



The Telford Langley School
ENSURING EXCELLENCE

Physical Intervention & Restraint Policy

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Policy Title

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Contents

.....	2
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Relevant Legislation.....	3
3. Definition of Reasonable Force & Restraint.....	3
4. Our Approach.....	5
5. Pupil and Staff Support.....	5
6. Seclusion.....	6
7. Recording the use of force.....	6
8. Complaints & Allegations.....	7
10. Links to other School Policies and References.....	8

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. Relevant Legislation

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

3. Definition of Reasonable Force & Restraint

WHO CAN USE REASONABLE FORCE?

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. To prevent or stop a pupil from:

1. causing injury to themselves or others
2. committing a criminal offence
3. damaging property
4. causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

UNACCEPTABLE USES OF FORCE

It is illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment. Pupils should not be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example,

by covering the mouth and/or nose, or applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen. The use of force can be dangerous, particularly where it occurs on the ground. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should release their holds or re-position into a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible.

OTHER PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS

Telford Langley School does not have a 'no contact' policy and we will not grant any requests by parents or staff members not to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions. The adoption of a 'no contact' policy at a school can leave staff unable to intervene where reasonable in the circumstances to fully protect pupils.

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with pupils which does not give rise to any question over the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions. This will depend on the circumstance, but examples of occasions when physical contact is generally appropriate include:

- to give first aid
- to guide or escort pupils, such as holding the hand of a pupil at the front/back of the line when going to assembly, when walking together around the school or on a school trip, or when helping a pupil to a space they have chosen to access to self-regulate
- to comfort a distressed pupil
- to congratulate or praise a pupil, for example a pat on the back or a handshake
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

In assessing whether physical contact is appropriate in a given situation, the member of staff should use their judgement and have regard to:

- the Telford Langley School child protection policy
- the applicable circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present
- the individual pupil's age
- any other material factors, including but not limited to whether:
 1. the pupil has SEND or other vulnerabilities
 2. any alternative strategies that do not include physical contact can be used

USE OF REASONABLE FORCE TO SEARCH PUPILS

Headteachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item. A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for legally prohibited items, but not to search for items banned under the school rules only.

Examples of items included on the legally prohibited list include:

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

4. Our Approach

In the exceptional circumstances when reasonable force 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
3. Involve other pupils in the restraint
4. Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct
5. Twist or force limbs back against a joint
6. Bend fingers or pull hair
7. Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
8. Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil
9. Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment

5. Pupil and Staff Support

School staff should evaluate all incidents involving the use of restrictive intervention as soon as practicable after the event to understand why it was used, the impact on pupils and staff, any patterns and trends, and how the use of restrictive interventions might be avoided in future.

If appropriate, the pupil and staff member involved should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. Incidents in which a member of staff uses reasonable force or seclusion on a pupil must be recorded appropriately using agreed school systems. In addition, any injuries should be

recorded in accordance with the school's procedures and reported as appropriate to the Health and Safety Executive.

School staff will hold a follow-up conversation(s) to facilitate reflection, learning and to support pupil and staff wellbeing. This conversation should be framed as part of the overall debriefing process and look to understand what happened during the incident and why, based on separate reflections from both the staff and pupils involved, as well as to repair and rebuild relationships through dialogue. This process should ideally be facilitated by a staff member who was not involved in the incident and may also benefit from the presence of an additional person to ensure impartiality and support.

School staff will continue to monitor pupil and staff wellbeing and provide additional support if needed, for example through further follow-up conversations, counselling or other resources.

6. Seclusion

Seclusion - a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving - should only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. In such circumstances, the pupil is not acting with intent. Seclusion should not be implemented by staff through threat of punishment.

The place to which the pupil is confined should be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil. The pupil should be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil should be allowed to leave.

An incident involving the use of seclusion must be recorded and reported. Seclusion is not a disciplinary response to deliberate or wilful misbehaviour. There are disciplinary measures that are similar, such as removal from the classroom.

7. Recording the use of force

Incidents must be recorded as soon as practicable after the event. It should be recorded by the staff member(s) involved and they should endeavour to do this no later than the same day.

School staff should record the following details:

- name of pupil(s) and staff directly involved
- any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code
- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and

(where relevant) what type of reasonable force was applied, the degree of force, and details of any physical injuries sustained

- brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance
- any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts

Parents/carers should be made aware of any use of force as soon as possible after the event.

8. Complaints & Allegations

Any complaints regarding the use of restrictive interventions should be dealt with in accordance with the school's normal complaints procedure.

9. Annex 1 – Terminology

Restrictive intervention: a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This guidance uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

Reasonable force: a term used in legislation which includes physical restrictive interventions. All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.

Significant incident: any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

Seclusion: a non-disciplinary intervention involving 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.

Restraint: a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact. For example, holding a pupil's arms to their sides or removing a pupil's crutches would both be considered forms of restraint.

10. 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 \(July 2013\)](#)

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