


## Physical Restraint Policy

<b>CURRENT POLICY REDRAFT/AMENDMENTS</b>	<b>No</b>	<i>If Yes please provide brief details of changes below and highlight changes in yellow.</i>	
<b>NEW POLICY</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>AUTHOR</b>	Emma Boussida
<b>LAST REVIEWED</b>	June 25	<b>NEXT REVIEW</b>	June 2026
<b>REVIEW CYCLE</b>	<b>Annually</b>	<b>TO BE RATIFIED BY TRUSTEES</b>	<b>No</b>
		<b>TO BE RATIFIED BY THE LGB</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>DATE APPROVED BY LGB</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> June 2025		
<b>Name of LiFE MAT School:</b>			

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## 1. Introduction

On rare occasions there may be incidents which result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff. The policy for physical intervention is based upon the following principles:

- Physical intervention should be used only as a last resort when other appropriate strategies have failed.
- Any physical contact should be only the minimum required.
- Physical intervention must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Incidents must be recorded and reported in line with the school's reporting procedures
- 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 Headteacher 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:

- causing injury to his/herself or others
- committing an offence
- damaging property
- 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.

## 3. Definition of Reasonable Force and Restraint

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

- 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.
- 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.
- Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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:

- 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, trip or a 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; and
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Schools cannot:

- 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":

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- 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 School aims 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 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.

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.

## **6. Actions after the 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 Headteacher should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will either take responsibility for making arrangements or delegate this as appropriate.

An appropriate member of 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/carers informed.

Staff members involved in any restraint will take part in a supportive debrief afterwards with access to counselling if need to prioritise wellbeing and reflect on the incident.

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, 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 uploaded to CPOMS.

A member of the pastoral team will contact parents/carers 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:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known
- 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
- The school's duty of care to all pupils and staff

## **8. Complaints and 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.

## **9. Staff Training**

Some key members of staff within the School, including at least one member of Senior Leadership Team will be trained and regularly updated in the use of positive handling. Usually the staff are those most likely to find themselves in a situation that may require the use of reasonable force and are therefore trained to do this correctly and in a lawful manner.

## **10. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- LiFE MAT Complaints Policy

## Appendix 1: Physical Restraint Incident Form

## Physical Restraint Incident Form

<b>Staff Name:</b>		<b>Date of incident:</b>	
<b>Student Name:</b>		<b>Time of incident:</b>	
<b>Student Year Group:</b>		<b>Location of incident:</b>	

Reason for Physical Intervention (please tick all appropriate)	
Prevent a pupil harming another person (including staff or fellow pupil)	
Prevent a pupil harming themselves	
Prevent a pupil engaging in serious disorder and disruption to a lesson / school event / on a school trip	
Remove a child from a classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to leave	
Conduct a search without consent for knives, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco, cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images, any article which is likely to be used to commit an offence / cause injury / cause damage to property	

Description of the circumstances concerning <u>why</u> force was used, and <u>what</u> force was used.
<i>Please ensure that your account explains why the use the use of force was proportionate and necessary.</i>

Names of witnesses (both staff and students)
<i>Please ensure that statements have been taken in line with statement protocol and uploaded to CPOMS</i>

Describe what actions have been taken to inform parents / carers of the pupil about the use of force, and when

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<b>Describe any injuries sustained by any staff or students involved</b>
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<i>Ensure that first aid procedures have been followed</i>
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<b>Other follow-up actions</b>
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**Signed:**

**Date:**

<b>Please ensure that the Headteacher is alerted to this incident and this form uploaded to CPOMS as soon as possible</b>
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