LONGPARISH
Church of England
Primary School

Restrictive Physical Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force Policy 2026

At Longparish .C.E. Primary School, we are committed to creating an environment where all children feel safe, respected and supported to succeed.

We believe that positive relationships, early intervention, understanding individual needs, reasonable adjustments and restorative practice are the most effective ways to prevent behaviour from escalating. Restrictive physical interventions are therefore regarded as a **last resort**, used only when necessary to maintain safety and wellbeing.

The school seeks to minimise the need for restrictive interventions through:

- Positive relationships and trust.
- Understanding behaviour as communication.
- Whole-school behaviour expectations.
- Individual support plans and reasonable adjustments.
- De-escalation strategies.
- Staff training.
- Close partnership with families and external agencies where appropriate.

Definition of Restrictive Physical Intervention

A restrictive intervention is any action that prevents, restricts or subdues a pupil's movement.

This may include:

- Physical intervention involving direct contact.
- Restricting access to an area or object.
- Guiding or escorting a child away from danger.
- Preventing movement where there is an immediate risk of harm. Reasonable force means using **no more force than is necessary, for the shortest possible time, to prevent harm or serious disruption.**

Circumstances Where Reasonable Force May Be Used

All school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force when necessary to:

- Prevent a pupil injuring themselves.
- Prevent a pupil injuring others.
- Prevent serious damage to property.
- Prevent the commission of a criminal offence.
- Prevent behaviour that is causing serious disruption to the learning or safety of others.

Examples may include:

- Intervening to stop fighting.
- Preventing a child from running into a road.
- Preventing serious damage to school property.
- Removing a dangerous object.
- Stopping behaviour that places pupils or staff at immediate risk.

Preventative and De-escalation Approaches

Before any restrictive intervention is considered, staff will seek to use preventative approaches such as:

- Calm verbal reassurance.
- Restorative conversations.
- Visual prompts and supports.
- Distraction and redirection.
- Offering choices.
- Providing processing time.
- Withdrawal to a safe and agreed calm space.
- Support from a trusted adult.
- Individual behaviour support strategies.
- Sensory regulation strategies where appropriate.
- Staff will always seek to preserve the dignity of the child and maintain positive relationships.

Considerations for Pupils with SEND

The school recognises that pupils with SEND may communicate distress through behaviour.

Staff will:

- Seek to understand underlying triggers.
- Implement reasonable adjustments.
- Use behaviour support plans where appropriate.
- Work closely with parents and external professionals.
- Complete individual risk assessments where required.
- Review plans following any significant incident.
- The school will monitor the use of restrictive interventions carefully to ensure no group of pupils is disproportionately affected.

Prohibited Practices

The following practices are never acceptable:

- Using force as a punishment.
- Any technique restricting breathing.
- Pressure to the neck, throat, chest or abdomen.
- Covering a pupil's mouth or nose.
- Deliberately taking a pupil to the floor unless unavoidable to prevent immediate serious injury.
- Any intervention that is humiliating, degrading or intended to cause pain or fear.

Appropriate Physical Contact

Not all physical contact constitutes a restrictive intervention.

Appropriate contact may include:

- Administering first aid.
- Comforting a distressed child.
- Guiding a pupil.
- Supporting physical activities in PE.
- Holding a younger child's hand for safety.
- Escorting a child to a safe space they have chosen to access.

The school does not operate a "no contact" approach and staff will use professional judgement at all times.

Seclusion

The school does not use seclusion as a disciplinary sanction.

Where a child is experiencing extreme emotional dysregulation and presents a significant safety risk, temporary supervised separation may be necessary as a protective measure.

Any such intervention will:

- Be used only to manage immediate safety risks.
- Last for the shortest possible time.
- Be continuously supervised.
- End as soon as the risk has reduced.
- Be recorded and reported in line with statutory requirements.

This is distinct from removal from class as a behavioural sanction, which is addressed separately within this policy

Recording and Reporting

Any significant incident involving reasonable force, restraint or seclusion will be recorded on CPOMS as soon as practicable and normally on the same day.

Records will include:

- Names of pupils and staff involved.
- Date, time and location.
- Duration of intervention.
- Antecedents and triggers.
- De-escalation strategies attempted.
- Nature of the intervention used.
- Reasons the intervention was considered necessary.
- Any injuries sustained.
- Post-incident support provided.

Parents will be informed as soon as practicable and normally on the same day. Written communication and, where appropriate, a follow-up meeting will be offered.

Post-Incident Reflection and Support

Following any restrictive intervention:

- The welfare of the child and staff will be checked.
- Medical attention will be sought if required.
- A restorative conversation will take place when the child is ready.
- Staff will review the incident to identify learning and preventative strategies.
- Behaviour support plans and risk assessments will be reviewed where necessary.
- Parents will be involved in planning future support.

The focus will always be on understanding the cause of the behaviour, rebuilding relationships and reducing the likelihood of future incidents.

Links with Other Policies

This section should be read alongside:

- Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy

Restrictive Intervention Last

The vast majority of incidents should be managed through positive relationships, de-escalation and regulation strategies. Restrictive physical intervention should only be used when there is an immediate risk of harm and no safer alternative is available.

STOP and THINK

Before intervening physically, ask yourself:

✅ Is someone at risk of immediate harm?

✅ Have I attempted de-escalation where it is safe to do so?

✅ Is this the least restrictive option available?

✅ Am I using the minimum force necessary?

✅ Can I justify my actions as reasonable, proportionate and necessary?

If the answer to any of these questions is **No**, continue using de-escalation and seek support.

Traffic Light Guidance

GREEN: Positive Behaviour Support

Use:

- Verbal reminders
- Praise and encouragement
- Redirection
- Offering choices
- Restorative conversations
- Emotional regulation strategies
- Sensory support
- Movement breaks
- Support from a trusted adult

Aim: Prevent escalation.

🟠 **AMBER: Escalating Behaviour**

Use:

- Calm, clear instructions
- Increased adult support
- Removal of audience/triggers
- Behaviour support plan strategies
- Support from senior staff
- Access to a safe or calm space
- Additional processing time

Aim: Reduce risk and return to regulation.

● RED: Immediate Risk of Harm

Restrictive physical intervention may be necessary only when a pupil is:

- At risk of harming themselves.
- At risk of harming another person.
- Causing serious damage to property.
- Attempting to leave a safe environment and enter danger.
- Creating an immediate and significant safety risk.

Remember:

- Use the minimum force necessary.
- Use it for the shortest possible time.
- Maintain the child's dignity.
- Continue talking calmly throughout.
- Stop immediately when the risk reduces.

Never Do

Staff must never:

✕ Use force as a punishment

❌ Cause pain deliberately

❌ Restrict breathing

❌ Apply pressure to the neck, throat, chest or abdomen

❌ Cover a pupil's mouth or nose

❌ Humiliate, threaten or degrade a pupil

❌ Continue intervention once the risk has reduced

During an Incident

DO

✓ Stay calm

✓ Use the child's name

✓ Give simple instructions

✓ Offer reassurance

✓ Call for support where possible

✓ Keep other pupil’s safe

✓ Continuously assess risk

SAY

- "I'm here to keep everyone safe."
- "When it's safe, I will let go."
- "Take some slow breaths."
- "I can help you."

AVOID

- Arguing

- Raised voices
- Lengthy explanations
- Threats
- Public confrontation

After an Incident

1. Check everyone is safe.
2. Report immediately to the Headteacher or Senior Leader (DSL).
3. Record the incident on CPOMS.
4. Inform parents/carers as soon as possible.
5. Participate in a debrief and review.
6. Consider whether risk assessments or support plans need updating.

Key Principle

Restrictive physical intervention is a last resort safety measure, not a behaviour management strategy. Our priority is always prevention, de-escalation, dignity, respect and the wellbeing of every child.

Staff Reminder:
Prevent → De-escalate → Support → Intervene only if necessary → Record → Review → Restore Relationships.

Approved by	**Governing Body**
Policy Lead	Headteacher
Date Approved	[Insert Date]

Review Date	[Insert Date]
Statutory/Non-Statutory	

Appendix 1: Restrictive Intervention Incident Reporting Checklist

Staff Reporting Checklist

Complete as soon as possible following any incident involving reasonable force, restrictive physical intervention or supervised separation.

Incident Details

☐ Date of incident: _____

☐ Time of incident: _____

☐ Location: _____

☐ Name of pupil(s) involved

☐ Name of staff involved

☐ Other witnesses present

Before the Intervention

☐ Immediate risk of harm identified

☐ De-escalation strategies attempted

☐ Verbal reassurance used

☐ Redirection or distraction attempted

☐ Choices offered

☐ Additional adult support sought where possible

☐ Safe space or regulation strategy offered

☐ Other preventative measures tried

Details:

During the Intervention

☐ Intervention was necessary to prevent:

☐ Injury to self

☐ Injury to others

☐ Serious property damage

☐ Serious safety risk

☐ Criminal offence

☐ Minimum force used

☐ Child's dignity maintained

☐ Intervention lasted only as long as necessary

☐ Continuous risk assessment undertaken

Duration of intervention:

_____ minutes

Brief description of intervention:

Outcomes

☐ No injuries sustained

☐ Injuries sustained (details below)

☐ First aid provided

☐ Medical advice sought

☐ Emotional support provided to pupil

☐ Emotional support provided to staff

Recording and Communication

☐ Incident recorded on CPOMS

☐ Headteacher/Senior Leader informed

☐ Parents/carers informed

☐ Time parents informed: _____

☐ Follow-up meeting offered if required

☐ Risk assessment reviewed

☐ Behaviour Support Plan reviewed

☐ Further actions identified

Details:

Reflection and Learning

What triggered or contributed to the incident?

What could help prevent a similar incident occurring again?

Staff Declaration

I confirm that the information above is an accurate record of the incident and that any intervention used was reasonable, proportionate and necessary to maintain safety.

Staff Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Senior Leader Review: _____

Date: _____

Key Reminder: *Prevent → De-escalate → Support → Intervene only if necessary → Record → Review → Restore Relationship*