



## PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND RESTRAINT POLICY

ADOPTED :

N/A

DATE OF LAST REVIEW :

November 2019

REVIEWED BY :

Governing Body

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW :

November 2022

# Physical Intervention & Restraint Policy

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## INTRODUCTION

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Gorse Ride Schools encourage pupils to make positive behaviour choices. However pupils sometimes do make the wrong choices. On rare occasions this may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff.

Our Restraint Policy is based upon the following principles:

- Physical intervention is used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed.
- Any physical contact is only the minimum required.
- Physical intervention is used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Incidents are recorded and reported to the Head teacher.
- Parents are informed of each incident.

## THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows 'teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Head teacher who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- causing injury to his/herself or others
- committing an offence
- damaging property
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order & discipline

This policy has been written with DFE 'Use of reasonable force' advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2013 (see appendix 2).

## DEFINITION OF REASONABLE FORCE AND RESTRAINT

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The DFE guidance (2013) on the 'Use of Reasonable Force' defines and explains these terms in the following way:

- 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 pupil 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 pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
- 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.
- 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.

All members of staff who have undergone TEAM TEACHH training have a legal power to use it. This power applies to any member of staff at the school.

The DFE Guidance 2013 on 'Use of reasonable force' states that 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, trip or a 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.

In addition to the 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, fireworks, pornographic images and 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.

## OUR APPROACH

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We aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort in a minority of situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in connection with our Behaviour Policy (March 2019).

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate. Staff exercise their own professional judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff act within our school's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour. Once again it is stressed that physical intervention is only used when all other strategies have failed to have the desired effect on a pupil's behaviour.

NB 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 or on a school visit
- 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
- To give first aid.

Staff are aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in loco parentis and have a 'Duty of Care' to all children they are in charge of. They therefore take reasonable action to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils. This being said staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

## USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OR INTERVENTION

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Physical restraint is applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It never takes a form which could be seen as punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint i.e. only applying force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below. In all circumstances, alternative methods are used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint a last resort.

Staff are trained in TEAM TEACHH on an on-going basis.

In the exceptional circumstances when physical restraint or intervention becomes necessary, staff:

### DO:

- Summon help / involve another member of staff if possible
- Continue to talk to the pupil in a calm way
- Use simple and clear language
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for them to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Be aware of any feelings of anger
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax the restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

### DON'T :

- Try to manage on your own
- Stop talking even if the pupil does not reply
- Act in temper
- Allow a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment
- Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil

## PROCEDURE FOR PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

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1. Try to give a clear warning, i.e. “Look, you’re giving me no choice.....”
2. Try to offer an alternative escape route from the situation by calming down and talking things through – in fact this must stand all the way through the incident.  
NOTE: DO NOT DISCUSS THE ISSUE THAT LED TO THE INTERVENTION WHILST HOLDING THE PUPIL.
3. Once physical intervention is necessary, it is important that it happens quickly, smoothly, confidently and successfully.  
NOTE: THIS SHOULD OCCUR UNDER THE CONSIDERED AND CALM CONTROL OF THE MEMBER(S) OF STAFF INVOLVED.
4. The intervention should be proportionate to the circumstances and staff involved. Staff will need to make an instant risk assessment of the situation.
5. When circumstances justify the use of restraint, staff can restrain a pupil in a seated position, in a standing position, in a seated ground position or in a kneeling position.

When following out these forms of restraint the following guidance may be adopted:

- It is easier if one member of staff takes the lead and direction. Only one member of staff should do the talking at any one time.
- With two people present, where possible, approach the pupil face-on and take an arm each. They should now move to the pupil’s side, reducing their space for movement.
- Beware of kicks, knees, head butts, bites etc. Staff should lean slightly away from pupil. If the pupil starts to spit, they should be told to stop, if they persist, staff can hold the pupils face forward, using the L shaped palm method.
- Staff should take hold just above the wrist, on the long bones, front of the shoulder and upper arm.
- Check positions of hold constantly and communicate with each other and the pupil. Reassure the pupil that you will relinquish control when the pupil has gained sufficient composure and self-control.
- Try not to move the pupil long distances. The greater the distance = higher potential for injury for all.
- If sitting, aim for a well padded office chair with no arms. Staff should consider this before intervention.
- It may be necessary to lower the pupil to a kneeling position on the floor, follow the same processes.
- Arms should never be to the side or across the back, rather slightly bent at elbow.
- NEVER PLACE A CHILD FACE DOWN ON THE FLOOR!

Staff will be expected to exhaust all behaviour management strategies (where possible) before using physical intervention.

## RECORDING AND MONITORING

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The School will keep a separate, detailed, written record of every incident of restraint in the Bound Book held in the Headteachers office. The designated senior member of staff (the Head Teacher or a designated member of staff) will read every report and will address any issues which arise. Other interventions involving the use of physical interventions will also be recorded.

All records will be regularly reviewed by the designated senior member of staff to monitor the use of physical interventions generally and identify any issues or trends (whether particular children or staff are more frequently involved in incidents or whether particular situations trigger incidents, etc.) and consider whether any action is necessary.

Following an incident of restraint staff involved will have a debrief with Senior Leaders to record what led to the incident and review Pastoral Support Plan or Behaviour Plan or Positive Handling Plans in place for the pupil or the necessity of putting these in place for the pupil. (See Appendix A)

## COMPLAINTS

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When children are seriously out of control physical intervention may be unavoidable and may result inadvertently in the child being harmed/injured. In these circumstances it is the behaviour of the child which determines the degree of force required to bring them under control which may lead to injury rather than the intention of the member of staff or carer to cause harm.

If a child is harmed in the course of a physical intervention and he/she or his or her parents wish to make a complaint then this will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly in line with the Child Protection (Allegations Against Staff) Procedures.

Under no circumstances whatsoever should a parent take direct action against a member of staff. If this should happen, staff within schools would be fully supported in whatever action they may wish to take in terms of legal redress in respect of the parent.

In this difficult area it is important to balance up the primary consideration, which is the safety and welfare of children with the principles of natural justice in relation to the member of staff concerned. As a general rule, genuine attempts to use approved methods of physical intervention in appropriate circumstances would not attract a disciplinary response (even if the child is harmed) – though such circumstances may indicate a training need.

**APPENDIX A – Post incident discussion**

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Age/Understanding appropriate

Y/N

Date/Time/Location: .....

Present: .....

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Antecedents:	
Behaviours:	
Choices:	
Design:	
Entry:	

Additional comments by staff/pupil: .....

.....

Any amendments to existing BMP?

Y/N

Details: .....

.....

.....  
Signed (staff member)

Date .....

.....  
Signed (pupil)

Date .....