

Physical Contact and Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Ormiston Meridian Academy

Ormiston Academies Trust

Revision level	Revision date	Description of changes	
Prepared: <i>Signature</i>	Approved: <i>Signature</i>	Released: <i>Signature</i>	

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Policy Version Control

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Policy prepared by (name and department)	A Berrisford and G Davies
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At Ormiston Meridian Academy, as in all other academies/schools, physical contact between adults and children is often necessary and proper. For example:

- When comforting a distressed pupil;
- 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.

There will also be times when reasonable force may be used. 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.

The three instances in which reasonable force may be used are:

- To prevent a student from hurting themselves or other students/staff;
- To prevent a student from damaging property; and
- To prevent students from causing disorder.

In an academy, '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 academy/school members of staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.

The following offers some examples of when the use of reasonable force may be necessary:

- 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 an academy event or an academy trip or visit;
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety - or the safety of others - 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 a fight in the playground; and
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

All complaints about the use of force must be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated by the Principal.

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.

For further information on the use of reasonable force in academies/schools, please refer to the following documentation:

Department for Education: Use of reasonable force - Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2013