



## Behaviour Policy

The policy is guided by the Education and inspection Act 2006 which outlines the legislation relating to behaviour and discipline in schools.

At Footsteps, we expect all our learners to behave well and want to learn. They will be praised and rewarded for their efforts and can expect high quality learning experiences every day. Establishing behaviour that supports the climate for learning is essential if we are to help our learners to achieve to the best of their ability.

Well prepared, stimulating and appropriately challenging learning sessions are key in securing outstanding standards of behaviour. Effective learning space management skills can be developed through training, CPD, experience and appropriate support from colleagues. Personal reflection on practice is of great importance and is to be encouraged.

The key to managing behaviour successfully is a consistent approach. It is important therefore that all staff adopt and uphold this policy. Whilst it is accepted that there must be room for individual preferences, staff who do not put the core principles of our Behaviour Policy at the forefront of their approach make life more difficult for their colleagues and increase the workload of Team Leaders and Senior Leaders. We also believe that this makes it harder for some learners to understand and cooperate with the systems that we have that are designed to enable them to achieve.

The foundations of our Behaviour Policy are praise and reward; a punitive system that focuses on persistent punishment for the minority of learners who do not engage with our systems will disenfranchise the majority. Our well-motivated and hardworking learners must receive the recognition they deserve for their efforts.

When a learner enrolls at Footsteps, they and their parents/carers make a commitment to support Footsteps, and Footsteps makes a commitment to the learner and their parents/carers. It is hoped that they will support Footsteps in its endeavours to constantly improve the systems it has in order that learners can make progress in line with their abilities and aspirations.

We will consult annually with learners, parents/carers, members of staff, and the Board of Directors about our Behaviour Policy.

### Aims of this Policy

Aims of our Behaviour Policy:

- To support learning at Footsteps.
- To achieve outstanding standards of behaviour
- To allow all learners to learn in a safe and secure environment.
- To encourage respect for others, for property and for the environment.
- To encourage and develop self-discipline and personal responsibility/accountability for actions.
- To promote a positive, calm, and purposeful ethos within Footsteps community.
- To encourage honesty, trust, fairness, and tolerance.
- To recognise the individual needs of learners.
- To reduce 'low level disruption' in learning sessions.
- To eliminate persistent absence issues especially amongst vulnerable learners.
- To eliminate the necessity for all forms of exclusion from learning.

Date of Issue: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2025

## **Principles of Support**

- All staff and learners have a responsibility to create outstanding order at Footsteps and to maintain high standards of behaviour. In particular, Learning Mentors have a duty to maintain outstanding order in their learning spaces and should take steps to correct behaviour which does not conform to this policy.
- Every member of staff is empowered to praise, reward and challenge learners for actions that they consider to be anti-social, dangerous, or disruptive.
- Everyone at Footsteps has the right to be treated in a courteous and considerate way. Bullying, harassment, and any other form of unkind and upsetting behaviour will not be tolerated – ref: Anti-Bullying Policy
- Individual members of staff are responsible for maintaining a stimulating and purposeful learning environment. Learning Mentors and Academy Leaders will actively support staff in this.
- It is important that parents/carers share the responsibility for their learner's behaviour, and they have the right to be kept informed and involved. By enrolling as a learner at Footsteps, parents/carers undertake a commitment to support the work we undertake.
- When imposing a sanction on a learner, it is the action or behaviour which should be criticised, and not the individual.
- Staff should always seek to model appropriate behaviour, and ways of speaking to and engaging with learners.

## **Parents/Carers**

Parents and carers can expect the schools' aim to provide a positive learning environment for their child(ren). Parents and carers are expected to take responsibility for the behaviour of their child(ren) both inside and outside school. We see the role of parents and carers as a critical factor in maintaining high standards of behaviour and cooperation.

## **Code of Conduct for Students**

As a member of Footsteps student cohort, students are expected to:

- Attend
- Be punctual
- Be smart and have the correct equipment
- Work hard
- Act sensibly
- Treat everyone and everything with respect
- Make it easy for everyone to learn and for staff to explain/demonstrate/guide/coach/assist
- If in doubt, ask, listen to the answer, and then act accordingly
- Be tolerant and respectful of all members of the Footsteps team
- Promote a peaceful school environment by behaving in positive manner and not being aggressive, bullying, or fighting with others
- No eating in lessons - or chewing gum
- Remove hoodies when in the school building
- Use appropriate language at all times (No swearing)
- Keep Footsteps tidy
- No use of mobile phones during lessons (phones to be handed in)

## **Praise and Rewards**

Everyone thrives on rewards and praise. Staff should use the following to acknowledge learner achievement:

- Verbal praise
- Merit Card issue
- Showcasing good work with other learners
- Sending the learner to a Team Leader or Senior Leader to show good work
- Positive contact with parents/carers via postcards, phone-calls, e-mail, and text
- Nominations for Achievement Awards in weekly briefings

Date of Issue: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2025

Green Cards endeavour to promote a culture of rewarding consistent outstanding achievement. The exact criteria for awarding the 'Points for Prizes' rewards are obviously a matter for individual members of staff to determine as they know their learners best. However, likely reasons are:

- Consistent excellent attendance and punctuality throughout the year, e.g. 95%+ each term with no late marks recorded
- Commitment to the values and purpose of our learning culture
- Learners striving for excellence
- Consistent high achievement
- Learners who consistently meet assessment deadlines
- Learners who set themselves challenging targets and who are regularly learning new skills
- Learners who show full commitment to catching-up or developing revision skills

### **Progress Reports**

Parents, carers and referring agencies are issued with a weekly report of their child(ren)'s classroom conduct. These reports are in a coloured coded indication of green representing excellent behaviour, yellow being satisfactory and red which indicates poor behaviour; as well as merit and penalty scores of 5 points for merit and a demerit of -5 points. Following assessments, Half termly reports are issued. These indicate each subject grade, target grades and predicted grades with a summary data on pupil behaviour, behaviour targets, and to inform of appropriate interventions.

### **Sanctions**

Learners have a right to expect fair and consistently applied sanctions for poor behaviour that make a clear distinction between serious and minor infringements of this policy. An appropriate sanction is one that is designed to put matters right and encourage better behaviour in future. Thus, it is inappropriate to punish whole groups for the misdemeanours of a few or to impose a sanction that is designed to humiliate a learner or group.

In learning sessions, sanctions should be incremental and proportionate to the misdemeanour:

- Staff acknowledge to the learner that they have broken the code of conduct, without doing so publicly
- Informal verbal warning and rule reminder
- Issue of Red Card
- Formal verbal reminder and second rule reminder – learner must remain at the end of the session to discuss the matter
- Exit – the learner is escorted by a Learning Mentor of the group to a pre-arranged location to be isolated by the appropriate Academy Leader for the remainder of the session – a sanction letter will be sent home and suitable imposition, evening detention (replacing an Enrichment activity) or report card will be actioned with a note made in the learner's MIS file

Consistent use of assertive language: For example, "You know Footsteps rules about ... if you choose to ... then you are choosing ..." is most effective when giving verbal warnings. Sanctions, and in particular detentions, only work if there is consistent application of the Code of Conduct and consequences.

Where a learner does not improve their behaviour as a result of the sanctions above, the Learning Mentor should refer the matter to the appropriate Academy Leader who will arrange a meeting with the learner and parents/carers.

### **Documenting Incidents**

Unacceptable behaviour for learning concerns, minor or major incident (such as fight), staff are expected to make a record of the incident and the action taken. Staff can indicate the issues via the Schoolpod School Information Management system. In this way a profile of the pupils' behaviour can be evidenced via accumulated inputted information. These records will be extremely useful in logging intervention and guiding future support and action.

Date of Issue: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2025

## **Suspension and Placement Withdrawal**

In general rules, a suspension is resorted to serious matters or when other reasonable steps have been taken to promote and guide a pupil behaviour. At times, suspensions will be appropriate for a single, serious instance of misconduct. Suspending a student is the school way of making a statement that the rights of staff and other pupils are to be treated respectfully and taught free from distraction and disruption and to be safe and that the school is a priority place for learning.

The only person legally empowered to suspend a pupil is the Principal or a member of staff deputising for the principal. Senior staff can all make recommendations for an exclusion or suspension, but this must be done in conjunction with the principal. It should always be remembered that Footsteps does not Permanently Exclude students but withdraws their place and refers them back to the referring agency.

## **Zero tolerance in relation to Fixed Term Suspensions and Placement Withdrawal.**

There are a number of circumstances when having to establish a pupils' responsibility for unacceptable behaviour and consideration of SEN (if applicable) the pupil will be suspended. Depending on the circumstances and the nature of the incident, subject to further investigation, the pupil may have their Footsteps place withdrawn. Note that the pupil will not usually have their Footsteps place withdrawn in the first instance – although this option is always available. Placement withdrawal will be preceded by a fix term suspension to provide an opportunity to fully investigate student culpability.

The circumstances that apply where a student may lose their Footsteps place are:

- Physical aggression against a member of staff
- Serious acts of physical aggression against other pupil(s) leading to injury or repeated act of violence
- Possession of weapons
- The use of weapons including knives, firearms, imitation weapons, clubs, or hardware
- Discriminatory behaviour
- Behaviour which could publicly defame the reputation of the school or bring the school in disrepute
- The possession of any narcotics or alcohol

## **Commencement of Formal Disciplinary Procedures**

The outlined procedures seek to guide actions which will ensure that instances of indiscipline are being dealt with in a fair and just manner and consistently seek to promote personal and collective responsibility. The desired outcome of an effective sanction is to separate the behaviour from the child to set positives for the next lesson or interaction. Staff should build, repair and use praise when appropriate. The purpose of the discipline procedure is to set out the stages in which Footsteps will respond and to facilitate effective learning and positive personal development.

### **Stage 1 Meeting**

Following an incident, an investigation and/or meeting will take place. Staff must decide whether disciplinary action is appropriate and justified, or not. If so, a meeting will be called, inviting the learner, their parent/carers, and an officer from their referring agency. This is a Stage 1 meeting. At the meeting, the learner and parents/carers, and referring agency, will be informed of the nature of the incident/behaviour that is causing concern and give the learner the opportunity to explain why he/she is behaving in this particular manner. Ways forward will be discussed, and a strategy put in place. The learner will also have to sign a contract that binds them from future involvement in disciplinary issues. It will clearly state what is acceptable, and appropriate behaviour, and what is not. (Fixed period suspensions will not exceed 45 days in a school year).

The Stage 1 meeting clearly will set out the nature of the misconduct and the change in the behaviour required, and a timescale. It will be indicated that the warning is part of the disciplinary process and what the consequences will be of a failure to change behaviour. The consequences could be a Stage 2 meeting, or a permanent placement withdrawal from Footsteps. A record of these meetings will be kept.

### **Stage 2 meeting**

Where there is a failure to improve or change behaviour in the timescale set out at the Stage 1 meeting, or where the offence is sufficiently serious, the learner will normally be issued with a Stage

Date of Issue: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2025

2 meeting. The Stage 2 meeting will give details of the nature of misbehaviour and warn that failure to improve may lead to placement withdrawal. The protocols of the Stage 2 meeting are along the same lines as the Stage 1 meeting.

Each of the above two stages may use a fixed term suspension as part of the process for dealing with the poor behaviour. This may be an internal or external suspension i.e. served at Footsteps or where the learner is actually at home.

### **Stage 3 meeting and Withdrawal of Footsteps place**

If the learners' behaviour again fails to improve, a Stage 3 meeting, normally the final stage of the disciplinary process, will be called, and will generally lead to withdrawal of the student's place. However, the decision to do so can only be taken by the Principal, having considered all aspects, following meetings with the Chairman of Trustees/Trustees. At the meeting, the learner, their parents/carers, and their referring agents, will be informed of the reasons for this action being taken. Parents/carers have the right of appeal.

### **Cancellation of Arrangements**

This in itself is not a formal sanction by Footsteps. After attempting to improve the situation using all or some of the methods above, plus additional interventions where appropriate, it may be that Footsteps has no further option but to cancel the arrangement between Footsteps, the referrer, and the student. It will be for the referrer to decide what further sanctions, if any, or what further action will be appropriate.

### **Gross Misconduct**

Acts which constitute gross misconduct are those resulting in serious breaches of the Footsteps ethos and / or rules.

Examples of this include (but are not limited to):

- Theft
- Physical violence
- Sexual misconduct
- Bullying
- Deliberate and serious damage to property
- Deliberately accessing inappropriate sites on the internet
- Serious insubordination
- Unlawful discrimination or harassment
- Use of/Bringing illegal drugs or alcohol
- Carrying or using an offensive weapon

Footsteps is aware of the negative impact that gang-related activity may have on students and the community in general. "Gang" as used in this policy shall mean two or more individuals who associate with each other primarily for criminal, disruptive and/or other activities prohibited by law and/or by the related Footsteps policies and contracts, such as the anti-bullying policy and student contract, and the student conduct contract. Footsteps delivers anti-gang workshops as part of the curriculum, using outside agencies and professionals. The PSHE curriculum also includes anti-gang aspects and modules.

Consequently, this policy requires that no student shall:

- Wear hoodies or balaclavas, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewellery, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other thing which is evidence of membership or affiliation with any gang.
- Coerce or intimidate any student in order to persuade that person to commit or take part in any acts that they do not wish to.
- Draw gang graffiti or distribute gang-related literature.
- Use any speech or act in furtherance of gang activity.
- Solicit others for membership in any gang.
- Request any person to pay protection or otherwise act to extort any person.
- Commit any other illegal act or other violation of school policies.
- Incite other persons to act with physical violence upon any other person.
- Attend any activity that could be interpreted as relating to gangs or gang activity.

Date of Issue: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2025

Footsteps work in partnership with many outside agencies to ensure that everything possible is done to reduce gang affiliation and the negative outcomes associated with such associations.

Where a learner is judged to have behaved in a manner that constitutes gross misconduct, they may pass immediately to the permanent exclusion stage of the disciplinary process. It is still important the learner is given every opportunity to explain their actions and parents/carers should be included in this procedure.

The learner and their parents/carers will be informed of the reasons for this action being taken and how to appeal against the decision should they wish to do so.

### **Prohibitions**

Learners with an unauthorised item or whose appearance or equipment is unacceptable should be challenged (rule reminder) and asked to attend to the issue, remove the item, switch it off, put away etc.

If a learner does not comply or repeatedly needs to be challenged, then the issue should be referred to the appropriate Academy Leader who may impose a sanction, or as a last resort, confiscate an item.

Any confiscated items should be immediately stored securely to be returned at the end of the day and a note should be made in the learner's file. Parents/carers may also need to be contacted. Matters such as these can escalate very quickly, and it is vital that members of staff do not do anything that could in any way be deemed inappropriate should their actions be called into question at a later stage. Paraphernalia such as cigarettes/vapes, drugs, alcohol and weapons will not be returned to students. Parents/Carers, and police may be contacted.

In general:

- Mobile phones and electronic devices should be switched off and handed in when they are not needed as they present a distraction from the learning activity.
- Food and drink should only be consumed in the specifically designated areas outside of lesson time.
- Inappropriate clothing/footwear, jewellery/accessories and extreme/unnatural hairstyles/colours are not conducive to learning in the professional learning and workplace environment of Footsteps and therefore not allowed.
- Chewing gum is not allowed anywhere in site and will generate a detention.

### **Monitoring Impact & Review**

- The consistent application and enforcement of an effective policy and the resulting procedures by all staff, with suitable monitoring to ensure this, can improve the behaviour of individual learners and groups and thus contribute to the overall Footsteps experience.
- The policy is to be reviewed annually and is linked to the Attendance & Punctuality Policy, the Equality & Diversity Policy, the Exclusions Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **Searching**

- Hand-held scanners are used randomly, and on a targeted basis.
- School staff can search a pupil for any item if the parents/carers or pupil agrees.
- Academy Leaders, and staff, authorised by them, have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item.

Prohibited items are:

- knives or weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items

Date of Issue: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2025

- tobacco and cigarette papers, lighters and vapes
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:

- i. to commit an offence
- ii. to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil)

Academy Leaders and authorised staff can also search for any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for:

### **Confiscation**

- School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item, however found, which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline

<sup>1</sup> The ability to give consent may be influenced by the child's age or other factors.

<sup>2</sup> This provision applies through The School Behaviour (Determination and Publicising of Measures in Academies) Regulations 2012.

### **Reasonable Force**

#### **Key points**

- School staff have a power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
- Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.
- Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power

#### **What is reasonable force?**

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.

4. As mentioned above, schools generally 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

Date of Issue: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2025

## **Who can use reasonable force?**

- 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.

2 Section 93, Education, and Inspections Act 2006

## **When can reasonable force be used?**

- Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
- In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances. The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

## **Schools can use reasonable force to:**

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

## **Schools cannot:**

- use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

## **Power to search pupils without consent**

- In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following “prohibited items”:
  - knives and weapons
  - alcohol
  - illegal drugs
  - stolen items
  - tobacco and cigarette papers and vapes
  - fireworks
  - pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.
- Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules. Separate guidance is available on the power to search without consent – see the ‘Further sources of information’ section for a link to this document.

Date of Issue: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2025



### **I am a teacher - can I refuse to search a pupil without their consent?**

Yes, a headteacher cannot require a member of staff to conduct a search. In order to conduct a search without consent, a member of staff must be authorised to do so. Staff can choose whether they want to be authorised, or not.

### **Is there a risk that I could face legal challenge if I search a pupil without consent?**

Headteachers and authorised school staff have a specific statutory power to search pupils without consent for specific items - knives/weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, and stolen items. As long as the member of staff acts within the limits of this specific power, they will have a robust defence against a legal challenge.

3 Section 550ZB (5) of the Education Act 1996

#### **Communicating the school's approach to the use of force**

- Every school is required to have a behaviour policy and to make this policy known to staff, parents, and pupils. The governing body should notify the headteacher that it expects the school behaviour policy to include the power to use reasonable force.
- There is no requirement to have a policy on the use of force, but it is good practice to set out, in the behaviour policy, the circumstances in which force might be used. For example, it could say that teachers will physically separate pupils found fighting or that if a pupil refuses to leave a room when instructed to do so, they will be physically removed.
- Any policy on the use of reasonable force should acknowledge their legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs (SEN).
- Schools do not require parental consent to use force on a student.
- Schools should not have a 'no contact' policy. There is a real risk that such a policy might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a pupil or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a pupil causing harm.
- By taking steps to ensure that staff, pupils, and parents are clear about when force might be used, the school will reduce the likelihood of complaints being made when force has been used properly.

#### **Using force**

- A panel of experts identified that certain restraint techniques presented an unacceptable risk when used on children and young people. The techniques in question are:
- the 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing.
- the 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest; and
- the 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

4 Physical Control in Care Medical Panel - 2008

#### **Staff training**

Schools need to take their own decisions about staff training. The headteacher should consider whether members of staff require any additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities and should consider the needs of the pupils when doing so.

Date of Issue: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2025

Some local authorities provide advice and guidance to help schools to develop an appropriate training programme.

### **Telling parents when force has been used on their child**

- It is good practice for schools to speak to parents about serious incidents involving the use of force and to consider how best to record such serious incidents. It is up to schools to decide whether it is appropriate to report the use of force to parents.
- In deciding what is a serious incident, teachers should use their professional judgement and consider the:
  - pupil's behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident.
  - degree of force used.
  - effect on the pupil or member of staff; and
  - the child's age.

5 References to parent or parents are to fathers as well as mothers, unless otherwise stated.

### **What happens if a pupil complains when force is used on them?**

- All complaints about the use of force should be thoroughly, speedily, and appropriately investigated.
- Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.
- When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.
- Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. Schools should refer to the “Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff” guidance (see the ‘Further sources of information’ section below) where an allegation of using excessive force is made against a teacher. This guidance makes clear that a person must not be suspended automatically, or without careful thought.
- Schools must consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate.
- If a decision is taken to suspend a teacher, the school should ensure that the teacher has access to a named contact who can provide support.
- Governing bodies should always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against the teacher.
- As employers, schools and local authorities have a duty of care towards their employees. It is important that schools provide appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident.

### **What about other physical contact with pupils?**

- It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.
- Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:
  - Holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school.
  - When comforting a distressed pupil.

Date of Issue: September 2024

Date of Review: September 2025

- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised.
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument.
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching; and
- to give first aid.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: I am worried that if I use force a pupil or parent could make a complaint against me. Am I protected? A:** Yes, if you have acted lawfully. If the force used is reasonable all staff will have a robust defence against any accusations.

**Q: How do I know whether using a physical intervention is ‘reasonable’? A:** The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the teacher concerned. Whether the force used is reasonable will always depend on the particular circumstances of the case. The use of force is reasonable if it is proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent. This means the degree of force used should be no more than is needed to achieve the desired result. School staff should expect the full backing of their senior leadership team when they have used force.

**Q: What about school trips? A:** The power may be used where the member of staff is lawfully in charge of the pupils, and this includes while on school trips.

**Q: Can force be used on pupils with SEN or disabilities? A:** Yes, but the judgement on whether to use force should not only depend on the circumstances of the case but also on information and understanding of the needs of the pupil concerned.

**Q: I’m a female teacher with a Year 10 class - there’s no way I’d want to restrain or try to control my pupils. Am I expected to do so? A:** There is a power, not a duty, to use force so members of staff have discretion whether or not to use it. However, teachers and other school staff have a duty of care towards their pupils and it might be argued that failing to take action (including a failure to use reasonable force) may in some circumstances breach that duty.

**Q: Are there any circumstances in which a teacher can use physical force to punish a pupil? A:** No. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment. This is because it would fall within the definition of corporal punishment, which is illegal.