



Mulberry UTC Behaviour Policy

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Version control

Version	Reviewed	Changes since last version
5	Feb 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confiscated items will be kept in the main office (amended from kept in a locked safe in the main office) p.6 • Added: Spring, Summer / warmer periods to be determined by SLT: Ensure all coats and other items of outdoor clothing are removed when entering the school. (p.6) • Ensure all coats and other items of outdoor clothing are removed when entering learning spaces such as classrooms, theatre, studio and library all year round. (p.6) • Principal's breakfast, amended from every Thursday to once a half term (p.7) • Game of Cones, Golden Lanyards and Awards ceremony added (p.7) • Golden tickets removed (p.7) • Table of warnings for unprofessional behaviours added and replacing previous warnings system (p.8) • 60min detentions can now be sat on the same day (p.9) • Removed letter to be sent home when a detention is set (p.10) • Removed student council from p.11 • Removed KS5 disciplinary process on p.11 • Removed "in the playground" p.14
4	Jan 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Heads of House (HOH) to Heads of Year (HOY). • <u>Students are permitted to collect confiscated phones from the main office at the end of the day that they are confiscated.</u> (Amended from "permitted to collect the next day) • Planners added to equipment expectations • Students permitted to wear coats in café and the View. • Students to wear lanyards at all times • Edulink added as an app to add behaviour incidents. • SLT amended to ELT when referring to detentions and referrals.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added Vapes to "<u>Retaining, returning and disposing of items</u>"
2	Jan 2022	Update staffing, replace Assistant Principal with Director of Pastoral Provision
1	Jan 2021	Include Heads of House into the behaviour procedures

1. Introduction

At Mulberry UTC we offer a high quality academic and technical education which provides a stimulating and professional learning environment. This Behaviour Policy seeks to create an environment in which successful learning can take place. Such an environment needs to provide safety, security and mutual respect for individuals within the school community. We believe that students have the right to learn and staff the right to work effectively whether as teachers or as support staff.

At Mulberry UTC we believe that we all have a responsibility for implementing this behaviour policy consistently and fairly in the classroom and around the school. Only then will we successfully achieve an atmosphere of cooperation and respect conducive to the development of a creative learning environment.

2. Philosophy

This Behaviour policy was drawn up by UTC staff in consultation with students, support staff, parents/carers and governors. We encourage the involvement of all students, staff, parents or carers and governors in ensuring our standards are accepted and maintained.

The Behaviour Policy, which includes a KS4 and KS5 Escalation Process, provides clarity for students and staff so that the system and its procedures may be consistently applied. As such, students experience staff as implementing strategies fairly, whilst staff are able to support each other within and across departments.

Mulberry UTC believes that positive, professional behaviour needs to be taught. We have a stepped approach to discipline, in which students are rewarded for making positive choices to follow school and classroom rules.

We encourage students to develop self-awareness and self-discipline in order to achieve a 'work-ready' mind set, by making informed choices in taking responsibility for their own actions. The Behaviour Policy provides students and staff with a framework for such decision-making. Using a system of clearly taught rules, supported by a positive reward system and a hierarchy of consequences, students are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and to take responsibility for the choices they make.

We aim to develop students' self-awareness through the curriculum, including preparation to be successful citizens and decision makers via opportunities such as the School Council. The Behaviour Policy supports the Anti-Bullying Policy and has evolved through Personal Development and Citizenship lessons.

We believe that behaviour is related to a well-structured curriculum and to high quality teaching. If the curriculum is appropriate and taught well, the potential for disruption and conflict is reduced.

3. Principles

We aim to create a stimulating environment in which students and staff feel secure and successful teaching and learning can take place.

Everyone at Mulberry UTC is of equal value, whatever their race, gender, class, disability, learning need, life- style, sexual orientation, age or religion.

We encourage students to develop self-confidence and an understanding of and respect for others.

The policy includes a classroom behaviour plan which provides clarity for students and staff so that the system may be applied consistently

There are clearly taught rules, supported by a positive reward system and a hierarchy of consequences

4. Rights, Responsibilities and Roles

4.1 Rights:

- Everyone has the right to be taught and to work in a clean and safe environment
- Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity by other students, staff, parents/carers, governors and other people working in school.
- Everyone has the right to express their opinion and have their voice heard whilst paying due regard to other's feelings
- Teaching and non-teaching staff have the right to be able to fulfil their role and to be supported in promoting the achievement and welfare of school students.

4.2 Responsibilities:

- Everyone has responsibility to treat the building and its contents with care and respect
- Everyone has responsibility to treat other members of the school community with respect
- Everyone has a responsibility to enable others to feel physically and emotionally safe at school
- Everyone has a responsibility to listen to others and to respect other's opinions and pay due regard to their feelings.
- Everyone has a responsibility to be prepared to work and to allow other students and staff to work effectively.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff have a responsibility to fulfil their role and to promote the achievement and welfare of UTC students within a safe and supportive environment.

4.3 Roles:

Each member of the school community has a responsibility to fulfil their role appropriately:

- **All Students** must work within the guidelines of the UTC's Behaviour Management Policy, encouraging each other and respecting the contributions that others make in enacting the policy.
- **All Staff** are responsible for consistently implementing the policy in order to support each other in providing clear expectations of students in their care.
- **The Principal** will ensure that procedures are in place to communicate the Behaviour Management Policy, including School Rules and the Classroom Behaviour Plan to staff, students, parents / carers and governors and that strategies are in place which will enable standards to be consistently applied throughout the school.

- **The Governors** will review the policy at regular intervals and will support the staff in the implementation of the policy.
- **The Senior Leadership Team** will monitor the implementation of the Behaviour Management Policy through the line management structure of the school and will support middle leaders in carrying out their responsibilities accordingly. The Assistant Principal of Pastoral Provision (SENCO and Designated Safeguarding Lead) will support staff in training and mentoring departments and other teaching staff as needed. Support staff will be trained and guided through their line management structures. This will ensure consistency in the implementation of the Classroom Behaviour Management Plan.
- **Middle Leaders** are responsible for appropriate pastoral and curriculum aspects of behaviour management in line with all school procedures. Curriculum leaders will ensure that lesson delivery and schemes of work are stimulating and purposeful and that teachers make regular use of behaviour management strategies in the classroom. Heads of Year will work with tutors in ensuring there is effective communication with parents/carers on matters of behaviour. Middle leaders will ensure that appropriate referrals are made to form tutors and HOYs, should the behaviour of any student be a cause for concern. These referrals may lead to the involvement of the Special Educational Needs Department.
- **The Special Educational Needs Department** is responsible for liaising with members of the school community with regard to students on the SEN Register who have emotional, mental, learning, physical or social difficulties which have a longer-term impact on their learning. The key SEN staff will advise staff on any SEN provision for the students on the SEN Register.
- **The Inclusion Panel** includes both teaching and non-teaching staff who problem-solve and action plan together devising Pastoral Support Plans for students who may become disaffected or underachieve. The Panel is in a position to monitor the effectiveness of the Behaviour Management Policy when analysing strategies devised for supporting students.

5. Creating a professional environment and developing a work-ready mind set

At Mulberry UTC, we have a set of **School Rules** and **Classroom Rules** which apply to the whole school community. These rules are supported by positive rewards for following the rules, and consequences for choosing not to follow the rules. These form a central part of the Mulberry UTC Behaviour Policy and are designed with our ethos of preparing our students for life beyond the UTC in the workplace and in wider society.

5.1 School rules: creating a professional environment

We want Mulberry UTC to have a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which all students feel safe and in which they can achieve and progress to their full potential. These rules will help us to learn and work effectively together.

- Treat with respect all students and staff, the building and its facilities.
- Wear correct uniform or dress code at all times.
- Walk quietly and on the left on stairs and in corridors.
- Keep hands, feet and negative comments to yourself.

- Mobile phones, headphones and other personal electronic equipment should not be used in school, and must not be seen or heard within the school building*.
- Lockers should only be used outside of lesson and registration time.
- Behave responsibly during lunchtime and on the way to and from school.
- Listen to instructions from staff and follow them the first time they are given.

*Any Key Stage 4 students found using mobile phones, headphones or other personal electronic equipment in school will have them confiscated. Phones and other confiscated equipment will be kept in the main office. Students are permitted to collect confiscated phones from the main office at the end of the day that they are confiscated.

5.2 Classroom rules: developing a work-ready mindset

We want Mulberry UTC to have a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which all students feel safe and in which they can achieve and progress to their full potential. These rules will help us to learn and work effectively together.

- Arrive on time and line up outside with necessary equipment, planners and wearing correct uniform.
- Spring, Summer / warmer periods to be determined by SLT: Ensure all coats and other items of outdoor clothing are removed when entering the school.
- Ensure all coats and other items of outdoor clothing are removed when entering learning spaces such as classrooms, theatre, studio and library all year round.
- Students sit according to the teacher's seating plan.
- Students to wear lanyards at all times
- Listen to the teacher's instructions and follow them the first time they are given.
- Be respectful to everyone in the class.
- Do not drink, eat, or chew in class (you may drink water if given permission).
- Keep hands, feet, and negative comments to yourself.
- Speak in English unless told to do otherwise.

5.3 Rewards for keeping to the rules

Teachers should explain to students that they will be rewarded for following the rules. Rewards relate specifically to behaviour not to attainment, so that rewarding attainment is kept separate from the rewarding of behaviour. The underpinning belief is that behaviour improves if we reward good behaviour, and that a ratio of about three positives to one negative should apply.

Rewards for keeping to the rules include:

Rewards for Positive Behaviour

- **Verbal praise**

All subject teachers give verbal praise to students where it is due. Subject teachers are encouraged to contact parents when students have behaved in a way which deserves praise.

- **Achievement Points**

Achievement Points are awarded for a variety of reasons including good behaviour. They are passed to Heads of house and Head of Departments using the EduLink electronic system.

- **Awards ceremony each term:**

Students are nominated by their subject teachers to receive a £10 love to shop voucher.

- **Golden lanyards:**

KS5 students with exemplary attendance of 95-100% receive a golden lanyard which allows them to study wherever they wish to in the school. Additionally, they have their compulsory independent study removed and replaced with home study.

- **Game of Cones:**

KS4 Students are rewarded with ice cream cone stickers for exemplary behaviour or approach to learning, when x10 are collected in a week, they receive a chocolate bar when leaving school that Friday.

- **Principal Breakfast**

Students are nominated by the Heads of Year and Assistant Principal of Pastoral Provision as a result of exemplary attendance, punctuality and attitude to learning. The breakfast takes place with the Principal in the conference room once a half term

- **Shoutouts**

Shoutouts can be awarded by any member of staff in the school using the EduLink electronic system to recognise achievements made that week. These are logged once a week and announced in assembly, by the Heads of Year who read the shoutouts aloud to all students in the cohort with names displayed on the screen and quotes from teachers.

The class reward system feeds into a whole school reward system. Rewards need to be differentiated so that, for example, students with emotional and behavioural difficulties who may be on the SEN Register may be rewarded more regularly or in a way which is appropriate for their needs.

Attention is given for appropriate behaviour rather than negative behaviour. Rewards may need to be private (depending on the individual needs of the student) and frequent ('catch them being good').

The accumulation of positive rewards from class feeds into the school reward system of certificates and year prizes which are given out at reward assemblies.

5.4 Consequences of breaking the rules

Teachers should explain to students the consequences of not following classroom rules, as follows:

Teachers will use a range of strategies to ensure students are able to follow classroom rules. Before using formal sanctions, teachers should use a range of classroom strategies to focus or re-engage the individual or group, including positive reinforcement; positive repetition; scanning; circulating; 'moving in'; broken record and classroom routines.

If classroom strategies fail to affect the individual student's behaviour, the formal hierarchy of consequences begin. This is structured as follows:

Sanctions for unprofessional behaviour

Please note, the table below is not exhaustive and UTC staff will apply a 'best fit' approach

Examples of unprofessional behaviours	Sanction applied
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off task in lesson • Low level classroom disruption • Defiance of member of staff 	<p>1st warning given with script: name written on board (Script: <i>"I have now given you a first warning for [use language from the behaviour scenarios]. This is a warning to remind you of what my classroom expectations, so that you can still achieve well in this lesson"</i>)</p> <p>2nd warning given with script: name written on board (Script: <i>"I have now given you your 2nd and final warning to correct your behaviour for [use language from the behaviour scenarios]. This is your final warning and reminder of what my classroom expectations are"</i>)</p> <p>If a student is receiving warnings for their conduct, the member of staff should consider any reasonable adjustments to support them, i.e moving to a different seat / scaffolding.</p> <p>Then ELT referral on the 3rd occasion a warning is issued and the student will be removed from the lesson for an appropriate period of reflection and support with modifying their behaviour.</p>

	<p>Depending on the context, ELT may discuss with the classroom teacher if they want the student back in the lesson.</p> <p>A lunch time detention should be set with a 3rd warning.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrect uniform that cannot be resolved on the day. • Late to school / lesson • Non completion of homework/Independent study • Verbal / threatening aggression towards peers 	<p>25-minute same day lunch time detention, (an email will be sent to parents)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious disruption to learning / unsafe behaviour in lesson. • Defiance of senior members of staff • Offensive language against groups • Physical aggression towards peers 	<p>ELT referral and Internal exclusion & behaviour contract if necessary.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truancy 	<p>KS5 Isolated truancy: ELT referral / Internal exclusion / lunch privilege removed for approx. 3 days (lock down) / same day 60min truancy detention –parents are informed via call.</p> <p>KS5 persistent truancy: Lockdown procedure of groups of students for 3 days – held on site until the lesson they have been truanting.</p> <p>KS4: Same day 60min truancy detention – parents are informed via call.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal / threatening aggression towards staff • Serious physical aggression towards peers. • Physical aggression towards staff • Bringing the school into disrepute 	<p>Suspension & behaviour contract if necessary</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Items which are illegal to possess or carry, or inappropriate for the age of the child or the school environment 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor clothing worn inside the building during spring/summer months • Outdoor clothing worn inside learning spaces (classroom, library, theatre, studios) any time of the year. • Technology such as phones / EarPods / headphones seen outside of authorised zones & times for KS5 • Technology such as phones / EarPods / headphones seen at any point for KS4 • Glass bottles, aerosols 	Confiscated & 25-minute same day lunch time detention, (an email will be sent to parents)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students using the same cubical 	Searches by SLT and then necessary follow-up.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated instances of poor behaviour/punctuality/attendance 	These will be dealt with through individual behaviour / attendance plans that address the root causes of students repeatedly not meeting our expectations.

Behaviour Points on SIMs and EduLink are sent to Heads of Department, tutors and Heads of Year. Teachers followed by Heads of Department follow up in the first instance when issues arise in a particular subject area. Tutors and/or Heads of Year follow up with student if there appears to be difficulties across subjects.

If a detention is given, the teacher needs to record this on EduLink, as well as ensure the student has recorded it in their Planner, with the date and time of the detention so that parents/carers and form tutor can note it. Parents should be informed by the teacher or, if deemed more appropriate, the Head of Department or Head of Year if the detention is over 25-minutes after school. **Longer detentions cannot be sat on the same day.** During the detention, the student reflects on his or her behaviour, describes what he or she has done, writes out the rule that was contravened (if appropriate), describes the behaviour that needs to change and any support needed to change that behaviour.

Whole class detentions are only given in exceptional circumstances and only if the teacher is confident that the breach of a rule applies to all students equally in the class.

Students who rapidly work through the hierarchy of consequences without any change in behaviour will be referred to the Pastoral Team, who are in a position to consider multi-agency intervention and to write an Early Help Assessment or set up a Pastoral Support Plan which enables close monitoring of the student's behaviour.

Staff keep a record of both positive rewards and consequences. This record is then used during student reviews with tutors and for departmental reward systems. Departments are in an ideal position to reward students, who have improved their behaviour, during end of term assemblies. This complements subject attainment awards which may also be given at end of term assemblies.

'ELT referral' - referral out of class

ELT Referral is for use in lessons or independent study when all behaviour management strategies have been exhausted and if a student displays behaviours which are unsafe to themselves or others, or profoundly affecting the learning of others.

A student will only be placed in isolation following an ELT referral when there is a need to investigate a situation further, or in supporting the student to calm down and return to the lesson

'ELT referral'

For serious incidents which require immediate action or ongoing persistent disruption in a lesson.

If a serious incident occurs during a lesson which requires immediate action, the following process will be followed:

1. If and when a serious incident occurs which requires immediate action, the teacher involved must notify ELT using the ELT referral email address
2. The ELT member of staff on duty will attend the incident and take appropriate action. This may involve:
 - a. Reprimanding the student and taking them back into the classroom.
 - b. Placing the student in another classroom.
 - c. Removing the student and supervising them for the remaining duration of the lesson.
3. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, further consequences may include:
 - a. Requiring the student to attend Principal's detention for 1 hour after school on a Friday afternoon.
 - b. Meeting with parents to discuss the incident
 - c. Internal Exclusion
 - d. Suspension: only the Principal can exclude a student.
 - e. Permanent exclusion: only the principal can permanently exclude a student.
4. Every ELT referral must be recorded accurately on Edulink/SIMS. The teacher involved must write an account of what happened. It may also be necessary to gather accounts from students or members of staff who witnessed the incident.
5. Any student who is involved to a serious incident should be referred to the Pastoral Team. This may lead to them being referred for additional support, eg. From a mentor, social worker or counsellor. Students referred to the Pastoral Team, may have a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP). Targets given to students as part of PSPs are communicated to teachers, who will be able to positively reward students who choose to improve their behaviour.

6. Creating a professional environment and developing a work-ready mind set

It is easy for teachers to assume that, when students enter Year 12, they are ready to behave and to be treated as young adults. In reality, it often takes some time before KS5 students develop the skills of independent learning, self-motivation and the willingness to put in the hours of study needed to achieve success. This means that considerable support needs to be in place to help Sixth Form students to develop independence, responsibility and autonomy.

Key Stage 5 students are role models for younger students and play an important part in the organisation of the school. Although they are subject to the same whole-school rules and classroom rules as other students, Sixth Form students have certain rights and privileges that younger students in the UTC do not have. It is important for them to understand that with these privileges come particular responsibilities.

6.1 Privileges

Sixth Form students:

- wear professional dress rather than school uniform
- are allowed out of school at lunch time
- organise their own time during study periods
- lead and organise student societies and enrichment activities
- take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities
- have access to outstanding facilities within the UTC building

6.2 Responsibilities

Whilst most students will adjust quickly to the new responsibilities of Sixth Form, some will require more support or take more time to take on these responsibilities and to make the most of the opportunities available to them. A clear set of sanctions is therefore in place to address issues that arise of students failing to meet the UTC's high expectations.

Where appropriate, Key Stage 5 students will have their privileges withdrawn when they are not able to keep up with their responsibilities in terms of behaviour, attendance and punctuality.

Where a serious incident occurs, the member of staff involved will complete an incident report on CPOMS as soon as possible so that an investigation can be undertaken by the relevant members of the pastoral team.

7. Exclusions

Mulberry UTC follows the prevailing guidance from the DfE on all matters relating to exclusion, including permanent exclusion.

The Principal will decide whether to exclude a student, for a fixed term (suspension) or permanently, in line with the Mulberry Schools Trust Exclusions Policy and taking into account all the circumstances, the evidence available and the need to balance the interests of the student against those of the whole UTC community.

In line with DfE guidance, permanent exclusion is appropriate: in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the school's behaviour policy (including not following the student pledge and conduct outside of school) which are communicated to students on a day-to-day basis); and

Where allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others in the school. Examples of serious breaches for which permanent exclusion might be a reasonable response to a first offence include, but are not limited to:

- serious actual or threatened violence against another student or a member of staff
- sexual abuse or assault
- supplying an illegal drug
- carrying an offensive weapon
- arson
- behaviour which poses a significant risk to the child's own safety

The list above is in no way intended to be exhaustive nor to limit the Principal's authority to make reasonable decisions regarding permanent exclusions or the Directors' authority to uphold such decisions

Please see Mulberry Schools Trust – Exclusion Policy and Guidance

Permanent Exclusion

Mulberry UTC will exclude students permanently if deemed necessary for more serious or persistent breaches of the school Behaviour Policy, whether in school or outside the school gates. Mulberry UTC does not have a "tariff" of exclusion length for different misdemeanours, however there are certain one-off incidents for which permanent exclusion would be considered, given their seriousness.

8. Searching, screening and confiscating property

Mulberry UTC adopts the prevailing guidance from the DfE on screening and searching students. UTC staff can search students with their consent for any item. The Principal and staff authorised by the Principal have the power to search students or their possessions, without consent, where they suspect the student has a "prohibited item".

Searching with a student's consent – any member of staff can search a student with his/her consent

The staff member does not need to obtain written consent. It is enough to ask the student to hand over an item, or to ask whether the staff member can look in the student's bag or locker, and for the student to agree.

If the student refuses the request, the staff member can apply a suitable punishment in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Searching without a student's consent

Only the Principal or a member of staff authorised by the Principal can conduct a search without a student's consent.

The person conducting the search must be the same sex as the student being searched, and another staff member must be present.

Any member of staff can carry out a search if he or she reasonably believes there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and another member of staff cannot be summoned.

Authorised staff members can search for certain items without a student's consent, including:

- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to property
- Any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for

During a search:

The person conducting the search may not require the student to remove any clothing other than outer clothing. A student's possessions can only be searched in the presence of the student and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.

Retaining, returning and disposing of items

Staff may retain or dispose of a student's property as a disciplinary penalty where it is reasonable to do so. For example, alcohol, fireworks, vapes, tobacco or cigarette papers may be disposed of. These items should not be returned to the student.

- Pornographic images may be disposed of/deleted unless an image constitutes a specified offence (i.e. it is extreme or child pornography). In these cases, it is necessary to pass images to the police.
- Weapons or items that are evidence of an offence must be passed to the police as soon as possible.
- Controlled drugs should be passed to the police unless the member of staff believes there is good reason to dispose of them.
- It would not be reasonable to involve the police in dealing with stolen low-value items such as pencil cases. However, school staff may judge it appropriate to contact the police if stolen items are valuable (for example, iPods or laptops) or illegal (for example, alcohol and fireworks).

Complaints about screening or searching

There is no legal requirement to keep a record of the search.

Any complaints about screening or searching should be dealt with through the school's normal complaints procedure.

Electronic devices

If an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff, that staff member can examine data or files and delete these where there is good reason to do so. There is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

Search powers do not violate human rights

Under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, students have a right to respect for their private life.

This means that students have the right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy. Whilst this right is not absolute, any interference with this right by a school (or any public body) must be justified and proportionate.

The guidance adds:

The powers to search in the Education Act 1996 are compatible with article 8. A school exercising those powers lawfully should have no difficulty in demonstrating that it has also acted in accordance with article 8.

Prohibited items are:

- knives and weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- lighters and matches;
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- CBD oil in all forms;
- 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;
- any item banned by the school which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.

The school will follow the latest legislation if a prohibited item is found as a result of a search.

9. Power to use reasonable force

Members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to prevent students committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom.

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 students

Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a student 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.

Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of a classroom.

Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two students are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention

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 Principal has temporarily put in charge of students

Reasonable force can be used to prevent students from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder.

In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control students 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.

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

- prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student, or to stop a fight
- restrain a student at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

The Principal and authorised school staff may also use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search without consent for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm.

The school can also identify additional items in their school rules which may be searched for without consent. Force cannot be used to search for these items.

Associated resources

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>
4. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>