



# Policy For The Use Of Restrictive Physical Intervention

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## **Policy For The Use Of Restrictive Physical Intervention**

This policy is based on guidance issued jointly by the DfE 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools - Guidance for schools in England April 2026. The principal legislation to which this guidance relates are:

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006, especially sections 93 and 93A
- The Schools (Recording and reporting of seclusion and restraint( (No .2) (England) Regulations 2025
- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated regulations
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality Act 2010

The guidance replaces Use of reasonable force (2013) and will be kept under review and updated as necessary.

## **Ethical and Legal Considerations**

The decision to use a **restrictive physical intervention** must take account of the circumstances and be based upon an assessment of the risks associated with the intervention compared with the risks of not employing it.

A restrictive physical intervention must only employ a **reasonable amount of force** - that is the **minimum force needed** for the **shortest period of time** to avert injury, serious damage to property, or to prevent a breakdown of safety in the environment. All interventions must be recorded with the **approximate duration** of the hold or restriction.

Team Teach is considered good practice. However, we have a duty of care and as such, it is not a requirement that any staff member must have this specific training to act in an emergency.

## **When can reasonable force be used?**

- Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from committing an offense, from damaging property, or from causing serious disorder.
- In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to **control** pupils or to **restrain** them.
- The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.
- **Non-physical restraint** is the use of de-escalation techniques, direction, or environmental adjustments to prevent harm, reduce risk, or stop unsafe behaviour, without the use of physical force.

### **Examples in a school context:**

- Giving clear, calm verbal instructions or redirection
- Using tone, pace, and body language to de-escalate
- Offering choices to regain cooperation
- Removing triggers or adjusting the environment
- Guiding a pupil to a safer space *without touching them*
- Strategic ignoring (where appropriate)
- Distraction or change of activity

### **Schools can use reasonable force to:**

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction and their behavior poses a risk to the safety of others or significant disorder.
- 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.
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight.
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

**Prohibited Practices:** Staff must **never** use techniques that interfere with a pupil's airway, breathing, or circulation (e.g. pressure to the neck, throat, chest, or abdomen). If a pupil ends up on the ground, they must be repositioned into a safer standing or seated position immediately.

### **Definition of Seclusion**

A non-disciplinary intervention involves keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others, and preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction, blocking or making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave. This practice is not permitted within our school.

### **Prevention and De-escalation**

The use of restrictive physical interventions must be **minimised** by the adoption of preventative strategies. Physical intervention is a **last resort** after de-escalation has been exhausted.

Preventative and de-escalation strategies include:

- Ensuring staff competence corresponds to the needs of the pupils.
- Helping pupils to avoid known triggers.
- **Co-produced Behaviour Support Plans**, which are responsive to individual needs and include current risk assessments.
- Creating opportunities for choice and a sense of achievement.
- Developing staff expertise in **trauma-informed** challenging behaviors.
- Talking to pupils and parents about preferred management strategies.
- Recognising early behavioral sequences and employing 'de-escalation' to avert escalation.

The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled, and the nature of the harm he or she might cause.

### **Proactive use of restrictive physical interventions**

Where there is clear documented evidence that particular sequences of behavior rapidly escalate into serious violence, the use of a restrictive physical intervention at an early stage may be justified.

It is important to establish in a written individual behavior plan and positive handling plan a clear rationale for the intervention. This should be endorsed by a meeting including the school team and those with parental responsibility.

### Seclusion

Seclusion must only be used as a **safety measure** in emergency circumstances to prevent harm to others. It must **never** be used as a punishment or disciplinary sanction. Any pupil in seclusion must be **supervised at all times** and the environment must be safe and non-threatening. A pupil must be allowed to leave as soon as the immediate risk has subsided.

### **Possible injury or injuries**

The Team Teach information states this: The skills and techniques taught on a Team Teach course are as a result of an on-going dynamic risk assessment in an effort to safeguard everyone involved in a violent incident where physical interventions are necessary.

Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury. But, whilst some physical injury potential can be reduced, there remains some risk with potential for possible bruising or

scratching. These are regrettable and infrequent side effects of ensuring pupils remain safe.

All staff work extremely hard to do the best they can. They do not come to work with any intention of having to restrain any pupil or to hurt a pupil. However, in some situations, injury resulting from having to physically handle a pupil may be unavoidable. Following any incident, a **medical assessment** of the pupil must be conducted and recorded, even if no injury is visible.

### **Emergency Use of Strategies**

It is recognised that unplanned or emergency intervention may be necessary. In an emergency, staff retain their duty of care. Any response must be proportionate, using the **minimum force necessary**. While staff should aim to use techniques they are familiar with, they must always avoid the **prohibited practices** mentioned above (interference with breathing).

It is the school's aim to use effective risk assessment together with well-planned preventative strategies, to help keep emergency use of restrictive physical interventions to a minimum.

### **Liaison with parents/carers and other agencies**

Communication with parents/carers is **statutory**.

- **Same-Day Notification:** Parents/carers **must** be informed of any significant incident involving restrictive physical intervention on the **same day** it occurs.
- **Written Records:** A written record of the incident, including de-escalation used and the duration of the intervention, must be provided to parents.
- **Recording:** All incidents are recorded on the school's physical intervention form and CPOMs.

### **Staff Training and Governance**

All staff require induction training. Some staff will receive additional, specialised Team-Teach training based on the needs of the pupils they support.

The nature and extent of the training will depend upon the characteristics of the pupils who may require a physical intervention, the behaviours they present and the responsibilities of individual members of staff.

Staff will normally only use Team-Teach methods of restrictive physical intervention for which they have received training. Specific techniques will be closely matched to the characteristics of individual pupils.

All staff will receive updates and refresher courses in line with recommendations set out by Team-Teach.

In an emergency, the use of force by any person (trained or untrained) can be justified if it is the only way to prevent injury or to prevent an offence being committed.

**Post-Incident Support:** Following an intervention, a "**Repair and Reflect**" session will be held for both the pupil and the staff involved to support wellbeing and relationship recovery.

**Oversight:** The **Governing Body** will regularly review and monitor incident data (including trends related to SEND or other protected characteristics) to ensure the school is actively working to reduce the need for restrictive interventions.