

Policy Title:	Physical Intervention
Policy Folder:	Pastoral
Review Date:	July 2026
Next Review:	July 2027
Lead By:	Headteacher
Responsible Committee:	SD

Introduction

This policy has been developed to ensure that staff, pupils, parents/carers, and governors understand 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 our school's duty of care to students, staff, and visitors.

This policy has been prepared using the following guidance:

- [Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance \(April 2026\)](#)
- [Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [KCSiE 2025](#)
- [Reasonable force, restraint & restrictive practices in alternative provision and special schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Reducing restrictive practices framework \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)
- [TSS diagram REVISED \(restraintreductionnetwork.org\)](#)
- 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 from our website, or a printed copy is available from our office upon request.

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 - 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. (Use of Reasonable Force and other restrictive interventions guidance, DfE, April 2026).

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.

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 always be supervised during the period of seclusion. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil should be allowed to leave. An incident involving the use of seclusion must be recorded and reported in accordance with the procedures outlined in the section on 'Recording and reporting duties'.

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 their staff to use reasonable force.

At Lantern Lane Primary & 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

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, parents/carers and pupils need to be aware of who to report to and how to report any safeguarding concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Peter Fowlie (HT) and the deputy DSLs are Nuala Thompson (DHT/SENDSCO), Paula Panther (AHT) and Jen Evans (WSA).

The nominated Governor with responsibility for Behaviour is Nicholas McGowan.

Deciding Whether to Use Reasonable Force

There will be times when school staff may need to use restrictive interventions, and they should know this option may be available to them. The decision on whether it is reasonable to use a restrictive intervention depends on the individual circumstances of each situation.

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:

Is it necessary?

- Staff will consider whether there are other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage a situation.
- Staff will assess whether a restrictive intervention is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself.
- Where possible, staff should communicate with other staff members to understand any broader risks in the environment.

Is it proportionate?

- Staff will use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce the relevant risks.
- If the intervention itself is escalating the situation, staff will reconsider their approach and attempt an alternative strategy.
- Staff will consider the personal circumstances of the pupil such as medical conditions, special educational needs or other vulnerabilities, their characteristics such as age and size, and must consider relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.

Have you considered the pupil's welfare?

- Staff will consider the impact on the pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. For example, pupils who have experienced an adverse life event, with diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, past trauma or neglect, communication difficulties, or other needs, may find the use of restrictive interventions particularly distressing.
- Staff will seek to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity. This may include, where possible, considering the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers.
- Where possible, staff will clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why, and explain what the pupil needs to do.
- For pupils with difficulties with speech, language and communication, or with English as an additional language, verbal and/or non-verbal strategies will be used to ensure the pupil understands what is happening and has adequate time to process information and respond.
- Staff will seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.

3) 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:

- Creating a calm, orderly and supportive school climate that minimises the risk and threat of violence of any kind
- Developing effective relationships between pupils and staff
- Adopting a whole-school approach to Inclusive practice
- Taking a structured approach to staff development that supports staff to use positive behaviour management strategies; managing conflict and to support one another during and after an incident
- Effectively managing individual incidents using a low-arousal response. Communicate calmly with the pupil; use non-threatening verbal and body language and ensure the pupil can see a way out of a situation in a supported manner
- Teaching pupils strategies to use in a crisis (such as sensory integration, clear communication and non-verbal signals to indicate the need for support)
- Whenever practical, warning a pupil that force may have to be used before using it

- Ensuring that staff and volunteers are aware of the pupils' Personal Safety Passport or Plans and understand situations which may provoke difficult behaviour, triggers, preventative strategies, and de-escalation techniques

Key principles surrounding the use of a restrictive physical intervention.

- 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.
- Staff should not enter into a restrictive physical intervention if on their own, help must always be sought.
- Physical Interventions should be employed using the minimum reasonable force for the shortest duration of time as possible and should not cause pain.
- Staff should be assessing signs of injury or psychological distress during and after the intervention.
- 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. For example, 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:

- Attempt to use diversion or diffusion to manage the situation.
- Report and record any use of physical intervention that occurs in unforeseen and emergency situations using school procedures.
- Inform parents/carers immediately if physical force is used on their child.
- Comply with H&S guidance on approved methods of physical intervention. A child or young person should never be placed in a prone restraint (face down), basket holds or wraps (the child's arms held around their own abdomen). These methods of restraint are barred under H&S guidance.

Pupil Regulation Plans

All children who have the potential to display behaviours of concern either linked to SEND or trauma will have a individualised regulation plan, and in some cases a risk assessment, which details appropriate adult responses when supporting the child through co-regulation.

Staff will be kept informed and have a duty to inform others about specific risk assessments, regulations plans or information around specific pupils who can present risks to themselves and others. This may include information about SEND, personal circumstance, and any experiences of trauma.

Staff training

Staff at Lantern Lane Primary & Nursery School, who have been identified as needing training in this area, will access physical intervention training through our Local Authority provider. Staff will be trained in accordance with guidance from the Restraint Reduction Network and BILD (code of practice). These courses provide participants with an insight into recent legislation and guidance that could impact on policy and practice, as well as a range of physical and non-physical strategies to help manage the risks posed by children and young people's behaviour. Staff who receive this training will be expected to attend refresher training to update skills and engage with recommended practice as and when appropriate.

All staff in school will access training on behaviour management and de-escalation support through staff training schedule and tailored support when required.

We will seek advice from NCC's Inclusive Behaviour Co-ordinator about the level of training considered appropriate to our setting. This will be assessed following the completion of an annual audit. In addition, all staff will have access to ongoing bespoke advice and guidance tailored to the needs of our setting using anonymised consultations about the needs of individual children as and when required. Staff who receive training through NCC's Inclusive Behaviour Co-ordinator around preventative supports and de-escalation strategies will be certified by the Local Authority in Understanding Behaviour.

Recording and reporting incidents

The [Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance](#) (April 2026) places a statutory requirement on schools around recording and reporting of incidents where physical intervention or restrictive practice is used. The school's 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.

Any use of restrictive practice is seen as significant and must be reported clearly and concisely as soon as practicable after the incident. The requirement to record applies even if the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan.

The following details will be recorded as a minimum:

- 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 and their SEN status code
- time, date, location and approximate length of time the intervention was used
- 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, what type of reasonable force was applied, the degree of force, and details of physical injuries sustained, if applicable
- 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

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. Our records are made using our local authority 'Use of restrictive practices: Recording template' and stored electronically via CPOMS. This ensures that additional details are included to identify best practices and areas for improvement. For example, the pupil's and/or witnesses' accounts of what happened, when and how parents were notified, and what follow-up has taken place.

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.

School staff will report any incident where reasonable force has been used to parents as soon after the incident as possible except where:

- the pupil is aged 20 or over; or
- it appears to the staff member that doing so would be likely to result in significant harm to the pupil. This includes all forms of abuse and neglect. In this instance, staff should follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

A report of the incident made to parents will include the following details as a minimum:

- time, date, location and approximate length of time the force was used
- brief account of what type of reasonable force was applied, and the degree of force
- details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable
- brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance

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 regulation plans/risk assessments will be updated with the aim of ensuring any lessons are learned and any identified changes are implemented.

Lantern Lane Primary & Nursery School will use the Nottinghamshire County Council electronic health and safety recording system 'WellWorker'. This system enables members of staff to report, using a standardised format, any

significant incident where force has been used, or any incident where violence to staff has occurred or been threatened.

4) 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.

Incidents that require use of restrictive physical interventions can be upsetting to all concerned and could result in injuries to the child or staff. The following guidance applies to both pupils and adults; for guidance on restorative conversations with pupils and restoring and renewing relationships, please see our Relationships & Behaviour Policy.

After incidents have subsided, it is important to ensure that staff and children are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action should, of course, be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded in accordance with school procedures. The school should take action to report any serious injuries to staff or students in accordance with LA guidelines (see First Aid and Medicines Policy and Practice).

We need to consider:

- thoughts, feeling, emotions,
- emotional 'first aid'

Stage 1 – Immediate 'Are you ok' This should occur before people leave to go home.

Stage 2 – De-briefing checking people have adjusted to an emotionally difficult event. This should occur within 48 hours.

Stage 3 – Counselling: formal support. Support is available when requested by a member of staff, however it is not imposed.

Focus on actions and behaviours:

- Who did what, when, why, how?
- What was the outcome?
- What does it tell us about what we already know about the young person?
- What have we learnt and what or how does this inform our practice?

5) Complaints and allegations

Any complaints or allegations will be managed in line with our school complaints procedure and allegations against staff policies and investigated thoroughly.

We will also make clear to pupils that they have a right, and are able, to question/complain about the use of reasonable force. We will ensure that mechanisms are in place for pupils, parents, carers and staff to voice the opinions, comments or concerns. Pupils will be given the opportunity of a de-briefing with a member of staff following any incident.

Our complaints policy is available from our website or a printed copy is available from our office upon request. An evaluation of any complaint(s) will result in changes to practice/policy if necessary.

The role of the LADO

Working together to Safeguard Children (2025) 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 (2025) 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) states that '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.

A referral to Nottinghamshire's LADO can be [made here](#)

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed at least annually or as required.

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy and the H&S link governor also has responsibility in this area.

Other policies to refer to include:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Relationships & Behaviour Policy
- Complaints procedure
- Allegations against staff Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Safe Touch Policy
- Intimate Care Policy