



Behaviour Policy

STATUTORY POLICY

"The motto of 'ready, respectful and safe' is central to the school's approach to behaviour. Pupils understand the school's expectations and why these rules are important. They know that if there are any problems, such as bullying, staff will sort these out straightaway." Ofsted, June 2024

"The school manages behaviour very well." Ofsted, June 2024

Agreed by Governors: Summer 2025

To be reviewed: Summer 2026

Behaviour Expectations at Dothill Primary School

- We are **ready** to learn
- We are **respectful** to each other and school property
- We keep ourselves and others **safe** in and out of school and online



Introduction

This policy is the statement of principles, aims and strategies for the positive management of behaviour at Dothill Primary School.

At Dothill, we believe that exemplary behaviour is at the heart of our learning community. We want to help our children grow up with a clear sense of what is right and wrong and an appreciation of the needs of others and society around them. Everyone is expected to maintain the highest standard of personal conduct and to accept responsibility for their behaviour. Our behaviour policy encompasses our core expectations, incorporating a partnership approach, with an emphasis on mutual respect.

Excellent behaviour is underpinned by strong relationships, high quality teaching and learning and positive recognition. We, as adults, set the tone for the children and take this responsibility very seriously in that we endeavour, always, to treat each other and the children as we, ourselves, would wish to be treated. Through the behaviour of the adults who care for them at school and through well planned and stimulating learning opportunities, we believe that children will accept learning challenges and develop self-discipline. Because of this, we have created a welcoming and safe learning environment in which everyone can be successful.

Purpose and Aims of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide simple, practical procedures for staff and children:

- Provide **clear guidance** for children, staff and parents about expected levels of behaviour.
- Teach appropriate behaviour through **positive intervention**.
- Develop a **consistent and calm** approach across the school which all children know and understand.
- Ensure **all adults take responsibility** for managing behaviour and follow up incidents personally.
- Ensure all adults use **consistent language** to promote positive behaviour.
- To ensure that all learners are **treated fairly and shown respect** to promote good relationships.
- Ensure **restorative approaches** are used.
- To help learners **take control** over their behaviour and be **responsible for its consequences**.
- Recognise **individual behavioural norms** and respond appropriately.
- To align our approach with our whole school **values and vision**.

Whole School Vision and Expectations

At Dothill Primary School, we value three main ideals which will help us **Be Our Best**:

Ready: to learn, to improve, to make progress, to be positive to play, to aspire to the future

Respectful: of each other, of ourselves, of our surroundings, of our differences, of each other's feelings, of everyone's rights

Safe: at school, in our learning, in the playground, in the classroom, online, in our play and at home.

Our School Vision

We strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, in which each member of the school community feels nurtured, valued and secure. We ensure that our pupils are listened to by all stakeholders.

We are committed to delivering a fun, engaging curriculum, rich in experiences, that empowers children to become curious life-long learners with dreams and aspirations.

We hold high expectations for everyone, whatever their starting point, and seek to ensure each child can feel fulfilled and proud of themselves and their achievements.

We embrace diversity, celebrating our British Values, and regarding every child as an individual who harnesses their own strengths, ideas and interests and whose personal experiences contribute to and enhance our school.

We teach our children to be able to make choices which have a positive impact on their physical and mental health, and to be able to face challenges without fear of failure.

To facilitate all this, we aim to build trust and communication with our wider community, sharing in our goal to develop confident, kind, and happy children who love coming to school.

British Values

Dothill Primary School is committed to serving its community. As a school, we are already incorporating these values through the planned taught curriculum as part of their links with Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural aspects of learning.

The five key British Values are:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

What do our children want from our school staff?

- That our staff care about them
- They have a fresh start every lesson
- They are kept safe from harm
- They are treated fairly
- They are helped to learn and feel confident
- Their teachers have a sense of humour

Expectations

At Dothill, we act as a whole school community, and all stakeholders work closely together: parents, carers, staff, children, governors - to ensure that the school environment is a safe, happy and calm place of learning.

The following responsibilities are expected to be followed:

- Class teacher – as per the teacher standards, teachers take primary responsibility for general behaviour management, establishing clear rules and routines. They should have high expectations of behaviour, establishing a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly.
- Phase leaders may become involved if there are recurring issues with behaviour.
- The Learning Mentor may become involved with strategic interventions should behavioural patterns be persistently unacceptable.
- Senior leaders (Assistant, Deputy and Head Teacher) may take necessary actions towards consistently unacceptable behaviour in line with the sanctions within this policy.
- When parents actively engage with school through consistent communication and mutual trust, they play a vital role in reinforcing positive behaviour and ensuring a supportive environment for their children's growth.

What does good behaviour management look like?

All staff will uphold and promote these expectations for behaviour throughout school:

- Always redirect children by referring to '**Be ready, respectful and safe.**'
- Close links with our **behaviour curriculum** (see Appendix 2)
- **Botheredness** – staff demonstrate **unconditional** care and compassion.
- Deliberately and persistently catch children doing the right thing and **praise** them in front of others.
- Develop **positive** and calm **relationships** with all children.
- **Relentlessly** work to build **mutual respect**.
- Take time to welcome the children into the classroom each day; be on the playground to bring pupils back into school after play and lunch.
- Employ **clear and consistent** classroom routines.
- Make every child feel **valued** regardless of any disability, nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender or sexuality.

The Senior Leadership Team will do the following:

- Be a visible presence around the school.
- Regularly celebrate staff and children whose efforts go above and beyond expectations.
- Ensure staff training needs are identified and met.
- Use behaviour records to target and assess interventions.
- Support teachers in managing children with more complex or challenging behaviours.

In partnership with parents/carers

Parents/carers have a vital role in promoting and supporting good behaviour and so effective home/school liaison is very important. As such, it is important that teachers work alongside parents/carers to manage

appropriate behaviour and attitudes to learning as documented in the Home/School Agreement (see appendix 1).

We ask parents/carers to sign and return the Home/School agreement to demonstrate their support.

We expect parents/carers to support the actions of the school to give a consistent message to children.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Because of our behaviour expectations, we will not accept the following:

- Refusal of requests by adults.
- Disrupting the learning of other children.
- Dishonesty, including stealing.
- Bullying of any kind, including name-calling, hurting others, threats and intimidation (See Anti-Bullying Policy).
- Racism, homophobia or sexism, including name-calling and any type of harassment.
- Verbal or physical aggression.
- Anything illegal being brought into school, including weapons, drugs or stolen items.
- Abusive or foul language to anyone.
- Damage to property, including graffiti.

Bullying

Bullying is the repeated and sustained desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else. Physical, verbal or emotional bullying can cause long-term misery to children. We consider bullying to be unacceptable behaviour and it will not be tolerated. As with any problem in school, bullying is best dealt with when teachers, parents and children are all working in partnership. We encourage children to tell adults about incidents of bullying and for parents to share information they may have with school. Governors are informed about the number of bullying incidents that take place. Please see our anti-bullying policy for more information.

Aggressive Behaviour

We will not accept any behaviour, physical, emotional or verbal, which is dangerous or upsetting to anybody else. We give children consistent advice on dealing with fighting or violence in support of this policy. We encourage children to speak to their teacher or teaching assistant if they have been the victim of aggressive behaviour. We always explain that hitting back is wrong.

Leaving the classroom or school grounds without permission

If a pupil leaves a classroom, we will establish where they have gone. Teachers must not run after them. Teachers will direct a member of the support team who will monitor the child and encourage them to return to the classroom. If the behaviour is of concern and unsafe then a message should be sent to the pastoral or senior leadership team for support.

It is advisable to keep a watchful eye on any child who has taken him or herself out of the school building and possibly out of school grounds unless this provokes the child to run further. If a child is no longer on school premises, parents will be contacted. If they are not at home the police will be informed (by calling 999) that a pupil has left school and is at risk.

Procedures for Managing Behaviour

Restorative Practices

Being 'restorative' focuses on building positive relationships based on respect and fairness. In turn, this creates a community that is supportive, accountable and respectful. We believe that every individual is responsible for their own behaviour. The Restorative framework is based upon 'knowing the effect that I have on others.' This approach allows children the opportunity to think about how they relate to each other and how they can find positive ways of repairing harm caused, rather than focusing solely on punishing their poor behaviour, or individuals avoiding taking responsibility for their actions. Children and adults are encouraged to put things right together.

We understand the importance of modelling positive language and behaviour. We take time to develop positive and meaningful relationships with colleagues and pupils. When positive relationships are developed, and connections are made, individuals are less likely to cause harm to others or choose to damage relationships.

Positive Behaviours

Our pupils and staff are considerate of each other and our surroundings and always behave in a positive way. The rewards for such behaviours are intrinsic and we recognise that feeling good about some you have done is a very significant reward. We also aim to reinforce positive behaviour with descriptive praise and recognition through rewards.

Our behaviour curriculum includes three clear processes for children to follow which emphasise clear ways that they can show they are living our school values. Full details can be seen in Appendix 2.

Silent Signals

These are ways in which staff can gain the attention of pupils without having to raise their voice.

Gliding with Pride

This ensures children are safe and respectful when moving around the building and are ready to listen and learn when reaching assembly or the classroom.

Fantastic Listening

We refer to this as STAR:

Sitting or standing up straight

Tracking the teacher

Attention at all times

Respect towards others

Recognising good behaviour

'If you constantly reward minimum standards then children will strive for minimum standards. If you reward children for going over and above there is no limit to their excellent behaviour.'

We draw attention to good behaviour in the following ways:

- Recognising children's achievements with certificates in celebration assemblies
- Giving golden letters
- Sending positive notes home
- Giving Class Dojo points
- Using teacher stickers
- Using stampers for effort and quality in work
- Sharing work with teachers, leaders and parents to show pride in their achievements

- Termly Dojo Rewards (all children are rewarded)

We strive to avoid the following:

- Humiliation – it breeds resentment
- Shouting – it diminishes us
- Over-reacting – the problem will grow
- Blanket punishments – this is unjust towards the innocent
- Harsh sarcasm – it is hostility disguised as humour
- Threatening with someone else's discipline – this creates fear
- Using the curriculum as punishment (e.g. extra maths or PE) – all learning should be positive

As part of promoting positive behaviour and providing positive role models, pupils are provided with the opportunities to take on responsibilities within their own class, and across their school.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Membership of the School Council
- Playground leaders
- Classroom and school-wide monitor jobs
- Peer listeners
- Early Years buddies
- Membership of the Safeguarding Squad

Discouraging inappropriate behaviour

We employ a range of strategies for promoting good behaviour for all children. However, when a child forgets a rule, or breaks it on purpose, a stepped response will be followed.

Responses and sanctions will be used fairly, proportionately and consistently. This will be explained to the child using key words used by all staff. It is important to continue to reward and encourage the child for their good behaviour.

Stepped Responses to Inappropriate Behaviour

We aim to prevent escalation of behaviour through early intervention. As such, we follow these steps:

1. Initial Response such as redirection and positive reinforcement:

- Redirection: briefly address the inappropriate behaviour and redirect the pupil's attention towards appropriate activities or tasks.
- Positive Reinforcement: acknowledge, praise and focus on any positive behaviours taking place to encourage pupils and create a more positive classroom environment.

2. Clear Reminders of Expectations:

- remind pupils of school rules and ensure they understand what is expected.

3. Warning which is clear and verbal that a consequence will happen if the behaviour does not change:

- Have a discussion with the child about why the behaviour is unacceptable.

- explain the consequences of further poor behaviour, giving choices.
- Respond in a consistent, fair and proportionate manner.

4. Consequence which is fair and related to the behaviour e.g.:

- A zero dojo is logged.
- Loss of break time or privileges e.g., Break play time/ Lunch play time/ Clubs/ Monitor jobs.
- Time spent within another teacher's classroom to work or to spend with the phase leader.

5. Restorative Conversation:

- Follow up discussion around the impact of the chosen behaviour.
- Consider other people, future choices, positives.
- Involve the pupil in reflecting on their own behaviour.

Procedures for Inappropriate Behaviour

At Dothill, we refer to 'Amber' behaviours which are unacceptable and will result in the child being removed from the classroom:

- Swearing
- Violence
- Racism (or other discrimination)
- Disrupting learning
- Damaging property
- Repeated low-level behaviours

It is a serious sanction to be removed from a classroom.

Important Information regarding Removal from Class

Make the reason clear

If a pupil is being removed, they should be made aware of the reason for this. State which of the amber behaviours the removal relates to. By ensuring that pupils understand how they are expected to behave and giving them an opportunity to reflect on how their own behaviour falls short of these expectations, you will reduce the chances of the behaviour recurring.

Keep it short

Removals disrupt a pupil's learning and should be kept to an absolute minimum. Once the initial objective has been achieved, for example giving the pupil sufficient time to calm down, they should return to the classroom. The class teacher should consider any support that needs to be put into place to ensure that the return is as speedy as possible. It should be noted that the rest of the class should be made to feel safe about the child returning to the classroom – especially if the behaviour has made them feel unsafe.

Ensure appropriate supervision and offer continuous education

Pupils should be adequately always supervised. There should NEVER be a child unattended standing outside a classroom. If a pupil has not been able to behave appropriately in the classroom, it is possible that any misbehaviour will continue once they have left the classroom.

When a pupil is removed from the classroom, it is a requirement that they receive 'continuous education'. The child should be sent/taken to the agreed buddy teacher – ideally this will be the parallel classroom to minimise lost learning.

Consider how the pupil will be reintegrated

When a pupil returns to the classroom after being removed, it is helpful to consider any steps that you could take to increase the likelihood of this reintegration being successful and to avoid a repeat of the original behaviour.

- have a brief chat/restorative conversation with the pupil to explain why their behaviour was not acceptable and the behaviour you expect in the future
- moving them away from any factors that could trigger the unwanted behaviour in the future, e.g. sitting with pupils that might encourage this
- offering additional support with their learning, especially if you believe that the original behaviour was an avoidance tactic related to their academic ability.

Have a strategy for lost learning

There will inevitably have been some disruption to the pupil's learning, regardless of the duration of the removal. You will need to consider whether the pupil has missed any key learning or experiences, which will put them at a disadvantage on their return to the classroom and, if so, take steps to address this.

Records & Reporting

Where a child's behaviour is observed as unacceptable each day, staff will log an incident on CPOMS, the online Safeguarding management reporting software in use in school and parents will be informed.

The guidance issued by the Department for Education specifies that parents/carers should be informed of the removal on the day that this happens. Parents will be informed either at the end of the day or via a phone call from the class teacher.

Consider if any follow-up action is required

It is important to analyse the root causes of any misbehaviour so that these can be addressed. This will reduce the likelihood of the unwanted behaviour happening again. As a school, we analyse whether there are any patterns to the misbehaviour and, if so, what these patterns might indicate. This will enable us to put relevant interventions in place or make referrals for additional evaluation and support, if necessary.

When the Procedures Don't Work

We believe that most unacceptable behaviour should be dealt with by the child's own class teacher using the strategies listed above. However, with persistent or extreme behaviour or if procedures appear to be failing to help a child control his or her behaviour a behaviour plan will be devised and implemented. This works best when all adults, including the parents, work towards the same targets. The involvement of parents at this stage is key.

A parent/pupil behaviour conference will be held with the Phase Leader and Class Teacher and if appropriate also with the SENDCo. The Phase Leader will oversee the creation of an Individual Behaviour Support Plan in conjunction with the class teacher and parent to support the pupil. Behaviour targets will be set, and a review date agreed.

Further Action

In extreme cases, external professionals may also be involved, if needed, to plan further support for the child with relevant home/ school/ agency support. This may involve creating a Risk Assessment to keep the pupil and others safe when in school. Telford and Wrekin provide support through the Pre-exclusion Hotline.

The Pre-exclusion Hotline can be used by schools to alert the council of possible exclusions and to discuss support available to the school and young people at risk of exclusion or following an exclusion.

Support could include:

- 1:1 work with school
- 1:1 work with young person at risk of exclusion
- Support in creating an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP)
- Discussion of alternatives
- De-escalation support
- Identification of support

Governors are informed of cases of extreme behaviour as appropriate.

At the point of exclusion, an Early help Assessment could be completed which may lead to additional support. School may also ask for additional help and advice from the LA Fair Access panel (FAP).

Exclusion

A fixed or permanent exclusion is the last resort after a range of measures have been tried to improve a pupil's behaviour. A decision to exclude a pupil for a fixed period may be taken in response to breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy, including persistent disruptive behaviour. If this occurs parents/carers may be asked to remove their child for a specific, short-term period while intervention strategies are put in place to help the child improve. Exclusions whether fixed term or permanent can only be imposed by the Headteacher or the Deputy Head teacher.

Where exclusion is used the school conforms to the Local Authority and DfE Guidance. If a child is excluded for a period of less than 5 days, the school will provide work – it is the parent's/carers responsibility to ensure the pupil completes the work and returns it to the school for marking (NB parents/carers can be fined if their child is found in a public place during an exclusion). From Day 6 of exclusion, temporary alternative arrangements for schooling will be made for the child. In the event of a permanent exclusion, the Local Authority will contact parents/carers with details of the Day 6 provision.

Any child returning to school after an exclusion is helped to behave appropriately. The Chair of Governors will be notified of all exclusions without the child's name being disclosed. Governors are updated termly on the number of exclusions that have taken place.

The power to discipline beyond the school gate

Disciplining beyond the school gate covers the school's response to all non-criminal bad behaviour and bullying which occurs anywhere off the school premises and which is witnessed by a member of staff or reported to the school. The governing body must be satisfied that the measures proposed by the head teacher are lawful. (See appendix 3)

Searching and confiscation

The Head, Deputy and Assistant Headteacher have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they suspect the pupil has certain prohibited items. The items that can be searched for under this power are knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items. School staff can seize any banned or prohibited item found following a search or is considered to be harmful or detrimental to school discipline. (See appendix 4)

Use of Physical Intervention

The use of physical intervention is very rare and is, wherever possible avoided using de-escalation strategies. There may be occasions where the use of reasonable force or physical restraint is appropriate; for example, if a child is hurting themselves and/or others or making a threat to injure using a weapon. Most staff have been trained in de-escalation strategies and key staff have been trained in physical interaction techniques. Any intervention used will always be minimal and in proportion to the circumstances of the incident. All physical intervention will be recorded. (See appendix 4 for guidance)

Pastoral care for school staff

If an employee is accused of misconduct and pending an investigation, the governing body will instruct the Headteacher to draw on the advice in the 'Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff' guidance when setting out the pastoral support school staff can expect to receive if they are accused of misusing their powers.

Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunities means ensuring that every member of the school community is regarded as being of equal worth and importance, irrespective of culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, learning abilities, sensory or physical impairment, social class or lifestyle; it is about recognising differences, meeting individual needs and taking positive action, so that everyone has equal access to the educational opportunities offered by the school; it is also about regularly monitoring that each child has the opportunity to achieve.

Making the Policy Known to All

To ensure that all staff, children and parents are aware of the aims and procedures of the policy it will be presented to:

All staff through their regular meetings.

Children through displays and discussions of expectations and behaviour guidelines. On going work in PSHE, circle time and assemblies will explain and revisit the policy throughout the year.

Parents through induction meetings, website, leaflets or newsletters.

Website: www.dothillprimaryschool.co.uk

Arrangements to Monitor and Review the Policy

This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team in the following ways:

- Feedback from children
- Agenda item at staff meeting where staff can feedback.
- Feedback from Teaching Assistants and Lunchtime Supervisors at regular meetings with Head Teacher

The policy will be reviewed by Governors on an annual cycle or sooner if issues need addressing.

Appendix 1 – Home School Agreement

Appendix 2 – Dothill Behaviour Curriculum

Appendix 3 – The power to discipline beyond the school gate

Appendix 4 - Searching and confiscation

Appendix 5 – The use of reasonable force

Appendix 6 – Forms to record search/force

Dothill Primary School

Home-School Agreement

- We are **ready** to learn
- We are **respectful** to each other and school property
- We keep ourselves and others **safe** in and out of school and online



As a school, we will

- Care for your child and meet your child's learning needs.
- Deliver a carefully planned curriculum and regularly share this with you.
- Provide a safe, nurturing environment and always promote your child's wellbeing
- Have high expectations to ensure your child reaches their full potential.
- Let you know of any concerns we may have and work with you to best support your child.
- Value and respect every member of our school and wider community.
- Keep you informed about your child's progress.
- Maintain good behaviour and discipline.

As a parent, I will

- Make sure my child attends school punctually, dressed appropriately and properly equipped.
- Encourage my child to participate fully in school activities.
- Contact school as soon as possible if my child is absent for any reason.
- Support the school's policies on behaviour.
- Support and encourage my child's learning at home and in school.
- Inform school of anything that might affect my child's behaviour or learning.
- Adhere to the Parent Code of Conduct.
- Attend meetings and read letters, emails and school website.

As a pupil, I will

- Try hard in everything I do.
- Remember our school values of Ready, Respectful and Safe.
- Look after our school and everything in it.
- Be kind, helpful and polite.
- Wear my uniform and bring all the things I need to school every day.
- Tell someone if I am unhappy or feel unsafe.

Name of child: _____

Parent: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2

The Behaviour Curriculum

Appendix 3

The power to discipline beyond the school gate

Disciplining beyond the school gate covers the school's response to all non-criminal bad behaviour and bullying which occurs anywhere off the school premises and which is witnessed by a member of staff or reported to the school. The governing body must be satisfied that the measures proposed by the head teacher are lawful.

Any bad behaviour when the child is:

- taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity or
- travelling to or from school or
- wearing school uniform or
- in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school.

Or, misbehaviour at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, that:

- could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school or
- poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public or
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

As a result of any of these behaviours, the Headteacher will collect witness statements from both adults and children who have witnessed the event. The parents of the child involved will be contacted and invited into school to discuss the matter. Sanctions for the bad behaviour will follow those issued by the school for bad behaviour during the school day. Parental support will be sought for sanctions which they are able to administer outside the school day.

Following any incident, the Headteacher will consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or Community Support Officers of the actions taken against a pupil. If the behaviour is criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will always be informed. If there is any concern that the behaviour may be linked to the child suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm, safeguarding procedures would be followed.

Behaviour and discipline government guidance for governors

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/463484/Behaviour_and_discipline_in_schools_guidance_for_governing_bodies.pdf

Behaviour and discipline government guidance for headteachers and school staff

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488034/Behaviour_and_Discipline_in_Schools_-_A_guide_for_headteachers_and_School_Staff.pdf

Appendix 4

Searching and confiscation

The Headteacher, Deputy and Assistant Head Teachers each have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they suspect the pupil has certain prohibited items. The items that can be searched for under this power are knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items. School staff can seize any banned or prohibited item found as a result of a search or is considered to be harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

Searching with consent

Schools' common law powers to search:

School staff can search pupils **with their consent for** any item which is banned by the school rules.

1. The school does not need to have formal written consent from the pupil for this sort of search – it is enough for the teacher to ask the pupil to turn out his or her pockets or if the teacher can look in the pupil's bag and for the pupil to agree.
2. Items which are banned in school include, mobile phones, electronic games or devices, any item which could be used as a weapon, matches, any form of drugs (including medicines, which have not been prescribed and a medical form completed), knives, firearms, sprays, alcohol or stolen items.
3. If a member of staff suspects a pupil has a banned item in his/her possession, they can instruct the pupil to turn out his or her pockets or bag and if the pupil refuses, the teacher can apply an appropriate punishment as set out in the school's behaviour policy.
4. A pupil refusing to co-operate with such a search raises the same kind of issues as where a pupil refuses to stay in a detention or refuses to stop any other unacceptable behaviour when instructed by a member of staff – in such circumstances, schools can apply an appropriate disciplinary penalty.

Searching without consent

What the law says:

What can be searched for?

1. Knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items (referred to in the legislation as 'prohibited items').

Can I search?

2. Yes, if you are the Headteacher, Deputy headteacher or assistant head. But:

- a. you must be the same sex as the pupil being searched; and
- b. there must be a witness (also a staff member) and, if at all possible, they should be the same gender as the pupil being searched.

It should be noted that on occasions where a member of staff of the same sex as the pupil to be searched is not available, we would contact parents before the search is carried out.

When can I search?

3. If you have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item.

Authorising members of staff

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and assistant head are authorised to use these powers.

1. Teachers can only request a senior member of staff to undertake a search without consent if they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil may have in his or her possession a prohibited item. The teacher must decide in each particular case what constitutes reasonable grounds for suspicion. For example, they may have heard other pupils talking about the item or they might notice a pupil behaving in a way that causes them to be suspicious.

2. The powers allow school staff to search regardless of whether the pupil is found after the search to have that item. This includes circumstances where staff suspect a pupil of having items such as illegal drugs or stolen property which are later found not to be illegal or stolen.

Location of a search

1. Searches without consent can only be carried out on the school premises or, if elsewhere, where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil.

2. The powers only apply in England.

During the search

Extent of the search – clothes, possessions and trays

What the law says: The person conducting the search may not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing. **‘Outer clothing’** means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear but ‘outer clothing’ includes hats; shoes; boots; gloves and scarves.

‘Possessions’ means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control – this includes trays and bags. A pupil’s possessions can only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff. The power to search without consent enables a personal search, involving removal of outer clothing and searching of pockets.

Trays

Under common law powers, schools are able to search trays for any item provided the pupil agrees. Pupils will have a tray on condition that they consent to have it searched for any item whether or not the pupil is present.

If a pupil does not consent to a search then it is possible to conduct a search without consent but only for the “prohibited items” listed above.

Use of force

Reasonable force may be used by the person conducting the search (see appendix 3).

After the search

The power to seize and confiscate items – general

What the law allows:

Schools’ general power to discipline, as set out in Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil’s property as a disciplinary penalty, where reasonable to do so.

1. The member of staff can use their discretion to confiscate, retain and/or destroy any item found as a result of a ‘with consent’ search so long as it is reasonable in the circumstances. Where any article is thought to be a weapon it must be passed to the police.

2. Staff have a defence to any complaint or other action brought against them. The law protects members of staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss of, or damage to, any item they have confiscated, provided they acted lawfully.

Items found as a result of a 'without consent' search

What the law says:

- A person carrying out a search can seize anything they have reasonable grounds for suspecting is a prohibited item (that is a weapon/knife; alcohol; illegal drugs or stolen items) or is evidence in relation to an offence.
- Where a person conducting a search finds **alcohol**, they must retain it for return to the parent.
- Where they find **controlled drugs**, these must be delivered to the police as soon as possible.
- Where they find **other substances** which are not believed to be controlled drugs these can be confiscated where a teacher believes them to be harmful or detrimental to good order and discipline.
- Where they find **stolen items**, these must be delivered to the police or returned to the owner, providing it is safe to do so.
- Any **weapons or items which are evidence of an offence** must be passed to the police as soon as possible.
- It is school policy to always deliver stolen items or controlled drugs to the police. If the owners of the items are known and do not pose a threat to the pupil, these will be returned to the owner.

Telling parents and dealing with complaints

Schools are not required to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child.

1. There is no legal requirement to make or keep a record of a search, however as good practice the sheet below will be completed whenever a search and/or confiscation has taken place.
2. The school will always inform the individual pupil's parents or guardians where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found along with any other banned items which might be found.
3. Complaints about screening or searching will be dealt with through the normal school complaints procedure.

Screening, searching and confiscation government guidance

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/f0076897/screening>

Appendix 5

The use of reasonable force

What is reasonable force?

- (i) 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.
- (ii) 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.
- (iii) 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- (iv) 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.
- (v) 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.
- (vi) 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.

2 Who can use reasonable force?

- (i) All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force
- (ii) This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the head teacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

3 When can reasonable force be used?

- (i) Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
- (ii) In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- (iii) 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.
- (iv) 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 where 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 a fight in the playground; 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.

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.

Staff training

Training is provided for senior staff so that they can support staff across the school. A senior member of staff will always support other staff across the school.

Telling parents when force has been used on their child

All incidents of reasonable force are recorded to support the child and staff involved. (See sheet below)

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
- 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.

For details of what happens if a pupil complains when force is used on them please refer to grievance policy.

Use of reasonable force government guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf

Use of restrictive physical interventions government guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693446/Environments_where_children_can_flourish.pdf

Appendix 6

Search and confiscation Record



Name of child:

Year group / Class:

Where search took place:

Reason for the search

Names of staff carrying out the search / staff acting as witness

1.

2.

Items found

Other agencies involved – please list with name and title

Parents contacted

Date:

Time:

Meeting with parent and child following the incident

Sanctions / next steps

Any further intervention or agency involvement required

Signed:

Date:

Reasonable Force Record



Name of child:

Year group / Class:

Where search took place:

Reason for the use of reasonable force

Names of staff using reasonable force

1.

2.

Other agencies involved – please list with name and title

Parents contacted

Date:

Time:

Meeting with parents

Sanctions/Next steps

Any further intervention or agency involvement required

Signed:

Date: