

Policy: Restrictive Interventions Policy
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Holy Trinity Church of England (VA) Primary School



Believe • Achieve • Inspire •

Restrictive Interventions Policy

SCHOOL VISION

Our vision is for our pupils to flourish in an inclusive, inspirational place of learning where we are happy, respectful, kind and safe.

At Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School our Christian vision shapes all we do.

*"I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live."
Ecclesiastes 3:12.*

- we facilitate opportunities so every child can flourish in a place where they feel **safe, happy and confident**.
- staff **well-being** and professional development is valued and supported in order to fulfil their roles, **inspire** others and experience personal **fulfilment**.
- the school provides facilities that enables our pupils to reach their potential in an **optimum learning environment**.
- the **school plays a central role within our community** and enjoys strong **links with the church, local companies and other schools**.
- we create a culture of vigilance to **safeguard** all children.

'I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live.'
Ecclesiastes 3:12

1. The Legal Framework

Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, should be limited to emergency situations and used only in the 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 trained 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, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil)
- 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.

This policy is based on guidance from the DfE (April 2026) [Restrictive Interventions, Including The Use Of Reasonable Force , In Schools](#)

2:1 Definition of Restrictive Interventions at Holy Trinity CE Primary School

Restrictive intervention:

a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This policy 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 as described in 'Other physical contact with pupils' within this document. 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.

2:2 General Policy Aims

Staff at Holy Trinity CE Primary School recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the last in a range of strategies available to secure pupil safety / well-being and also to maintain good order and safety. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy, Intimate Care Policy and our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2:3 Specific Aims of the Restrictive Intervention 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.
- To use the minimum degree of force necessary to accomplish safety.
- To give full support to staff who have been assaulted or have suffered verbal abuse from pupils or others.
- To maintain accurate records of incidents where any form of restrictive intervention has been employed.

3. Why Use any Restrictive Intervention?

Actions by staff 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 restrictive intervention would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own professional judgment 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 well-being.

3.1 Alternative Strategies

There are some situations in which the need for use of a restrictive intervention is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives (e.g. if 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 (audience) 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 with later when emotions are no longer running high)
- the employment of other strategies consistent with the school's Behaviour Policy.

3.2 Use of Restrictive Intervention

Restrictive intervention 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 a punishment.

There is no absolute definition of what constitutes reasonable force. It 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.

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 positive handling should be a last resort, used for the least amount of time necessary with least amount of force necessary. When restrictive intervention becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple, calm and clear language
- Hold limbs above or below a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance
- Be aware of any feelings of anger
- Summon help
- Continue to talk to the pupil in a calm way
- Provide a soft surface if possible
- Be aware of any accessories worn by you or the pupil
- Hold the pupil's arms by his/her sides

DON'T

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Try to manage on your own
- Stop talking even if the pupil does not reply
- Straddle the pupil
- Push arms up the back
- Put pressure on joints
- 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
- Restrain a pupil face down

Restraint must NOT:

- Involve hitting the pupil
- Involve deliberately inflicting pain on the pupil
- Restrict the pupil's breathing
- Involve contact with sexually sensitive areas

During any incident the restrainer should:

- Offer verbal reassurance to the child
- Cause the minimum level of restriction of movement
- Reduce the danger of any accidental injury

Physical intervention may take several forms. It may involve staff:

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Holding
- Leading a pupil by the arm or hand
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds

3.3 Actions After an Incident

Restrictive intervention 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. A member of the leadership team 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 victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

Staff are required by law to record every incident of restrictive intervention, including seclusion. This must be recorded on the day of the incident. Staff must use CPOMS to record:

- names of pupil 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
- 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
- the time that parents were informed (should be the same day)

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural PLP, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the SENDCO.

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

All incidents should be recorded immediately on CPOMS and reported to the Headteacher. A member of the leadership 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. Staff will also meet with a member of the leadership team and SENDCo to discuss possible triggers and successful de-escalation strategies.

4. 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 (see Appendix 2). 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

5. Complaints

A clear restrictive intervention 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, 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. All complaints are dealt with according to the School's Complaints Policy. It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

Examples of situations that may require restraint are when:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils fighting
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others
- a pupil absconding from a class or trying to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an area
- a pupil behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson

Action Steps

Examples of actions an adult may take in the event of a possible situation:

1. Tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and state possible consequences of failure to do so
2. Use restraint if necessary
3. If possible, summon another adult
4. Continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident
5. Make it clear the restraint will be removed as soon as it ceases to be necessary
6. Appropriate follow up action should be taken, which may include:
 - a. Providing medical support
 - b. Providing respite for those involved

A calm and measured approach to any situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem.

De-escalation Strategies

All teachers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with pupils with challenging behaviours and steps which they can take to diffuse and calm a situation.

- Move calmly and confidently
- Make simple clear statements
- Intervene early
- Try to maintain eye contact
- If necessary, summon help before the problem escalates
- Remove the audience from the immediate location

THERE ARE SITUATIONS WHERE STAFF SHOULD NOT INTERVENE WITHOUT HELP

Assistance should be sought when dealing with:

- A physically large child
- More than one pupil
- When the adult believes that s/he may be at risk of injury

In those circumstances where the member of staff has decided that it is not appropriate to restrain the pupil without help they should:

- Remove other pupils who may be at risk
- Summon assistance from colleagues
- Where necessary, telephone the police
- Inform the pupil(s) that help will be arriving
- Until assistance arrives, the member of staff should continue to attempt to diffuse the situation orally and try to prevent the incident from escalating

6. Training

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that staff members are fully informed of the school policy and understand what authorisation entails. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to arrange training or guidance to staff, possibly through a senior member of staff. An up-to-date list of authorised staff should be maintained within school and all staff should know who they are.

Additional advice and support on managing behaviour can be provided through the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support Team and through the school SENDCO. Currently trained staff members in 'Team Teach' are listed in Appendix 1.

Relevant legislation:

- [Education and Inspections Act 2006, especially sections 93 and 93A](#)
- [Schools \(Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint\) \(No. 2\) \(England\) Regulations 2025](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#) and associated regulations
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)

This policy was adopted by Holy Trinity CE Primary School and agreed by the Standards, Achievements and Curriculum Committee and ratified by the Full Governing Board.

Approved by.....on behalf of the School Governing Board.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

Appendix 1

Holy Trinity CE Primary School



Authorised Staff – Positive Handling (Team Teach trained)

From section 550A of the Education Act 1996:

9. The Act allows all teachers at a school to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. It also allows other people to do so, in the same way as teachers, provided they have been authorised by the Headteacher to have control or charge of pupils. Those might include classroom assistants, care workers, midday supervisors, specialist support assistant.

Headteachers should identify people, other than teachers, whom they wish to authorise to have control or charge of pupils and therefore be able to use force if necessary.....The Head should explicitly inform the people concerned and ensure that they are aware of and properly understand what the authorisation entails.....They should keep an up-to-date list of authorised people and ensure the teachers know whom they are.

Staff members currently trained in application of 'Team Teach' principles:

Name of staff:	Date of training:	Expiry Date:
Rose Fearn	19 November 2025	19 November 2027
Tori O'Neill		

Appendix 2

Holy Trinity CE Primary School

Behaviour Risk Assessment

Name of Child:

Name of Assessor:

Date of incident:

Position:

	Risk Findings			
What form did the inappropriate action take?				
What evidence is there?				
What do witnesses say happened?				
Is there any evidence of provocation?				
Are there previous incidences to take into consideration?				
How has the accused responded to their behaviour and actions?				
Other considerations				
How high is the assessed risk that this will be repeated or there will be retaliation at the school's action?		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
What de-escalation strategies work well for this pupil?				