

TKS Restrictive Interventions, including the use of Reasonable Force Policy

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Policy Statement

- (i) This policy ensures that the school complies with all relevant statutory requirements, as amended from time to time.
- (ii) This policy ensures that the principle of 'justification' and 'proportionality' are always used in respect of the use of reasonable physical force, restrictive interventions, restraint, searching, screening and/or confiscation
- (iii) This policy applies to all pupils in the whole school including in EYFS
- (iv) This policy uses 'staff' to describe staff employees of the school, visitors, volunteers, and/or third parties.
- (v) This policy applies to all staff when they have lawful control or charge of pupils, both on and off the school site.
- (vi) This policy recognises that creating and maintaining school culture, where all staff and pupils feel safe and secure, is vital to establishing an environment that recognises our responsibility as a school that honours God and that supports parents and children.

The principal pieces of legislation to which this policy relates are the:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006, especially sections 93 and 93A
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and associated regulations
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Coroners and Justice Act 2009
- Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008
- Education Act 1996
- Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012

This policy also takes fully into account the most recent Department of Education guidance entitled:

- Use of Reasonable Force, and other restrictive interventions in England (2025)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2022)

- Behaviour in Schools (2024)
- Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention (2019)
- Sharing nudes/semi-nudes (2024)
- DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools (2012)
- The Equality Act and advice for schools (2014)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- KCSIE (2025)

This policy also supports the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS Framework which applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

Links to other policies and procedures

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Behaviour, Suspensions and Exclusions Policy

SEND Policy

Complaints Policy

Educational Visits Policy

Health and Safety Policy

First Aid Policy

Code of Conduct

Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy

IT Policy

1 What is reasonable force?

- It is not illegal to touch a pupil, and there are occasions when physical contact is appropriate and necessary for staff. For example, holding the hands of a younger pupil at the front/back of the line, or guiding them when walking in a group, to comfort a distressed pupil, to congratulate or praise a pupil, to demonstrate a musical instrument, to provide intimate care for younger children, and of course, to provide first aid.
- Physical contact with pupils via the use of reasonable force, restrictive interventions, and/or restraint, including the requirement to search a pupil, however, is not usually necessary due to staff knowing of, and utilising a range of alternative behaviour strategies, including those aimed at the de-escalation of a situation.

That said, there may be times when the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions, including the requirement to search a pupil, by staff will be required, and in doing so will be lawful. However, the above interventions can only be used when there is a need to keep individuals and the wider school community safe i.e. to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, and/or from causing disorder. In addition, searches may also be due, in part of an ongoing investigation.

- It is recognised within this policy that the use of reasonable force, other restrictive interventions, including the requirement to search a pupil, may have a significant impact on the pupil(s), staff, and parents/carers involved, as well as the wider classroom and community.
- This policy, therefore, aims to help the school and its staff proactively minimise the need to use reasonable force and other restrictive interventions, including the requirement to search a pupil.

It is also the intention of the policy to protect every individual against unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful physical intervention, while clarifying the power of teachers and other staff who have lawful control, and/or are in charge of pupils, should they have to intervene for reasons of safety, whether they are on/off the school site.

2 Who can use reasonable force?

- (i) All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force¹.
- (ii) This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the head teacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

3 When can reasonable force be used?

- (i) Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
- (ii) In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- (iii) 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.
- (iv) Corporal punishment is illegal. Therefore, this policy does not authorise or permit the use of corporal punishment or the threat of corporal punishment under any circumstances whether on or off the school premises. Further, staff must never threaten any punishment which could adversely affect a pupil's wellbeing.
- (v) The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- 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 or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others

- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
- to restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical/emotional dysregulation
- if there is a reasonable belief that a pupil has a prohibited item on their person that may endanger themselves/others/property or is illegal or is suspected of having been used in an offence.

Schools cannot:

- use force as a punishment – **it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.**

4 Communicating the school's approach to the use of force

- (i) Every school is required by law to have a behaviour policy and to make this policy known to staff, parents and pupils. The governing body should notify the head teacher that it expects the school behaviour policy to include the power to use reasonable force.
- (ii) There is no legal requirement to have a policy on the use of force but it is good practice to set out, in the behaviour policy, the circumstances in which force might be used. For example, it could say that teachers will physically separate pupils found fighting or that if a pupil refuses to leave a room when instructed to do so, they will be physically removed.
- (iii) Schools do not require parental consent to use force on a student.
- (iv) By taking steps to ensure that staff, pupils and parents are clear about when force might be used, the school will reduce the likelihood of complaints being made when force has been used properly.

5 Using force

Certain restraint techniques presented an **unacceptable risk** when used on children and young people and should therefore never be used. The techniques in question are:

- the 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing
- the 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest; and
- the 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

6 Staff training

Schools need to take their own decisions about which staff will require training in the use of force, and what that training should be. Some local authorities provide advice and guidance to help schools to develop an appropriate training programme.

7 Reporting and Recording

The school will adhere to its duty under Section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act (2006) and the legal requirement (from September 2025) to record and report each 'significant incident' in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil.

'Significant incidents' are defined as 'any incident where the use of reasonable force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff' as described in 'other physical contact with pupils.'

In line with the above statutory requirements, the school will always make a written record of its use of reasonable force, restrictive interventions, including the requirement to search, as soon as reasonably practical (See Appendix A)

Any interventions involving pupils, including searches that are undertaken by the police on the school site must also be recorded by the school.

The report must include the following basic information:

- the time, date, and location of the intervention
- the name of the pupil directly involved – separate records must be made if physical intervention occurred with more than one pupil
- the name and role of the staff member directly involved in the intervention
- the name and role of any staff who witnessed the intervention
- the time, date, and method that the parents/carers were contacted to inform them of the intervention involving their child

It must also include information on:

- the needs/vulnerabilities or circumstances of the pupil including whether the pupil involved has an identified SEND, including an EHCP
- a brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident and any preventative or de-escalation strategies used prior to the intervention
- a brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary (including what the potential risk of harm was)
- whether or not consent was given if a search was undertaken
- details of the intervention, including whether any other referrals were made to other organisations as a result of intervention/incident

The requirement to record applies if the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's Behaviour Support Plan/Safeguarding Risk Assessment.

The proprietors, via those in governance roles, in partnership with the school should regularly review and interrogate data on the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions, and in addition the number of searches undertaken.

8 What happens if a pupil or parent complains when force is used?

- (i) All complaints about the use of force, restrictive intervention and/or restraint, including the requirement to search, will be thoroughly investigated in accordance with our Complaints Procedure
- (ii) Should the school receive an allegation about a member of staff in relation to a staff member's use of reasonable force, restrictive intervention and/or restraint,

including the requirement to search, the DSL will follow the relevant section of the Safeguarding Policy, including informing the authorities in line with KCSiE (latest iteration).

9 Policy Summary

In undertaking any of the interventions described within this policy, staff must:

- First use alternative strategies to de-escalate the situation
- Consider the pupil's needs/vulnerabilities
- Ensure that the pupil understands what is happening and why
- Ensure that pupil's consent to be searched is informed
- Respect pupils' dignity, right to respect, privacy, and confidentiality
- Never involve other pupils in any intervention
- Have at least one staff witness
- Ensure that any actions are justified and proportionate
- Assess the risk of harm, and whether the intervention will prevent risk or escalate the situation
- Gain the Principal's authorisation
- Only use reasonable force as a last resort after all other strategies have been exhausted and the risk of harm remains high or is imminent
- Use the least amount of force needed, for the shortest duration
- Inform the parents/carers of any intervention on the same day
- Contact the authorities as soon as possible on the same day, as required
- Pass on any weapons, drugs and/or child abuse imagery to the police
- Make a record of the intervention as soon as possible after the event.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed triennially by the SLT and revised more frequently by the principal as appropriate, in accordance with changing national requirements for independent schools.

ASSOCIATED RESOURCES

Appendix A - Physical Intervention Report Form