

Christ Church NW1

Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy



September 2025

Vision and Values



**The Christian faith is at the heart of our school community.
At Christ Church we all care, learn and work together for God and others.**

'For we are all God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do'. Ephesians 2:10

**Our Christian Values are
Creation, Community, Endurance, Thankfulness, Reconciliation, Wisdom**

The distinctive nature of our approach to education can be found in our explicit Christian values, our collective worship, our grounded Christian ethos, our carefully crafted curriculum and in our Religious Education.

We aim to provide ambitious learning opportunities, promoting achievement in every area and nurturing social, emotional and spiritual well-being.

We actively promote the children's cultural capital (defined as the acquisition of skills and knowledge, which an individual can draw on to give them an advantage in life). We will introduce them to strong role models who will impart their knowledge and wisdom to help the children engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement and to become responsible local and global citizens.

Character and resilience are the qualities we promote within our children, developing the inner resources that we call on to help us in life. We instil these qualities in our children to make sure that they are ready to make their way in the world as robust, confident and inquisitive individuals.

We know that confidence, knowledge and skills will help them to become compassionate and well balanced young people. We want them to take their place in society as active citizens, economically independent, exemplifying the British values of equality, mutual respect, democracy, individual liberty and rule of law.

We use our six Christian values, Creation, Wisdom, Thankfulness, Community Endurance and Reconciliation, to reinforce and enrich our teaching wherever applicable.

- **Creation**

For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. Hebrews 3:4

- **Wisdom**

For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 2:6

- **Thankfulness**

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.
1 Chronicles 16:34

- **Community**

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. John 15:12

- **Endurance**

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Galatians 6:9

- **Reconciliation**

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.
Colossians 3:13

Our vision is inclusive and seeks to promote the whole child thrive within our Christ Church family.

Each member of our Christ church family; children, parents and staff are valued as God's creation. We believe in full inclusion and acceptance of all and that this allows every individual to flourish.



Christ Church C of E Primary School
Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy

Date: September 2025
FGB approved: 23/9/25
Review date: September 2027

CONTENTS

	Page no:
1 Introduction and purpose	5
2 Legal framework	5
3 Senior leadership responsibilities	6
4 Physical intervention and use of force	7
5 Vulnerable pupils	8
6 Planning and prevention	10
7 Dealing with incidents	11
8 Following incidents	13
9 Training for staff	15
10 Publicising the policy	15
11 Complaints and allegations	16

1 Introduction and purpose of policy

On rare occasions, school staff may need to use physical intervention or restraint in order to safeguard pupils or maintain discipline within the school environment. *Keeping children safe in education* recognises that there are circumstances where it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to achieve these aims and states that schools should **not** have a no contact policy as this can put staff and pupils at risk.

This guidance has been written to help schools develop policies around the use of physical intervention and restraint so that any interventions used are lawful and carried out in a safe and responsible manner. The aim of any policy is to ensure staff are confident about the context in which they have the power to use physical intervention and restraint in order to safeguard pupil welfare.

Camden's core statement

Physical intervention and restraint on pupils should only be used as a last resort, normally when de-escalation strategies have failed, and when there is a clear risk of serious harm to the pupil or others or serious damage to property or to deal with serious classroom disruption.

Decisions on when to use physical intervention is a matter of professional judgement and any intervention or restraint should be proportionate and reasonable in the context of the perceived risk and in the pupil's best interests. This would normally be after de-escalation strategies have failed. Should such an intervention be required the school should record the details, including any injury, and contact the parent/carer on the same day to explain the circumstances involved.

2 Legal framework

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows members of the school's staff to **use reasonable force** in order to:

- prevent a pupil from hurting themselves or others
- prevent a pupil from causing serious damage to property
- remove a disruptive pupil from a classroom
- prevent a pupil from leaving a classroom where there is a risk to their safety or the safety of others.

Statutory guidance makes it clear that physical intervention and restraint cannot be used as a punishment.

Section 550ZB of the Education Act 1996 allows schools to **use reasonable force to carry out searches** for prohibited items where the young person has not consented to the search.

Prohibited items are:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage property.

When conducting searches, schools/colleges should refer to the *Screening and searches guidance* available at:

[Schools and Nurseries Safeguarding Policies - Camden Safeguarding Children Partnership – CSCP](#)

Schools can also refer to the following government guidance for further details:

- *Use of reasonable force in schools*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

- *Searching, screening and confiscation in schools*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

3 Senior leadership responsibilities

Senior leaders in schools, including governors and head teachers, should ensure the following:

- There is a culture of respect and good relationships between staff and pupils so that the need for high-level intervention is reduced.
- All staff are aware of the school policy and their powers and responsibilities regarding the use of physical intervention and restraint and their part in implementing this policy.
- Staff are able to use de-escalation techniques strategies in the first instance unless the situation requires an immediate physical response.

- All staff receive appropriate training in behaviour management, including de-escalation techniques so that they are confident to deal with incidents and only use physical intervention where necessary.
- Schools may wish to consider whether certain staff members should receive specialist training on physical intervention and restraint techniques.
- The school will assess any risk posed to staff and take steps to reduce these risks. Staff do not place themselves at risk when using physical restraint and are able to access medical treatment and take time off if injured.
- The use of physical intervention and restraint is part of an overarching strategy of behaviour management within the school environment and that its use is closely aligned to the school's behaviour policies.
- Staff are aware of any agreed adjustments to the policy and procedures that are in place for individual pupils who are vulnerable due to learning and other disabilities, autism or mental health difficulties (see section 5).
- Staff are supported to use physical intervention and restraint where this is within acceptable parameters and in line with school policies.
- Support is offered to pupils and staff involved in incidents requiring physical intervention and restraint.
- There is a system in place to record and monitor incidents where physical intervention or restraint have been used.
- The policy on physical intervention and restraint is reviewed at least annually and more frequently where thought appropriate.

4 Physical intervention and use of force

To ensure the welfare of pupils and protect staff from any misplaced allegations, any physical contact between staff and pupils must be appropriate within the context of the teacher/pupil relationship, the pupils' age and the circumstances. There are many examples of appropriate positive physical contact that can be used to reassure, comfort, guide or calm a pupil, such as holding hands.

Physical intervention can cover a wide variety of contact with pupils of varying degrees of intrusiveness ranging from positive handling, such as gentle guiding to physical restraint. The level of intervention used and the degree of force required will be determined by the circumstances and the level of assessed risk to the pupil and others.

Generally, low-level physical contact/positive handling can be used to manage most behaviour, for example gentle contact to comfort, reassure or guide a pupil away from risk or block their movements.

For younger pupils, this positive handling can be used to control the child's movements in order to keep them from harm or danger. The level of contact and force that would be acceptable to achieve this would be similar to the actions that a reasonable parent would do to keep their own child safe.

In some situations, it may be necessary to use a physical intervention that involves restraint and the use of force. Where force is used, it must be a proportionate and reasonable response to the risk involved and decisions to use force must be based on a full risk assessment.

Reasonable force should involve "no more force than is needed" and should only be used for the purposes of restraining or controlling a pupil in order to safeguard pupils, stop damage to property or keep order in the classroom. What is reasonable force will be down to the professional judgement of the staff member but any use of force must be justifiable and the paramount consideration is that any action is taken in the interests of the pupil.

5 Vulnerable pupils

Some pupils may exhibit challenging behaviour in response to overstimulating environments, stressful situations or an inability to communicate distress in any other way. This can make them more vulnerable to experiencing physical intervention and restraint and it is likely the experience will be traumatising.

Schools should be mindful of pupils that may be vulnerable such as (but not limited to):

- children who have learning and other disabilities and autism
- children who are experiencing mental health difficulties
- children who have experienced trauma in their lives, for example, looked after children, refugee children and unaccompanied minors, children living with domestic abuse and children with child protection plans.

Under the Equalities Act 2010, it is essential that schools can demonstrate that reasonable adjustments have been made to ensure any policy on physical intervention and restraint does not disadvantage these pupils.

Government guidance *Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention* also requires schools to take steps to reduce the use of physical intervention for vulnerable children and this will be a feature of any inspection carried out by the CQC and Ofsted <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention>

Special schools where pupils have a high level of needs requiring regular physical intervention to manage behaviour may wish to consider use of a bespoke policy that takes account of the specific needs of the pupils using this guidance.

Schools must demonstrate that the specific needs of these pupils have been considered and that the school will tailor their approach accordingly to avoid discrimination against these pupils.

School policies on behaviour management should uphold the rights of vulnerable pupils, ensure their safety and dignity, and work in partnership with parents to reduce the need for physical intervention and restraint.

Vulnerable pupils will be subject to the requirements set out in this policy, but schools will also need to meet the following extra requirements.

- Vulnerable pupils whose behaviour is likely to increase the risk of physical intervention and restraint should have a behaviour support plan in place from the outset and pupils and parents should be fully involved in agreeing this plan. However, it should be noted that not all vulnerable pupils will require this.
- The plan should set out the strategies for managing challenging behaviour and should include a hierarchical response ranging from prevention, de-escalation and detailing how incidents will be dealt with.
- The plan should be based on an assessment of the pupil's particular needs and how these contribute to challenging behaviour, including any triggers for challenging behaviour and what steps can be taken to avoid these triggers and maintain a positive learning environment for the pupil.
- The plan should include any techniques for de-escalating situations and how best to manage challenging behaviour in order to avoid use of physical intervention and restraint.
- Forms of restraint or intervention to be used should be identified and agreed in advance and the circumstances for its use set out clearly so that pupils and parents understand the circumstances in which it will be used.

- The plan should include which staff members will be responsible for its implementation and what specific training they will receive to support them in this role.
- Behaviour support plans should also cover any transitions that a pupil may experience between services or locations as movement to unfamiliar places may be a trigger for challenging behaviour.
- Schools using forms of physical intervention involving seclusion or withdrawal that potentially restricts a child's liberty should have written rules about how and when these measures will be used and should ensure parents and pupils consent in advance to their use.

6 Planning and prevention

6.1 Whole school

Schools should be alert to situations and circumstances that can lead to incidents that may require physical intervention and take active steps to avoid issues escalating.

The school should regularly review environmental factors within the school that may lead to incidents in the school or elsewhere and should consider:

- the general school environment and any potential hot-spots
- any difficulties that may arise at different times of the day, ie: breaks
- any issues around supervision of pupils
- specific environmental factors for vulnerable pupils
- specific risks related to gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality or disability
- specific risks related to gang activity
- specific risks off-site/school trips.

This should address:

- the nature of the risk and likely impact on pupils
- the likelihood of incidents
- actions and/or reasonable adjustments for vulnerable pupils
- actions to be taken to avoid incidents and reduce risk
- actions to be taken in the event of an incident in order to reduce risk to staff and pupils.

6.2 Individual pupils

All vulnerable pupils' who are at heightened risk of experiencing physical intervention and restraint should have an individual behaviour support plan (see section 5).

Any pupil who requires physical intervention on 2 or more occasions should have an individual plan that looks at their specific circumstances, any triggers to behaviours and strategies or approaches that may reduce the number of incidents and which should be regularly reviewed.

Where it is known that physical intervention involving force or restraint may be required in order to manage an individual pupil's behaviour this should be planned for in partnership with parents and the pupil (where appropriate) and an intervention plan put in place.

The risk assessment should consider:

- the risks to the pupil and others from their behaviour
- the risks from use of physical intervention
- the risks from not intervening
- the form of physical intervention that would be the least restrictive.

The plan should:

- identify the triggers to the behaviour that may lead to the need to intervene or restrain
- relevant background information, such as experiences of home life or history of abuse
- detail any de-escalation techniques that should be used in the first instance to deal with incidents
- set out what forms of physical intervention and restraint may be used without injury to the pupil, staff member or anyone else present
- provide details of how incidents will be reviewed and who will be involved in the review.

Planned intervention can be viewed as positive as it demonstrates a commitment to keeping children safe and enables them to take part in the planning process.

7 Dealing with incidents

7.1 Initial consideration

Before any action is taken staff should quickly weigh up the situation and decide if intervention is needed immediately to avert risk of harm. It is for the staff member to make a professional judgement on whether the situation requires the use of physical intervention and the degree of force needed.

The staff member must be clear on the justification of the action and the intended outcome of intervention, for example stopping a young child from leaving the classroom to stopping an older pupil from attacking another pupil, and how the intervention is in the best interests

of those involved. This could be important in terms of providing a defence to any allegation of assault arising following the incident.

Staff should also consider the risks of not intervening, for example if no intervention is made and the pupil causes serious injury to another, the school could be considered negligent in the duty of care owed to that pupil.

7.2 De-escalation

De-escalation techniques If possible must be used in the first instance and staff should:

- make the pupil and others present aware that the staff member is taking control of the situation;
- ask other pupils to leave in order to calm the situation;
- send for assistance from another staff member (particularly if restraint is likely to be needed);
- remain calm and respectful and speak slowly and clearly to the pupil to give reassurance and instructions;
- be aware of their tone of voice and body language;
- where possible, use minimal force/positive handling to gently guide the pupil away from danger (but be aware of risk to self);
- be aware of their own emotions and avoid allowing the situation to spiral;
- if the pupil is pacing, try to remain still and avoid mirroring their anxiety;
- keep a respectful distance and avoid encroaching on the pupil's personal space
- give the young person options so that they have an opportunity to resolve the situation in a dignified manner
- be specific to a pupil's SEND.

De-escalation techniques can be used where there is an opportunity to do so but not in a situation where a pupil is already at risk of harm and action is needed. However staff can continue to use many of the techniques listed above during restraint to calm and reassure the young person.

7.3 Use of force and restraint

All staff have a duty of care to pupils and have the power to use physical intervention and restraint where required. However staff can send for help if it is thought that assistance will be needed.

Use of force must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary and restraint should only be used for as long as is needed and.

- Ideally, staff should not have to deal with incidents requiring restraint alone for any period of time and it is recommended that other staff attend the incident as soon as possible in order to reduce risk.
- Where possible, before intervening, staff should warn the pupil clearly and calmly that physical force may be used to restrain them and they should be given an opportunity to comply with any instructions to avoid this.
- When using restraint, staff should remain calm and continue to talk to the pupil calmly throughout in order to reassure them and let them know what is happening and why.
- The restraint should:
 - only involve the minimum of force necessary to restrict movement
 - only be used temporarily until the risk has passed
 - should not restrict breathing or blood supply
 - should avoid bringing pupil to the ground
 - should not involve any contact that may amount to a criminal offence such as assault.
- The child or young person should be released slowly and safely when it is felt they are sufficiently in control of their emotions.

8 Following incidents

8.1 Recording and reporting incidents

Serious incidents involving use of force should be recorded and the record should be written up within 24 hours of the incident and should cover:

- time/date of incident
- staff and pupils involved
- events leading up to the incident
- reason for use of physical intervention/restraint
- nature of physical intervention/restraint including degree of force and duration
- outcome of incident, including any injuries sustained.

8.2 Notifying others

- The head teacher must be informed of all incidents immediately in order to decide on what further actions are required.

- The designated safeguarding lead should also be informed of incidents that may raise any safeguarding issues.
- It is good practice for schools to inform parents following serious incidents involving the use of force to physically intervene or restrain a pupil and this decision should be made by the head teacher. Parents should be informed by telephone, text or email immediately after the incident and a written notification giving details of the incident sent within a reasonable timeframe.
- Parents of vulnerable pupils should always be notified when physical intervention and restraint has been used.
- Head teachers and the head of Pupil Referral Units should include a report on the use of physical intervention and restraint as part of their annual report to the Board of Governors of Management Committee.
- In settings where the use of physical intervention and restraint is a regular feature due to pupils' individual needs the setting should have in place a system for recording, analysing and reporting incidents. This can be particularly helpful during Ofsted inspections and where an allegation or complaint is made.

8.3 Support following incidents

It should be acknowledged that the use of physical intervention and restraint carries an inherent risk of injury to staff and pupils involved.

Use of physical intervention and restraint can be upsetting for pupils and staff and schools should have procedures in place for dealing with the aftermath of incidents so that those involved have time and space to recover and reflect on what happened so that this learning can be used to review and improve policies.

It may be necessary to ensure staff and pupils receive any required medical attention and are able to talk to someone who was not involved in the incident about what happened and why.

For vulnerable pupils, staff and parents, where possible, should be able to discuss the incident and consider whether the behaviour support plan needs to be changed and what learning can be taken from the incident.

8.4 Monitoring and reviewing incidents

Schools should monitor and review the use of force, physical intervention and restraint as a means of learning from incidents to improve practice and inform risk assessments in order to avoid the need for physical intervention and restraint. Information on incidents can help

inform any risk assessment both on a whole-school level and in terms of individual or groups of pupils. This is particularly important in the case of vulnerable pupils who may be more susceptible to experiencing physical intervention and restraint.

When reviewing incidents, the school should consider the following:

- Was the use of physical intervention necessary, appropriate and proportionate?
- What steps were taken to ensure that minimum reasonable force was used?
- Have the incidents needing physical intervention increased/decreased?
- Are vulnerable pupils over-represented in the numbers and if so why? Is the school confident that vulnerable pupils are not being discriminated against by policy and procedures?
- Was the length of time physical intervention was used kept to a minimum?
- Could alternative methods other than physical intervention been used?
- What steps were taken to ensure that physical intervention used causes a minimum of pain or distress?
- What steps were taken following physical intervention for the pupil and the staff involved?
- Were there separate debriefing sessions for both pupil and members of staff who have been involved in the intervention? What were the antecedents, consequences and alternative courses of action?

9 Training for staff

Training from a relevant trainer increases staff confidence in dealing with incidents and reduces risks. Camden recommends schools use the Team-Teach training available from Camden Learning.

When considering training, schools should be aware that any member of staff may need to intervene in emergency situations. Schools may consider training in the context of the needs of pupils and the number and seriousness of incidents that are likely to occur in the school.

- All staff should receive training on how to prevent the need for physical intervention, including how to de-escalate situations and awareness of positive handling techniques.
- Schools should identify the most appropriate members of staff for specialist training in restraint techniques.
- Schools should keep a record of which training staff have received and those staff who have received specialist training in restraint techniques.

- Some settings such as special educational needs or pupil referral units may have a higher level of incidents requiring a higher proportion of staff to receive specialist training on positive handling techniques. Where settings have a regular need to use physical intervention and restraint it is recommended that all staff should be trained.

10 Publicising the policy

It is recommended that the school policy on physical intervention and restraint is part of the behaviour management policy and that the Camden core statement shown on page 1 is widely available to staff, pupils and parents so that they are aware of the policy.

The Camden core statement and any behaviour management policies should be available on the school website. It is important that pupils and parents are aware of the school's legal powers to use physical intervention and restraint and the circumstances in which it is likely to be used.

Parents should be made aware that their consent is not required to use physical intervention and restraint. Parents should also be aware of how the school will inform them of any incidents requiring the use of physical intervention and restraint.

11 Complaints and allegations

Schools should publish the complaints policy and ensure pupils and parents know how to make a complaint following the use of physical intervention or restraint.

The use of force to physically intervene or restrain a child can lead to accusations against staff by pupils and parents of improper conduct or assault, so it is essential that schools have in place clear policies and procedures around the use of physical intervention and restraint so that staff have a defence against such allegations.

Where an incident of physical intervention or restraint leads to an allegation being made against a teacher, this will be dealt with under the CSCP "*Guidance for schools on managing allegations against staff and volunteers*" and the matter will be referred to the LADO [Schools and Nurseries Safeguarding Policies - Camden Safeguarding Children Partnership — CSCP](#)

This guidance makes it clear that reasonable force can be used to control or restrain in specific circumstances and this will be taken into account when deciding on what action to take. However, it must be demonstrated that the staff member followed agreed practice and procedure.

It should be made clear to staff that force may only be used within the parameters set out in the school's policy and that any deviation from acceptable practice will leave the staff member vulnerable to complaints and allegations.

The Legal Framework Reasonable Force should be limited to emergency situations and used only as a last resort.

Under the Children Order 1995, it is only permissible as described under the heading "Physical Control".

Article 4 of the Education Order 1998 clarifies powers that already exist in common law.

It enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Headteacher, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to another person or damage to the property of any person.
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise. (Examples of possible situations are given in Appendix 1) Definition of restraint at Christ Church Primary is that Reasonable Force is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property.

General policy aims Christ Church Primary School staffing team recognise that the use of Reasonable Force is only one of the last in a range of strategies available to secure pupil safety and well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline. Our policy on Reasonable force

should therefore be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy and Child Protection policies.

Specific aims of the Reasonable Force policy

- To protect every person in the school community from harm
- To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention that is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful
- To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations Why use any kind of force?? Reasonable Force should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him / herself or others. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to

exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour. It is not possible to define every circumstance in which Reasonable Force would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own 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. 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 should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.

Behaviour

Behaviour at Christ Church is consistently judged by OFSTED to be 'Outstanding'. This is due to high expectations of behaviour, regular staff training on de-escalation, robust systems and a caring ethos. If expectations of children's behaviour are high then there are fewer problems. Occasionally some children are more prone to exhibit challenging behaviours and it is the responsibility of every member of staff to closely monitor these children and to attempt to ensure interventions suitable for each individual child are in place before a situation escalates.

Reasonable Force should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him/herself or others. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which Reasonable Force would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the School's policy on behaviour, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

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 should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and wellbeing. Failure to physically restrain a pupil who is subsequently injured or injures another, could, in certain circumstances, lead to an accusation of negligence.

At the same time staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

Alternative strategies

There are some situations in which the need for Reasonable Force is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives (e.g. is a pupil is about to run across a road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives e.g. use of assertiveness skills such as:

- the '*broken record*' in which an instruction is repeated until the pupil complies

- use of a distracter, such as a loud whistle, to interrupt the behaviour (such as a fight) long enough for other methods of verbal control to be effective
- withdrawal of attention (sometimes by removing the class) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened
- other techniques designed to defuse the situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour (in these cases the incident can be dealt through a solution focussed approach, when emotions are no longer running high)
- the employment of other sanctions consistent with the School's policy on behaviour.

Use of physical restraint

Reasonable Force should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention or 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 a punishment.

See [Appendix 1](#) for Camden guidelines on use of restraint. This guidance has been shared with all staff.

See [Appendix 2](#) for Camden advice for staff. This guidance has been shared with all staff.

See [Appendix 3](#) for Camden advice on Physical intervention procedures. This guidance has been shared with all staff.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint, although there is no absolute definition of this, as what constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

All staff members have been trained in de-escalation. Members of the SLT have attended 'Team Teach' training, to learn how to safely restrain children when necessary. These members of staff are available to pass on the key points from that training to their colleagues, including about methods of restraint. 'Team teach' Restraint training will be offered to all staff on a rolling bi-annual programme to cater for any turnover of staff.

There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil's path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary. In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate or effective Reasonable Forces should be a last resort.

When Reasonable Force becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible – ensure adequate supervision for other children is addressed
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

DON'T

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- 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

Actions after an incident

Reasonable Force 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 Headteacher should be informed of any incident as soon as possible** and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. The incident should be recorded clearly in the restraint record (see appendix 4). An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed by letter and meeting (see appendix 5).

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural IEP, referral to an outside agency or other strategies agreed by the SENCO.

It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

All incidents involving pupils should be recorded immediately on the Pupil Restrain Report Form (below). All sections of this report should be completed so that in the event of any future complaint a full record is available. The Headteacher or a senior teacher will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, 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.

Risk Assessments

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:

- Management of the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict, holds to be used if necessary)
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate

Complaints

A clear 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, either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and social services department under child protection procedures.

It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Review

This policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis by the headteacher and Governing body.

Appendix 1: Practical Advice and Guidelines on the Use of Force (Camden guidance)

Examples of situations that fall within the first two categories listed in Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 include:

- a. A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- b. Pupils are fighting;
- c. A pupil is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate and serious damage to property;
- d. A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- e. A pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others;
- f. A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school other than at an authorised time. The judgement on whether to use force in this situation would depend on an assessment of the degree of risk to the pupil if he or she is not kept in the classroom or school (age and understanding would be critical factors).

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are where a pupil – this is not to suggest that all these cases would lead to or require the use of force:

- g. Refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom;
- h. Is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson;
- i. Blocks a door to prevent others from leaving;
- j. Is using a mobile phone to disrupt a lesson (an authorised member of staff could forcibly confiscate the phone by removing it from a hand or desk but could not lawfully search the pupil for the phone); and
- k. Resists attempts to search him or her for a weapon.

In all these cases use of force would only be reasonable (and therefore lawful) if it was clear that the behaviour was sufficiently dangerous or disruptive to warrant physical intervention of the degree applied and could not realistically be dealt with by any other strategies.

Key question: Does the risk of not intervening outweigh the risk of intervening?

There is no legal definition of reasonable force and that it is therefore not possible to set out when it is reasonable to use force, or the degree of force that may reasonably be used. This will always depend on the circumstances of the case and be a matter of personal and professional judgement.

The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore physical force could not be justified in order to

prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that clearly could be resolved without force.

The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.¹⁷

Types of intervention which may be appropriate:

- Any holding tactic in which a young adult is held without injury until the young adult calms down.
- Physical contact with a young person designed to control the young person's movements which pose a danger (e.g.: holding by the arms against the side of the body). Standing by the side of the young person is likely to minimise the risk to adult and young person.
- The holding of a young person's arms or legs to prevent/restrict striking/kicking.
- The use of sufficient physical force - without causing injury - to remove a weapon/dangerous object from a young person's grasp (if foreseeable this requires specialised training).
- Physically preventing a young person from exposing themselves to possible danger by leaving the premises.

Where children have been identified as possibly requiring the use of physical interventions, it is strongly recommended that staff working with these children are trained in the use of appropriate techniques. However, *all* staff have a duty of care in this respect.

Pupils should not be placed on the floor unless staff have received specialist training. Where risk assessment has taken place it is imperative that techniques are outlined within the pupils' Positive Handling Plan. Following ground-holds, pupils should be monitored every fifteen minutes for at least three hours. All relevant authorities, including the parents/carers, must be informed as soon as possible following the incident.

The member of staff should advise the young person calmly and repeatedly that he/she could stop the restraint by applying self-control.

The young person should be released from restraint as soon as is safely possible. Release must always be carried out in a planned and controlled way.

As far as is possible staff should avoid any actions that could be viewed as sexual. If a member of staff feels that a necessary restraint action may be viewed by a young person as having a sexual content, the staff member should describe what he/she intends to do and why, giving the young person an opportunity to avoid it. If the action remains necessary, while carrying it out, the staff member should repeat why it is necessary, stressing that it is in the young person's power to remove the need for restraint.

If restraint is required for an extended period because the child cannot be released safely the senior member of staff on duty will monitor the situation closely with a view to safeguarding

the young person and the staff concerned. Best practice during a long intervention would be to rotate the staff involved; this requires training.

As far as possible actions should be calculated to reduce the need for restraint or, when restraint is used, to reduce the length of time for which it is necessary.

Only a court may judge what is reasonable in terms of the amount of force used in Reasonable Force and obviously does so retrospectively.

The following actions are examples of what would be deemed as unreasonable:

- Striking a person
- Exerting excessive pressure on any part of a young person's body
- Causing actual injury to a young person
- Forcing a young person's arm up his/her back
- Squeezing a young person's windpipe
- Sitting on a young person
- Lifting a young person off the floor in order to intimidate
- Pulling a young person's hair

The following are also prohibited as forms of control

- Corporal Punishment

It is totally illegal to use corporal punishment in all state-maintained schools. Corporal punishment may be defined as any act or threat of an act, such as hitting, kicking, slapping, punching, poking, prodding, biting, throwing an object, rough handling etc, which causes or threatens harm.

- Restriction of liberty (e.g. locking someone up)
- Deprivation
- Requiring the wearing of distinctive or inappropriate clothing (clearly this does not include wearing of school uniform or school sports-wear)
- Fines
- Intimate physical searches

Appendix 2 - Managing Confrontation and Physical Intervention (Camden guidance)

Advice for staff

At all times try to manage your own emotions – maybe take a deep breath – and don't become involved in a 'conflict spiral'. Situations are rarely personal.

Name the inappropriate behaviour; express clearly the desired behaviour – calmly, confidently and assertively.

Use 'language of choice' – put the responsibility/ownership of behaviour with the child/pupil

Remaining Calm - the ability to try and remain calm and appear relaxed is less likely to provoke.

Calm Stance - Think of the values of stepping back from a situation, both physically and emotionally.

Pacing and Chasing - Angry people often pace around in tense situations. Try to remain still when attempting to help a student calm down.

Awareness of Space - Try to be aware of the space around you and avoid stepping in to another individual's personal/intimate space.

Intonation - When people are anxious or angry they tend to talk faster, higher and more loudly. In a crisis situation staff should deliberately speak slower, lower and more quietly. How we deliver a message is as important as what we say.

Help Script – Particularly useful when addressing an agitated student. Connect by using student's name; recognise the feelings – "I can see you are upset"; "I'm here to help"; Give direction but not promises.

Diffusing body language responses

- Social distance
- Sideways stance, step back
- Intermittent eye contact
- Relaxed body posture
- Palms open

Physical Interventions:

On extremely rare occasions it may be appropriate for staff to intervene physically with or between students. These include:

- Injury or risk of injury to another student
- Injury or risk of injury to a member of staff
- Serious damage to property

All staff owe a duty of care to students. To take no action, where the outcome is that a child injures him/herself, or another, including staff, could be seen as negligence.

Appendix 3 - Physical intervention procedures (Camden guidance)

As soon as a member of staff has decided to intervene physically in order to prevent injury occurring to any person, or serious damage to property, then she/he should:

a) Give clear instruction, warning the young person of the consequences of failure to comply. Note: this warning must not comprise any threat of unlawful assault.

b) If at all possible, summon a second adult – this can help to:

- Reduce the risk of injury (to staff or child)
- Act as a witness to the situation (for the protection of adult and child)
- Diffuse the situation – the second adult may not be the focus of anger and could indeed take over
- Remove other children from the situation

c) While intervening the member of staff must:

- Employ minimum physical force necessary for the minimum period needed to restrain the young person;
- Keep talking to the young person for example: ‘if you stop kicking I will release my hold’ (unless an individual protocol is in place);
- Avoid committing any act of punitive violence
- Keep his or her temper under control
- Ensure that there is a record of the incident

Any intervention should be a last resort and be ‘proportionate’, ‘reasonable’ and ‘appropriate’. Any intervention should be done with the aim to reduce not provoke.

Staff are strongly advised not to physically stop students from leaving their room or the school unless absolutely necessary – give choice and consequences.

Application of Force (DCSF guidance to schools 2007)

Staff should NOT act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. This includes:

- Slapping, punching, kicking or tripping a pupil
- Twisting or forcing limbs against joints
- Indecently touching, holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear
- Other than in circumstances that are exceptional, using reasonable force to hold a pupil face down on the ground

In the event of a serious incident e.g. a fight, staff should:

- Make their presence felt – “stop fighting, stop fighting”
- Send for assistance
- Spell out sanctions
- Remove the ‘fuel’ by clearing the ‘audience’ away
- Be a witness
- Intervene physically if confident and having assessed the degree of risk

But should not ignore or walk away.

Key question: Does the risk of not intervening outweigh the risk of intervening?

Appendix 4– Reasonable Force register

Christ Church School

Record of positive handling.

Name of adult making report..... Date.....

Name all adults and children involved in the use of reasonable force.

Describe what led to the use of positive handling.

Describe how the pupil(s) was/were restrained.

Any future actions that will be undertaken to limit the opportunity for the behaviour to be repeated.

Signed.....

Appendix 5 – Letter to parents



CHRIST CHURCH C of E SCHOOL
Redhill Street, Regent's Park, London NW1 4BD
Telephone: 020 7387 7881 Fax: 020 7388 3646
E-mail: admin@cchurchnw1.camden.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Paula Walker

Thursday 4th October

Dear Mr and Mrs xx

I am writing to inform you it was necessary to restrain xxx today to calm him/her down and help them to deescalate and regulate their emotions. A decision was made that this was a necessary measure to ensure his/her safety and the safety of those around him. Please make an appointment with the office so we can discuss this incident further and work together on strategies for supporting your child.

Yours sincerely

Paula Walker
Head teacher
