

Hallcroft Infant & Nursery School



Physical Intervention and Restrictive Practice Policy November 2025

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Introduction

This policy has been developed to ensure that staff, pupils, parents/carers, and governors have an understanding of school guidelines for supporting pupils who have reached crisis point and are displaying behaviours that may put themselves or others in physical danger. Following these guidelines will ensure pupils are able to learn, and staff are able to teach, in a safe and secure environment.

This Policy will be applied consistently to pupils regardless of their age, SEND, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, faith background or personal circumstances. Respect for these protected characteristics will be considered as an important part of the whole school Inclusive practice and ethos.

Physical Intervention or Restrictive Practice is traumatising for all people involved and their use often damages relationships.

‘Physical restraint can be humiliating, terrifying and even life-threatening. It should only be used as the last resort, when there is no other way of de-escalating a situation where someone may harm themselves or others’ (Campbell, 2018).

As a school, we are committed to reducing the need to use restrictive practices. We recognise that restrictive physical interventions are only entered into as a last resort when dealing with potentially dangerous situations, where there is a risk of harm to children or adults. Restrictive physical interventions must only be used in a person’s best interest and comply with Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School’s duty of care to students, staff, and visitors.

This policy has been prepared using the following guidance:

- [Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- [Keeping children safe in education 2024: part one \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- [Reasonable force, restraint & restrictive practices in alternative provision and special schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- [Reducing restrictive practices framework \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales)
- [TSS diagram REVISED \(restraintreductionnetwork.org\)](https://restraintreductionnetwork.org)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 - Section 93
- BILD code of Practice for minimizing the use of restrictive physical interventions; 4th Edition (BILD 2014)

This policy is available:

- Online on the school website.
- From the school office

The Legal Framework

Restrictive Practices

Restrictive practices are all practices which limit the freedom and independence of children to learn. They include the mildest of practices, for example, requiring children to follow a prescribed timetable and curriculum, through to the most restrictive of practices, for example, the use of physical intervention and restraint.

The key principle which underpins our decisions about the use of restrictive practices is that their use should be as minimal as possible whilst ensuring the safety of the child, other children, and the adults working with them. There will be occasions when to ensure safety and to minimise the risk of harm, adults may need to physically intervene, restrain a child, or impose a restriction on their liberty.

Restraint and deprivation of liberty

Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— (a) injury to any person (including the child); (b) serious damage to the property of any person (including the child). (2) Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate.

Seclusion

“Seclusion involves separating an adult or child against their will, restricting freedom of movement and forcing them to spend time alone.” Joint guidance from the Department of Health and DFES (July 2002)

Seclusion may only be used when:

A pupil is posing a risk of injury to themselves or others due to behaviours such as biting, head butting, kicking and they need time in a **safe environment** with a trusted adult to help them calm. No child should be left in isolation within a contained environment with locked doors or barriers in place which places the child’s well-being and/or safeguarding at risk.

Staff Authorised to Use Reasonable Force

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act (2006) and subsequent guidance published by the DfE in January 2016 entitled ‘Behaviour and Discipline in Schools – Guidance for Headteachers and Staff’ the Headteacher at our school is empowered to authorise those members of his/her staff to use reasonable force.

Here at Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School the Headteacher has empowered the following members of staff to use reasonable force:

- Teachers and any member of staff who have direct responsibility and a duty of care of pupils in school
- Other members of staff such as site management and administrative teams also have the power to use reasonable force if a circumstance should arise in which immediate action should be taken to reduce the risk of harm

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their Deputies in our school are: Jo Cook (headteacher), Katie Allen, Sian Babenko and Sarah Davy. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all, however all staff, parents/carers and pupils need to be aware of who to report to and how to report any safeguarding concerns.

Deciding Whether to Use Reasonable Force

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act (2006), members of staff are empowered to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from or stop them continuing:

- *committing any offence*
- *causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself);*
or
- *prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise*

All members of staff will make decisions about when, how, and why to use reasonable force. To help staff in making decisions about using reasonable force the following considerations may be useful:

- whether the consequences of not intervening would have seriously endangered the wellbeing of a person
- whether the consequences of not intervening would have caused serious and significant damage to property
- whether the chance of achieving the desired outcome in a non-physical way was low
- making an assessment on the age, size, gender, developmental maturity of the persons involved

Staff will be kept informed and have a duty to inform others about the Personal Safety Plans around specific pupils who can present risks to themselves and others. This may include information about SEND, personal circumstance, and any experiences of trauma.

School Expectations

All staff should adopt a positive approach to improving behaviour to reward effort and build self-esteem. We work in partnerships with those who know the child best to:

- **Establish the functions of behaviours being displayed**
- **Understand the factors that may influence a child's behaviour**
- **Identify early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours are developing**

This approach will help to ensure that the use of early and proactive strategies is common practice. It aims to reduce the incidence of extreme behaviours and supports the reduction of restrictive practices in school.

Staff should, where possible, avoid any type of intervention that is likely to injure a pupil, unless in the most extreme of circumstance where there was no viable alternative. Staff should try to avoid using force unless or until another member of staff is present to support, observe or call for assistance.

Reducing the need to Intervene Physically

Although preventative measures may not always work, there are several steps which can be taken to help reduce the likelihood of situations arising where the power to use force may need to be exercised:

- As a school we are firmly committed to creating a calm and safe environment which minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of reasonable force. We use a curriculum which endeavours to explore and strengthen emotional responses to situations.
- We will only use force as a last resort and strongly believe in de-escalating any incidents as they arise to prevent them from reaching a crisis point. Staff will be skilled in promoting and rewarding positive behaviour and will utilise various appropriate techniques in the management of a class environment.
- Staff will only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved by **not** using force.

Key Principles surrounding the use of a restrictive physical intervention.

1. Consider if you really need to use a restrictive physical intervention. If so then use the least restrictive first and return to the least restrictive as soon as possible.
2. Staff should not enter into a restrictive physical intervention if on their own, help must always be sought.
3. Physical Interventions should be employed using the minimum reasonable force for the shortest duration of time as possible and should not cause pain.
4. Staff should be assessing signs of injury or psychological distress during and after the intervention.
5. Staff should always avoid touching or restraining a pupil in a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct.

Use of restrictive physical interventions in unforeseen and emergency situations.

On occasion, staff may find themselves in unforeseen or emergency situations when they have no option but to use reasonable force to manage a child in crisis. E.g. where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury to the child or others. Any member of staff would be justified in taking any necessary action to safeguard the child from harm.

Staff should:

- Before using force- staff attempt to use diversion or diffusion to manage the situation.
- Staff should always report and record any use of physical intervention that occurs in unforeseen and emergency situations using school procedures.
- Parents/carers will always be informed immediately if physical force is used on their child.
- In line with Health and Safety Guidance on approved methods of physical intervention at **NO** time is a young person to be placed in a **Prone Restraint** (face down) or **basket holds or wraps** (the child's arms held around their own abdomen as these methods of restraint are barred under Health and Safety Guidance.

Safety Passports/Personal Safety Plans

All children who have the potential to display behaviours of concern either linked to SEND or Trauma will have a [Safety Passport](#) or [Personal Safety Plan](#) document which details appropriate adult responses when supporting the child through co-regulation.

Staff Training

Senior Leaders at Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School have accessed the Understanding Behaviour training and all our more experienced staff have previously completed Physical Intervention training with the local authority. They have cascaded this non-confrontational/de-escalational approach to all staff.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

The governing body will ensure that a procedure is in place, and is followed by staff, for recording and reporting significant incidents where a member of staff has used reasonable force on a pupil, in line with the most recent safeguarding requirements issued to Governors and the latest advice given to OFSTED inspectors.

Any use of restrictive practice is seen as significant and **must** be reported clearly and concisely as soon as practicable after the incident.

School staff should consider and include in the report:

- the pupil's behaviour and the level of risk presented at the time
- the degree of force used and whether it was proportionate in relation to the behaviour
- the effect on the pupil or member of staff

Staff should also bear in mind the age of the child; any special education need or disability or other social factors which might be relevant. Sometimes an incident might not be considered significant in itself, but forms part of a pattern of repeated behaviour. In this case, although there is no legal requirement to record such incidents, schools are advised to let parents/carers know about them.

Records are important in providing evidence of defensible decision-making in case of a subsequent complaint or investigation. Staff may find it helpful to seek the advice of a senior colleague or a representative of their trade union when compiling a report.

After incidents in which a restrictive physical intervention is used, staff should report and record the matter in accordance with school procedure, including informing parents/legal guardian. All incidents requiring the use of restrictive physical intervention should be thoroughly and systematically documented within school records.

The incident must be directly reported to the Headteacher, and staff involved will be debriefed to review and analyse the incident. A review and analysis of the incident will take place as soon as possible thereafter, and safety passports will be updated with the aim of ensuring any lessons are learned and any identified changes to the environment or support plans are acted upon/implemented.

Post-incident support

Following the use of physical intervention staff and pupils will be supported, the immediate physical needs of all parties will be met and staff will ensure that positive relationships are maintained. The Head Teacher will ensure that staff, pupils and their families are supported after an incident.

Complaints and allegations

Mechanisms are in place for pupils, parents, carers and staff to voice the opinions, comments or concerns. Formal complaints may be made in line with the complaints policy. Complaints and allegations will be taken seriously and we will investigate and make future recommendations.

The role of the LADO:

Working together to Safeguard Children (2023) requires each Local Authority to have a LADO. In Nottinghamshire the role of the LADO is undertaken by the Managing Allegations Service.

The purpose of the LADO role is to address allegations/concerns made against adults working or volunteering with children in Nottinghamshire.

Working together to Safeguard Children (2024) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) outline the criteria to be applied to allegations and concerns about an individual when it is indicated the individual may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children;
- Behaved or may behave in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Concerns may relate to either a person's work/voluntary role or their behaviour outside the work setting.

LADO role in Restraints of under 18s

KCSiE 25 Paragraph 372.

If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion involving the police and/or local authority children's social care will be convened in accordance with the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children. If the allegation is about physical contact, for example restraint, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the LADO should take into account that teachers and other school and college staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain children in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour.

The LADO should be notified when:

- A child is injured or may have been injured as a result of appropriate/permitted restraint practice or actual/perceived use of excessive force,
- A child and/or parent/carer makes an allegation and/or complaint against a professional following a restraint of a child,
- A professional, other adult or child reports an observed or perceived inappropriate restraint of or practice with a child by another professional.

The responsibility of the employer/person receiving the complaint is to:

- Ensure the child is safe and refer to MASH/Police as appropriate
- Consider the actions required to safeguard this child and other children in the setting
- Refer to LADO using the LADO Online Contact Form (link below) providing clear details of the incident, the adult of concern (including personal details to safeguard the adult's own children- consider any additional voluntary roles the adult holds); details of the child and your own details.

Link to LADO online Contact Form - [Submit a LADO Contact Form](#)

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed by the governing body at least annually or as required. This is the second version of this policy and is due to be reviewed when legislation changes or reflections require a change in the policy.

The Head Teacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy and the Chair is the Link Governor, who also has responsibility in this area.

Physical Interventions – Sample Recording Form

Name of student -	Additional students -
Witnesses -	Location -
Date -	Start Time - Finish Time -
Level of restraint - Low Medium High	Staff involved -
Parents informed - how and when? -	Staff reporting -

Pre-Incident

(What were the triggers that led to this incident?)

e.g. TC was outside at lunchtime playing on the swings, she had just eaten lunch. JG approached her and attempted to get on swing	Trigger
	Escalation

Incident details/Reason

(Please record the approximate length of each hold that occurred during the incident)

e.g. TC assaulted JG punching and kicking him TC was held in a medium level intervention, in a standing position by 2 members of staff for 3 minutes	Crisis (How was it managed?)
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Support and Learning

(How was the incident de-escalated and resolved)

	De-escalation
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Injuries

(Were any injuries to staff or pupils sustained during this incident, if yes please record the reference number of the appropriate form here)

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Incident De-brief

(What happened post incident to ensure all involved were physically and emotionally well?)

	Post Crisis (Support)
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Pupils views on the incident

	Post Crisis (Support)
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Key Learning

(What learning has taken place following this incident, what are we going to do differently to avoid this happening again)

e.g. Playground protocol and use of play equipment reviewed. TC Behaviour Plan reviewed and amended to develop turn taking skills during social times. Lunch time staff briefed on support required	Post Crisis (Learn)
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Signed

Reporter -

Witnesses -

Incident Reviewers Comments

e.g. SLT commented that parents need to be informed as soon as possible

Signed Reviewer

Date

Designation