



Physical Restraint Procedure

Date reviewed by School	Spring 2023
Date ratified by FGB	N/A
Date for next review	Spring 2026

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Restraint occurs when a member of staff uses physical force intentionally to restrict a pupil's movement against his/her will and should rarely be used. Physical contact with pupils may occur under other circumstances such as providing physical prompts, giving support in PE and offering reassurance. The term restraint does not extend to these situations. Staff should not be inhibited in providing such contact when it is professionally appropriate to do so.

2 When pupils may be restrained

- 2.1 Restraint should be avoided wherever possible and is never a substitute for good behaviour management. Other methods of managing the incident must be tried first, unless this would be impossible or impractical.
- 2.2 There are occasions when the restraint of pupils is necessary. Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 (and any amendments thereafter) states that a member of school staff, authorised by the Headteacher, may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of preventing the pupil:
- Injuring themselves or others
 - Damaging property
 - Behaving in a way that is prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere.

3 Who may restrain pupils?

- 3.1 Staff and other persons who are authorised by the Headteacher to have control or charge of pupils may restrain pupils. Authorisation for restraint will be on very singular cases, and will be well documented.

4 How may pupils be restrained?



- 4.1** Any restraint must be consistent with the concept of 'reasonable force'. Staff may not restrain out of anger, frustration or in any way that could cause injury to the pupil. During an incident, staff must caution the pupil that restraint may be necessary. Staff must remain calm and maintain appropriate communication throughout the incident. There is no government-approved technique for restraining students.
- 4.2** It is important, for pupil and staff safety, that all authorised staff adopt basic principles on the issue of physical control or restraint:
- a) Only use force where there is clearly no alternative approach which would work in the circumstances (i.e. there is an immediate emergency to resolve).
 - b) Only use force when defending or protecting.
 - c) Only use the minimum amount of force required for the shortest amount of time.
 - d) Always make sure the pupil is safe throughout any period of physical contact or restraint; stop if a pupil shows signs of difficulty in breathing, sudden changes in colour, distress, vomiting.
 - e) Staff are advised not to intervene in an incident without help (unless it is an emergency); for example, when dealing with a physically large pupil or more than one pupil.
 - f) Staff should not feel obliged to intervene where their personal safety is at risk or where they believe such intervention could lead to accusations of assault or child abuse.
 - g) In such circumstances, staff should summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues or where necessary, telephone the police. The member of staff should inform the pupil that they have sent for help. Until assistance arrives, the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation and to prevent the incident from escalating.

5 What to do after a restraint situation

- 5.1** The Headteacher must be informed as soon as possible following an incident in which restraint was used and a report form completed as soon as possible.
- 5.2** Parents/carers must be informed promptly by the Headteacher and given an opportunity to record their views. The Headteacher will ensure staff involved in the incident have the opportunity to share their perspectives and any anxieties, and will provide support as required.

6 Complaints

- 6.1** In the event that there is a complaint from a parent/carer regarding the use of force against their child by a member of staff, the Local Authority (LA) will give support and advice to schools on how to respond appropriately to the complaint.
- 6.2** Any staff receiving a formal complaint about another member of staff should contact the Headteacher for advice on how to proceed.



6.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Intimate Care Procedure.