

Use of Force and Restraint Policy

Effective Date: September 2025

School Name: Twineham CEP School

Introduction

The key objective of this policy is to maintain the safety of pupils and staff and volunteers/visitors; to prevent serious breaches of school discipline or to prevent serious damage to property. It is the belief of this school that force or restraint should only be used when there is no viable alternative, and then only to the minimum needed.

This policy sets out in which circumstances force might be used, by whom, and in what form, and also makes clear what recording and follow up action should happen afterwards.

1. Definitions

- Reasonable Force: Physical contact used to control or restrain a pupil, applied only when necessary and proportionate.
- Restraint: A specific form of restrictive intervention involving physical force to subdue movement.

2. Legal Framework

All school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Staff must be adequately trained, and schools are responsible for ensuring training reflects the principles of the guidance.

3. Appropriate Use of Force

- At this school, we believe that a calm environment, a nurturing ethos and teaching positive learning behaviours is the best way to ensure children are safe and happy and to reduce the need for any restraint.
- Relationship and Health Education (RSHE) is used to teach pupils how to regulate their emotions and support positive relationships. Our children with EHCP for ASD also have individualised programmes to help them to learn this.
- Force is used only when the risks involved outweigh the risks in not doing so.
- It is unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Use of force or restraint must be:

- Necessary: Only when there are no reasonable alternatives.
- Proportionate: Least amount of force for the shortest time.

- Respectful of Welfare: Consider the pupil's age, SEND status, medical conditions, and dignity.

4. Staff Responsibilities

- All staff are trained by Intelligensa July 2025 in using specific restraint techniques. A list of staff who are trained is prominently displayed around the school. Restraint is only used as a 'last resort' when all de-escalation techniques have failed. Any child who has been restrained will also have an individual risk assessment with de-escalation steps which is shared and agreed with parents.
- Staff are trained using a therapeutic approach to behaviour management to use positive behaviour strategies and individual behaviour plans to deescalate.

- Passive: blocking or impeding an action taking place.
- Active:
 - Leading by the hand / arm
 - Ushering with hand in the centre of the back
 - Restrictive holds
 - If there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, **any** necessary action should be taken.

2 adults should always restrain where possible. Except in an emergency, only staff who have been trained in positive handling should be present.

There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force, so the following points should be taken into consideration:

Restraint should only be used if:

- A criminal offence is being/ is about to be committed (or what would be reasonably deemed to be a criminal offence if the child were old enough)
- A child is causing personal injury to, or damage to property of, any person, including themselves.
- A child is significantly prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at school

Staff should only use force when:

- The potential consequences of not intervening are sufficiently serious to justify considering the use of force;

- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means are low;
- The risk associated with not using force outweighs those of using force.

Staff should always be well appraised of children who present significant risk to themselves or others. Individual risk assessments will be put in place for any child where restraint has needed to be used to put in place additional strategies to minimise the reoccurrence of this. Separate risk assessments will be completed for all Off-Site visits and for Outdoor Learning.

Some examples of situations which might merit the use of force would be:

- Attack on a child/member of staff
- Criminal damage
- Serious fighting
- Serious risk of injury even if unintentional (eg: very rough play)
- Where child leaves the class or school without permission and this would lead to a serious risk of harm.
- Where a child won't leave the classroom when asked, and is a danger to self or others and there is a reason the rest of the class cannot be removed (e.g. child is blocking the exit)

5. Reporting Requirements

- All significant incidents involving the use of force must be recorded in the red 'Bound and Numbered book' which is locked in the filing cabinet in the school office. The incident will also be recorded on CPOMs.
- Parents must be informed of these incidents.
- Records should include details of the incident, actions taken, and outcomes.

6. Safeguarding Considerations

- Ensure that the use of force does not compromise the safety and dignity of pupils.
- Monitor trends and ensure compliance with reporting requirements.
- Individual risk assessments are used to meet the needs of pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities.
- Should parents/ carers wish to raise a complaint about the use of force/ restraint, they should in the first instance discuss this with the Headteacher. If this does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, they should follow the complaints policy available on the school website.

7. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by school leaders and governors to ensure compliance with legal requirements and best practices.