Royal Borough of Greenwich

Physical chastisement

Schools have a statutory responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children both in and out of school.

The law

UK law protects every child up to the age of 18 years from cruel and abusive treatment by their parents and carers.

- It is against the law for a parent to use physical punishment on their child that causes marks.
- It is illegal to use an implement to hit a child.
- Parents who cause deliberate harm to their child could face criminal prosecution.
- It is against the law for anyone who is not the child's parent to use ANY form of physical punishment.

As a parent/guardian I understand that I am responsible for disciplining my children or those under my care when they are not in school. I am aware and fully understand that the use of physical force in disciplining them may be illegal in certain circumstances. This may include where an implement (e.g. belt, stick, slipper) has been used or where the use of that force has resulted in visible injury and the use of prolonged physical stress positions. (This is where children are placed in a position of discomfort for a long period of time). I understand in these circumstances the school has a statutory duty to report such incidents to Children's Social Care and that the police may be asked to investigate.

Should you want further advice and information on statutory guidance, legislation and parenting support please see:

- the school's child protection policy on the school's website
- Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board website provides advice for parents and carers, including information on positive and effective disciplining methods www.greenwichsafeguardingchildren.org.uk