



# PHYSICAL CONTACT & RESTRAINT POLICY



<b>Author</b>	Joe Masterson	Headmaster
<b>Approved by</b>	Joe Masterson	Headmaster
	Jo Storey	Group Lead Education, Compliance & Safeguarding
	John Forsyth	Chairman of the Forfar Education Group Governance Board for Harrogate Preparatory School Ltd, trading as Brackenfield School
<b>Next review</b>	Autumn Term 2025	

## PURPOSE

Brackenfield School fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 157 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This policy is a whole school policy and applies to all pupils including those in the EYFS. Care and consideration will be given to the age of the child when following the guidance in this policy. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors, paid and unpaid, working in the school including governors. This policy has been written using advice taken from Use of Reasonable Force, Advice for Headteachers, staff and Governing Bodies DfE 2013.

The school acknowledges its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs (SEND). Equality Act 2010, SEN and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years 2015.

### **For the Purposes of this Policy Document:**

- Reasonable force is defined as using no more force than is needed in the circumstances.
- Physical restraint is defined as the positive application of force in order to protect/prevent a pupil from causing injury to themselves or others or seriously damaging property. It is necessary in more extreme cases, for example to stop a physical fight.
- Injury means 'significant injury'; this would include actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of, or injury to, themselves or others, by wilful or reckless behaviour, and self - poisoning.

### **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.
- It can also apply to people whom the Head has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.
- The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

### **When can Reasonable Force be used?**

Reasonable force can be used:

- to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, from committing an offence, or from causing disorder;
- to control pupils or to restrain them;
- to remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- to prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- to prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- to prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground;
- to restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts;

## When can Reasonable Force **NOT** be used?

Reasonable force can never be used as a form of punishment.

## Guidelines for the Use of Physical Restraint

Professional judgement should be used in circumstances where the use of physical restraint and reasonable force is needed.

- Staff should not hesitate to act in an emergency provided they follow the guidelines in this policy.
  - Staff should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of professional colleagues.
  - In any application of physical restraint, the minimum reasonable force should be used to calm down the situation.
  - Help should be summoned from colleagues; pupils should never be involved in restraint.
- What to do in circumstances when the use of physical restraint and reasonable force is needed
- Approach the pupil calmly but firmly.
  - Where possible, the consequences of refusing to stop the behaviour should be explained and it should be communicated to the pupil that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
  - A calm and measured approach is required by staff throughout.

## Method of Restraint

The method of restraint employed must use the minimum force for the minimum time and must observe the following:

### Restraint must not:

- Involve hurting the pupil
- Involve deliberately inflicting pain on the pupil
- Restrict the pupil's breathing
- Involve contact with sexually sensitive areas
- Involve locking the pupil in a room

### During any incident the person restraining should:

- Offer verbal reassurance to the pupil
- Cause the minimum level of restriction of movement
- Reduce the danger of any accidental injury
- Cease the restraint if there are any signs of physical distress in the pupil such as sudden change in colour, difficulty breathing or vomiting

### Physical restraint can be:

- Partial – restricting and preventing particular movements
- Total – as in the case of immobilisation

**Physical intervention can take several forms and may involve staff:**

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Holding
- Pushing
- Pulling
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back or in extreme circumstances using more restrictive holds

**REPORTING**

At any time, it has been necessary to follow the above guidelines, all incidences are reported to the Headmaster and are recorded in full. This is reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headmaster within their monthly review meetings and where necessary feedback to the Chairman of the Governing Body – John Forsyth, via regular and annual Safeguarding reviews.

The Headmaster is the nominated member of staff to lead or assist in physical restraint, when absolutely necessary, and is trained to do so: Team teach positive behaviour management (<https://www.teamteach.co.uk/>)

<b>Name of policy</b> Physical Contact/Restraint Policy	<b>Policy reviewed/amended date</b> October 2022 (V2) November 2023 (V3) November 2024 (V4)
<b>Original policy date</b> January 2022	<b>Current version</b> V5
<b>Date of new review</b> Autumn Term 2025	