



**The Telford Langley School**  
**ENSURING EXCELLENCE**

## **Physical Intervention & Restraint Policy**

Approved: Spring 2023

# Policy Title

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# 1. Introduction

The Telford Langley School encourages 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. The policy for physical intervention is based upon the following principles:

1. Physical intervention should be used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed.
2. Any physical contact should be only the minimum required.
3. Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
4. Incidents must be recorded and reported to Deputy Headteacher (relationships)
5. Parents will be informed of each incident

## 2. The Legal Framework

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:

1. causing injury to his/herself or others
2. committing an offence
3. damaging property
4. 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 (appendix 2).

## 3. Definition of Reasonable Force & Restraint

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

1. 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.
2. 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.

3. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
4. As mentioned before, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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 can use reasonable force have a legal power to use it. 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 pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying pupils on a school organised visit. The DFE Guidance 2013 on 'Use of reasonable force' states that: Schools can use reasonable force to:

1. remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow and instruction to do so;
  2. prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event, trip or a visit;
  3. 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;
  4. prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
  5. restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.
- Schools cannot:
6. use force as a punishment - it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Schools have the power to search pupils without consent:

In addition to the general 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":

1. knives and weapons
2. alcohol
3. illegal drugs
4. stolen items
5. tobacco and cigarette papers
6. fireworks
7. pornographic images
8. 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.

## **4. Our Approach**

The Telford Langley School aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort in a minority of situations and always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in connection with our Behaviour for Learning Policy.

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

\*Some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition will on occasions have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a child so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment.

This means that adults should:

1. consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact, perhaps involving another member of staff, or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.
2. be familiar with and follow recommended DfE guidance.
3. always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take.

\* Taken from the IRSC/Safe Practice Guidance/February 2005

Staff should be 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 must, 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.

## **5. Use of Physical Restraint or Intervention**

Physical restraint should be 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 should never take 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 should be used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint a last resort.

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

### DO

1. Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
2. Use the minimum force necessary
3. Involve another member of staff if possible
4. Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
5. Use simple and clear language
6. Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
7. Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

### DON'T

1. Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
2. Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil Involve other pupils in the restraint
3. Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct
4. Twist or force limbs back against a joint
5. Bend fingers or pull hair
6. Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
7. Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil
8. Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment

## 6. Actions after an incident

Physical restraint often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. The Deputy Headteacher (relationships) should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any other individuals involved in the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed. Part of that debriefing will involve consideration of the circumstances that precipitated the incident and exploring ways in which future incidents can be avoided. If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of an appropriate individual support plan, which may include a risk assessment, an anger management programme, involvement of external agencies or other strategies agreed by the pastoral team.

All incidents should be recorded immediately on the Pupil Restraint Report Form (appendix 1). All sections of this report should be completed so that any patterns of behaviour can be identified and addressed. In the event of any future complaint or allegation this record will provide essential and accurate information. A copy should be filed in the child's appropriate file and a central copy will be kept by the Deputy Headteacher (relationships).

A member of the pastoral team will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

## **7. Risk Assessment**

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

1. Strategies to be used prior to intervention
2. Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known
3. Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
4. Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
5. identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate
6. The school's duty of care to all pupils and staff

## **8. Complaints & Allegations**

A clear physical intervention and restraint policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation under the Complaints Policy or Disciplinary policy as required. If following preliminary investigations it is deemed necessary the Headteacher will contact the LADO in line with the school's safeguarding and child protection policy. It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply. We will review this policy annually.

## 9. Links to other School Policies and References

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

1. [Telford Langley School's Behaviour Policy](#)
2. [Telford Langley school's Child Protection Policy](#)  
[Use of Reasonable Force – Advice for Teachers, Staff & Governing Bodies \(July 2013\)](#)