



**TRURO  
SCHOOL**

**SENIOR SCHOOL**

# **Restrictive Interventions And Use Of Reasonable Force Policy**

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A copy of this policy is published in the following areas: The school's website  
Reviewed and updated: March 2026  
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Created by: Deputy Head (Pastoral)  
Reviewed by: Deputy Head Pastoral

## **Restrictive Interventions, Including The Use Of Reasonable Force Policy**

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*The school's website*

Reviewed: March 2026

Date for review: March 2027

Reviewed by: Deputy Head (Pastoral)

### **A. Related Truro School Policies**

This Positive Handling Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Positive Behaviour and Values Policy;
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Searching and Confiscation Policy;
- School Rules

### **B. Rationale and purpose of policy**

The policy has been updated in line with guidance from the DFE on 'Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools' (April 2026)

The policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to physical and non-physical interaction between adults and pupils. The policy has been prepared for the support of all staff who come into contact with pupils and for volunteers working within the school to explain the school's arrangements for care and control. All members of staff may employ restrictive intervention including use of reasonable force when appropriate to do so, but they do not have a duty to do so; volunteers assisting with school activities may not employ reasonable force in any circumstances.

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good and positive conduct in our school. It is recognised that the overwhelming majority of pupils in our school respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff in Truro School. All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force and/or restrictive interventions in limited circumstances. Reasonable force means using no more force than is necessary, for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to act in situations where the use of restrictive intervention, including the use of reasonable force may be required.

Restrictive intervention is defined as a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body of a pupil. This can include both physical and non-physical actions aimed at restraining pupils in different ways. Truro School acknowledges that physical techniques are only part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management. Every effort will be made to



ensure that all staff in the school clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in responding appropriately, where reasonable force is necessary and are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations.

## C. What is reasonable force?

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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.

Reasonable 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 pupil needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury to themselves or others .

'Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances. At Truro School this is understood as the use of the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming themselves, others or property. The scale and nature of any physical intervention and use of reasonable force must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled, and the nature of the harm they might cause. **Fundamentally, 'reasonable force' means using no more force than is necessary to control or deescalate a situation.**

All staff should attempt de-escalation strategies first, such as the use of clear, calm verbal and non-verbal communication such as open body language, active listening and verbal warning, before reasonable force may be used to either **control** or **restrain** a pupil.

### **Control**

- 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**

- To hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control;
- Must use the minimum force for the minimum time.
- For example, physical restraint of a pupil through holding them back.
- For example, physical restraint of a pupil to bring them under control perhaps by placing a hand in the centre of the back, or in extreme circumstances using more restrictive holds.

Pupils should not be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example, by covering the mouth and/or the nose or applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen.

### **Seclusion**

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

## **D. When can restrictive intervention, including the use of reasonable force be used?**

The decision on whether it is reasonable to use a restrictive intervention depends on the individual circumstances of each situation. The member of staff should consider the following:

Is it necessary – staff should consider whether there are other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage the situation; whether the use of restrictive interventions is likely to successfully reduce risks or escalate the situation further; where possible communicate with other members of staff to understand any broader risks in the environment

Is it proportionate – staff should use the least amount of force or restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce the risks; if the intervention itself is escalating the situation, the member of staff should reconsider the approach and attempt an alternative strategy; the personal situation of the pupil including medical needs, SEND needs or other vulnerabilities, alongside the characteristics of the pupil and relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010

Have you considered the pupil's welfare: staff should consider the impact on the pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken; staff should seek to maintain respect for the pupil's dignity; where possible staff should communicate calmly and clearly 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 EAL, verbal and non-verbal strategies should be used to ensure the pupil understands what is happening; staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and this information should be used to determine if the restrictive intervention should be or continue to be applied, reduced or stopped

Restrictive interventions including the use of reasonable force can be used to:

- Prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder;
  - remove a disruptive pupil from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
  - prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
  - prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that poses a risk to others;
  - prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight on the school premises;
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts. Such force as is reasonable given the circumstances may also be used to conduct a search without consent.

Staff should follow the procedure for search without consent set out in the Searching and Confiscation Policy.

Using reasonable force to restrain a pupil should always be the last resort and 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. 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 guarantee avoidance of any injury to the pupil.

## **E. Recording and reporting instances of restrictive intervention and use of reasonable force**

If a member of staff is required to use force to control or restrain a pupil they should report it to the Deputy Head Pastoral (Designated Safeguarding Lead). The incident must be recorded as soon as practicable after the event. It should be recorded by the staff member(s) involved and they should endeavor to do this no later than the same day. This includes incidents where the use of restricted interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's behaviour/support plan. When producing a record of the incident in writing, staff should record the information using the 'Restrictive interventions including the use of reasonable force report form' -

### **Appendix**

**A.** This form should be handed to the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

The school will contact parents when incidents occur involving the use of significant force on a pupil. Parents will be contacted as soon as it is practically possible after the incident and will endeavour to do this no later than the same day. The exception to this is if the pupil is aged 20 or over, or if in reporting to the parent would likely increase the risk of harm to the child. In this case, a staff member must report the incident to any parent who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm, or if there are none, to the Local Authority. In deciding what is an incident involving the use of significant force, the Deputy Head (Pastoral), in consultation with the Head teacher and other senior pastoral colleagues, when deemed appropriate, will use their professional judgement and consider the:

- pupil's behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident;
- the degree of force used;
- the effect on the pupil or member of staff;
- the pupil's characteristics such as age and height.

## **Recording and reporting the use of seclusion and non-force related restraint**

An incident of restraint may occur with or without direct physical contact. Any incident of restraint that occurs without direct physical contact must also be recorded.

Incidents involving seclusion and non-force related restraint must be recorded as soon as practicable after the event. It should be recorded by the staff member(s) involved and they should endeavour to do this no later than the same day. A record must be made of any such incident in

writing. This includes where any form of seclusion and/or non-force related restraint in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's behaviour/action plan. Information should be provided to the parent(s) in writing about the seclusion or restraint incident. The exception to this is if the pupil is aged 20 or over, or if in reporting to the parent would likely increase the risk of harm to the child. In this case, a staff member must report the incident to any parent who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm, or if there are none, to the Local Authority.

When producing a record of the incident in writing, , staff should record the information using the 'Seclusion and non-force interventions report form' - **Appendix B**. This form should be handed to the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

All incidents will be logged by the Deputy Head (Pastoral)

## **F. Follow up after instances of reasonable force**

The school will arrange a follow-up session with a pupil after an instance of the use of restrictive intervention has occurred which will be conducted by a senior pastoral member of staff. This meeting may also involve the pupil's parents and the member of staff who carried out the use of reasonable force. In all meetings, the pupil will be accompanied by an advocate who will usually be their form tutor, Head of Year or the School Chaplain. This meeting should be conducted after a period of time when all parties have had the opportunity to reflect on the incident; it is not recommended that this session happens the same day, but perhaps the following day or so would be appropriate.

The purpose of the session would be to:

- Review events leading up to the use of reasonable force;
- Discuss whether the pupil's behaviour could have been managed differently, for example any behavioural triggers or warning signs of an impending incident
- To maintain good relationships between pupils, staff and parents;
- To learn any lessons for future practice which can inform reviews of the pupil's behaviour action plan.

An outcome of such a meeting may identify the need for staff training in de-escalation strategies and positive handling techniques. Staff who may be expected to use restrictive positive handling will receive additional, more specialised training and the nature and extent of the training will depend upon the characteristics of the pupils who may require positive handling, the behaviours they present, and the responsibilities of the individual members of staff.

## **G. Complaints and allegations towards members of staff**

All complaints about the use of force should be referred to the Head who will either investigate the matter themselves or delegate it to another senior member of staff. All investigations will be conducted in accordance with the Complaints Policy.

When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that their allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that they have acted reasonably. A member of staff who is subject to an allegation or complaint will be informed of the complaint once it has been received by the Head.

If the individual making the complaint provides sufficient evidence to warrant a detailed investigation, procedures for managing complaints against staff outlined in the school's Complaints Policy will be adhered to. In accordance with government guidelines, suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.

The school has a duty of care to its employees and will provide appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident. 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.

### **Appendix A**

#### Restrictive Interventions Including The Use Of Reasonable Force Report Form

This form should be completed if a member of staff is required to use force to control or restrain a pupil.

This form should be handed to the Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Name of pupil restrained	
Any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, for example SEND	
Name of other pupils involved	
Name(s) of staff involved	
Date and time of incident	
Location of incident	



Details of incident including all steps taken to de-escalate the situation and resolve it without the use of force	
Description of restraint used including type of force applied, the degree of force, and any injuries resulting from the use of force	
Duration of restraint used	
Brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary	
Post incident support including medical treatment for injuries or any adverse effects (pupil, witnesses and/or staff member)	
Damage to property	
Outcome of the incident including any agreed actions	
Parents notified	
Any training needs identified	

SSLT member informed	

Signed ..... Date .....

Appendix B

Seclusion and non-force interventions report form

This form should be completed if a member of staff is required to use seclusion and/or non – interventions

This form should be handed to the Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Name of pupil	
Any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, for example SEND	
Name of other pupils involved	
Name(s) of staff involved	
Date and time of incident	
Location of incident	
Details of incident including all steps taken to de-escalate the situation and resolve	



Description of seclusion /type of non-force applied, and any injuries resulting from the use of this intervention	
Post incident support including medical treatment for injuries or any adverse effects (pupil, witnesses and/or staff member)	
Outcome of the incident including any agreed actions	
Parents notified	
Any training needs identified	