or other restrictive interventions, as defined in the terminology section above, depends on the individual circumstances of each situation. In assessing whether force and/or other restrictive interventions are reasonable in a situation, the member of staff should use their professional judgement.

Factors staff might want to consider include:

Is it necessary?

Staff should consider whether there are reasonable alternative ways to manage a situation and achieve the desired outcome. Staff should assess whether the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the consequences of the behaviour that it intends to address. Where possible, staff should communicate with other staff members to understand any broader risks in the environment.

Is it proportionate?

Staff should use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce the relevant risks. Staff should consider the personal circumstances of the pupil such as medical conditions, special educational needs or other vulnerabilities, their characteristics such as age and size, and must consider relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.⁷

Have you considered the pupil's welfare?

Staff should consider the impact on the pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. For example, pupils who have experienced an adverse life event, with diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, past trauma or neglect, communication difficulties, or other needs, may find the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions particularly distressing. Staff should seek to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity. This may include, where possible, considering the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers. Where possible, staff should clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why, and explain what the pupil needs to do. For pupils with

difficulties with speech, language and communication, or with English as an additional language, verbal and/or non-verbal strategies should be used to ensure the pupil understands what is happening and has adequate time to process information and respond. Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is based on the following key documents and principles:

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Children Act 1989
- The Use of Reasonable Force and Other Restrictive Interventions in Schools Guidance for Schools in England (February 2025)

Staff members must be aware that the use of force is a serious matter and should only be used when necessary and in compliance with the law and school policy.

3. Definition of Reasonable Force

Reasonable force refers to the use of physical intervention to control or restrain a pupil, where it is deemed necessary, to:

- Prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence.
- Prevent a pupil from causing harm to themselves or others.
- Prevent a pupil from causing serious damage to property.

Force should be the minimum necessary to achieve the desired outcome and should always be proportionate to the situation. The use of force should be considered a last resort after other methods have been exhausted or are deemed inappropriate.

4. Principles of Reasonable Force

Staff are required to consider the following principles when determining whether to use reasonable force:

- Proportionality: The level of force used should be proportionate to the threat posed by the pupil's behaviour.
- Necessity: Force should only be used when there is no alternative available to ensure the safety of the pupil, staff, or others.
- Minimisation: The amount of force used should be kept to a minimum and only for as long as is necessary.
- Dignity and Respect: The dignity of the pupil should be maintained during any intervention, and force should never be used as punishment.

5. Who Can Use Force?

All members of staff employed by the school have a duty to act in the best interests of children and may use reasonable force if necessary. This includes teachers, teaching assistants, and any other staff members who have been authorized to do so. Staff who may need to use reasonable force should receive appropriate training to ensure they are equipped to handle such situations effectively and safely.

6. Types of Restrictive Interventions

In addition to physical force, restrictive interventions may include:

- Physical intervention: Involving physically guiding or holding a pupil.
- Seclusion: Restricting a pupil's movement within a safe and controlled environment.
- Time-out or withdrawal: Allowing a pupil to calm down in a designated area under supervision, to prevent further escalation of behaviour.

These interventions must always be used in accordance with the pupil's best interests and only when absolutely necessary.

7. Training and Support

Staff will receive regular training on the safe use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions, including techniques for de-escalating challenging behaviour. This training will ensure that staff are confident and capable of applying the policy in a safe and appropriate manner. The school will also provide support for staff involved in incidents where reasonable force is used.

8. Recording and Reporting Incidents

- Recording: Any incident where reasonable force is used must be documented by completing an Incident Report Form. This report should include the nature of the incident, the actions taken, the duration of the intervention, and any outcomes. This should then be uploaded to CPOMS with the 'Reasonable Force' toggle being highlighted.
- Reporting to Parents: Parents or carers will be informed of any incident where force has been used, either in writing or verbally, as soon as possible after the event.
- Monitoring: The school will monitor the frequency and nature of the use of force to identify any patterns of behaviour and ensure that interventions are appropriate and effective.

9. Safeguarding Considerations

It is important that all actions taken during an incident involving force are scrutinized to ensure they are in line with safeguarding practices. Any incidents of concern will be reviewed promptly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to assess whether any further action, such as a safeguarding referral, is necessary.

10. Special Considerations

- Pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND): Staff will take into account the individual needs of pupils with SEND and make reasonable adjustments to how force or restrictive interventions are applied. In some cases, additional support and training may be necessary to ensure interventions are appropriate for the pupil's specific needs.
- Cultural and Religious Considerations: Staff must be mindful of cultural and religious differences and consider these factors when deciding how to respond to challenging behaviour.

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the school's leadership team to ensure its effectiveness. The review will include feedback from staff, pupils, and parents. Any

necessary updates will be made to reflect changes in the law, guidance, or school practice.

12. Conclusion

The use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions must always be a last resort. Carbeile Junior School is committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment where all pupils can learn and thrive, and where staff are trained and supported to manage challenging situations effectively and professionally.

Headteacher: Mr P Hamlyn

Chair of Governors: Mrs S Morton

Date: Feb 2025

Review Date: Feb 2026