

Keresley Grange Primary School

Physical and Restrictive Intervention Policy

June 2026

Policy last reviewed: June 2026

Reviewed by: John Astley, June 2026

Agreed by governors: June 2026

Shared with staff: September 2026

Frequency of review: Bi-annually

Date of next review: September 2028

This policy should be read in conjunction with :

- DFE Guidance (2026) **Restrictive Interventions including the use of Reasonable Force.**
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6943dad6501cdd438f4cf5aa/Restrictive_interventions_including_use_of_reasonable_force_in_schools.pdf
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025
- Relationship and Behaviour Policy

Restraint will not be used as a punishment and must only be used where all other strategies have been tried and had no impact. The school has a restorative and relational approach to behaviour based on positive reinforcement of acceptable behaviour.

All school staff are familiar with the school's policy and have a clear understanding about when physical restraint is appropriate and how it should be done. They must also know when and how to get support from other staff (e.g. when a situation requires a more senior member of staff).

However physical contact must be appropriate for the age, understanding and sex of the child and must never threaten or be sexually inappropriate.

Staff must be sensitive to

- cultural backgrounds
- the need to maintain pupils' personal space
- be aware of pupils who have been sexually abused and will either seek physical contact or positively avoid it

Physical contact may be appropriate:

- to give first aid
- to guide or escort pupils, such as holding the hand of a pupil at the front/back of the line when going to assembly, when walking together around the school or on a school trip, or when helping a pupil to a space they have chosen to access to selfregulate
- to comfort a distressed pupil
- to congratulate or praise a pupil, for example a pat on the back or a handshake
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

However staff should take extreme care when offering physical comfort to pupils of the opposite sex, particularly as they approach puberty because physical contact can be misconstrued and this can cause distress to all concerned.

Staff should not be alone with pupils except in exceptional circumstances. Classroom doors should be left open when one member of staff is left supervising/talking with/teaching small groups or individual pupils.

Risk Assessment

All staff including teachers, classroom assistants and other colleagues in the school must be informed about pupils/families who are vulnerable.

Individual risk assessments and / or Positive Intervention Plans may be used for some children based on knowledge and previous experience.

The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils

School staff have a power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.

- Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.

What is reasonable force?

- 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 student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- As mentioned above, 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.

Who can use reasonable force?

- All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.
- This power applies to any member of staff at the school
- Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.
- At Keresley Grange, key members of staff are trained in safe use of reasonable force.

When can reasonable force be used?

To prevent or stop a pupil from:

1. causing injury to themselves or others
2. committing a criminal offence
3. damaging property
4. causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

Schools cannot:

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

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.

Using force:

A panel of experts identified that certain restraint techniques presented an unacceptable risk when used on children and young people. 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;
- The ‘nose distraction technique’ which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

Additionally, pupils should not be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example, by covering the mouth and/or nose, or applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen. The use of force can be dangerous, particularly where it occurs on the ground. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should release their holds or re-position into a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible. Where appropriate, the pupil should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. For any form of restraint, including seated and standing, there is a risk of physical and psychological harm, and it should be avoided where possible.

Staff training

This happens annually and is currently provided by Safer Handling. Key members of staff who may be required to use restrictive handling in their role will be trained.

Procedure:

- Staff will follow the Relationships and Behaviour Policy and use de-escalation and prevention strategies and work as a team. On most occasions, this will help to support the child to follow the expectations.
- Some children will have individual Risk Assessments and Positive Intervention Plans or Pastoral Plans which outline specific strategies to support children on an individual basis.
- Staff will need to make a professional judgement about the use of reasonable force. They must consider:
 - Is it necessary? Are there alternatives
 - Is it proportionate? Least amount of force or least restrictive intervention for the least amount of time.

- Have you considered the pupil's welfare? What are their past experiences, what will the impact be on the pupil's welfare, do they have medical conditions or SEND needs?
- Staff must use minimum force for maximum effect over the shortest time and use only the agreed restraint methods
- Pupil safety is paramount. Staff must be aware of signs of distress such as vomiting, changes in colour, breathlessness etc.

Recording and reporting

- After an incident staff must record the incident on CPOMS and fill in a physical intervention recording form.
- Parents must be informed on the same day as the incident, of the circumstances which led up to the incident and the outcome. Parents must also be informed of any future action the school intends to take. This should be done in writing and must include the following:
 - time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
 - • brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance
 - • brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
 - • details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicableIt would be prudent to follow this up with a discussion with parents about the child's behaviour and any learning that can be taken from the incident.
- SLT and staff will evaluate any incident or physical restraint to inform future management of pupils in similar situations.
- Staff involved will be debriefed following an incident and kept informed of any future action which relates to it.
- A report on the operation of this policy will be made by the Headteacher to the Local Governing Committee at least once a term.

Seclusion

Seclusion is defined as a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving - should only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. In such circumstances, the pupil is not acting with intent. Seclusion should not be implemented by staff through threat of punishment.

The place to which the pupil is confined should be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil. The pupil should be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil should be allowed to leave.

Where seclusion is used as an intervention, two members of staff should support the child apart from in exceptional circumstances.

Reporting and recording seclusion

Seclusion will be recorded using the recording form and logged on CPOMS

Parents will be informed in writing without delay and be given a copy of the recording form. This will be approved by a member of SLT.

Reports of any use of these interventions will be reported to the Local Governing Committee at least once a term.

It is important not to confuse seclusion with internal reflection time which may be used where children are asked to spend a specific length of time away from peers as a consequence and to help

the child learn from mistakes they have made. For more information, see the Relationships and Behaviour Policy.

Non-force related restraint

This may happen whereby there is no direct physical contact in a restraint – eg the removal of a walking aid.

Where this happens, procedures and recording and reporting must follow the same approach as for seclusion and physical restraint.

Complaints:

- All complaints about the use of force will be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated by the DSL. Families and school will communicate through meetings. All information will be recorded on CPOMS.
- HR will be notified about any such complaint who will act as support through the complaints process.
- *Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.*
- *When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.*
- *Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. Schools should refer to the “Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff” guidance*
- *Schools must consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate.*
- *If a decision is taken to suspend a teacher, the school should ensure that the teacher has access to a named contact who can provide support.*
- *Governing bodies should always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against the teacher.*
- *As employers, schools and local authorities have a duty of care towards their employees. It is important that schools provide appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident.*

Essential Points to Remember

- Whenever possible staff are advised to seek the support of another adult when they need to use reasonable force to resolve a situation they cannot deal with in any other way. The other adult will be a witness to the incident and will complete a witness report for the record.
- In some extreme cases staff are advised not to intervene in an incident, unless it is an emergency. Staff must judge whether it is safe to remove other pupils to a safe distance and seek help from other colleagues or the police. In such incidents, the teacher/member of staff should tell the pupil that he/she has sent for help and continue to try to diffuse the situation orally. If the situation is diffused successfully the incident log must still be completed so that others may learn from the experience.
- Staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.
- Staff must always consider whether a risk is urgent and whether there is any alternative to physical intervention.
- Staff should always try to deal with the situation using other agreed strategies to calm a situation before using force. See advice in the school behaviour policy.

Form to be filled out, reported to parents and stored on CPOMS.

Name of pupil:	Gender:
Class:	Date of incident:
Pupil details (eg SEND):	
Name(s) of staff involved:	
Type of intervention used:	
SECLUSION	REASONABLE FORCE
NON-FORCE	

Time and location of incident:
Circumstances that led up to incident:
De-escalation strategies used (eg deflection, change of adult, planned ignoring, distraction, calm voice, choices, clear and firm instructions, calm stance):
Justification for use of intervention: To prevent/interrupt: - A criminal offence - Injury to pupil/staff/others - Serious damage to property - Disruptive behaviour - Pupil absconding - Other (please state)
Give details of the incident: The student's behaviour and responses (include verbal and non-verbal) Anything relevant that was actually said by all parties involved Steps taken to defuse and de-escalate The dangers perceived (who was at risk from whom/ what?) and, if used, the reason for using physical intervention; Degree of force used and details/description of restraint technique used (eg breakaway, 2 person low, 2 person high). Defensive or disengage techniques for body hugs/ hair pulls/bites/kicks and punches. How long restraint was applied for and total duration of incident and the outcomes? How was the episode resolved? Please state how the restraint was in the best interests of this pupil Details of injuries, if any.

How effective was the intervention? What happened afterwards?	
Name(s) of staff or students that witnessed:	
Follow -up action required/taken by the school (delete as appropriate): Health & Safety/RIDDOR form completed and copied to Local Authority Child Protection procedures LADO referral Racial incident record Parent/Carer contacted Police or others informed Risk assessment and positive handling plan requested for student Other (give details)	
Who was the incident reported to and when?	
Was medical intervention needed? Provide details.	
Was pupil debriefed? Y/N Any pupil comments:	Was there a staff debriefing? Y/N Any staff comments:
Were parents informed? Did they have any comments? Y/N	
Staff signature: Date:	Headteacher signature: Date:

The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils

Reminder of Dos and Don'ts

Do

- Know the procedures in your school
- Stay calm
- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why.
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve other staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what he/she must do for you to remove the restraint
- Use simple language
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

Don't

- Act in temper
- Place yourself at risk
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Grasp or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against the joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way that restricts blood flow or breathing.
- Slap, punch, pinch or kick
- Trip up the pupil.