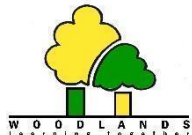


Woodlands Secondary School	Reasonable Force and Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy	
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Date	Review Date	Author	Nominated Governors
November 2025	November 2026	Caroline Lowry	GB
Website	Statutory Policy	Source	Ratification Date
Yes	No	Various	25/11/25

Introduction

At Woodlands there are students who can present behaviour that may occasionally necessitate the use of reasonable force and/or restrictive physical interventions. As set out in the Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, all members of staff have a right to use reasonable force or restrictive physical intervention (RPI) in the following circumstances, to prevent a student from:

- Hurting themselves or others
- Damaging property
- Committing an offence
- Seriously compromising good order or discipline

All staff must be aware that use of physical force must be reasonable, proportionate, and necessary, in the best interest of the child and comply with:

- Use of reasonable force Advice for Head teachers, staff and governing bodies (2013)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention (June 2019)

1. Aims

This policy aims to make clear the position of the school with regards to reasonable force and necessary restrictive physical interventions and to safeguard the well-being of students and staff when a situation or incident requires the use of restrictive physical intervention. It is the objective of Woodlands Secondary School to maintain consistent and safe practices in the use of reasonable force & restraint.

2. Reasonable force and the law

The following Government advice was taken from 'Use of reasonable force: Advice for Head teachers, staff and governing bodies' (2013)

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 students.

Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a student to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.

'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.

Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of a classroom.

Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control.

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 student.

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 Headteacher has temporarily put in charge of students such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

When can reasonable force be used?

Reasonable force can be used to prevent students from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, committing an offence or seriously compromising good order or discipline.

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. The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- prevent a student behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- prevent a student leaving the classroom where allowing the student to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student, or to stop a fight in the playground
- restrain a student at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Schools cannot use force as a punishment. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Schools do not require parental consent to use force on a student.

3. Legislation, statutory requirements and statutory guidance

This policy is based on legislation and advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- Use of reasonable force Advice for Head teachers, staff and governing bodies (2013) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a819959ed915d74e6233224/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf
- Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention (June 2019) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d1387e240f0b6350e1ab567/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention.pdf>

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its students

- Sections 88 to 94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which requires schools to regulate students' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and gives schools the authority to confiscate students' property

4. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Reviewing this policy in conjunction with the Headteacher
- Monitoring the policy's effectiveness
- Holding the Headteacher to account for its implementation

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Policy leadership: Approving this policy and ensuring that it is implemented consistently across all areas of the school.
- Implementation oversight: Monitoring that all staff apply the policy fairly and consistently with every student group, and that practice aligns with the principles of Team teach and safeguarding.
- Training quality assurance: Ensuring that high-quality positive handling training is delivered by accredited Intermediate Team Teach Trainers and that all required staff maintain current certification.
- Staff development: Supporting and promoting the professional development of the school's Intermediate Team Teach Trainers, ensuring they remain confident, competent, and up to date with current Team Teach approaches.
- Resourcing and safety: Ensuring that all necessary equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are available, maintained, and fit for purpose. This may include, but is not limited to, bean bags, crash mats, arm guards, and protective aprons.
- Monitoring and evaluation: Reviewing data and reports on restrictive physical interventions and using this information to inform whole-school behaviour strategy, training needs, and policy development.
- Safeguarding and accountability: Ensuring that the use of restrictive physical interventions is always consistent with safeguarding procedures, statutory guidance, and the principles of dignity, safety, and respect.

Team Teach Trainers

The Team Teach trainers are responsible for:

- Delivering training: Planning and delivering a programme of Team Teach Level 2 accreditation and reaccreditation training to selected staff, ensuring that all staff within the WISERR and Provisions Departments are trained or booked onto the next available course.
- Maintaining training records: Keeping accurate and up-to-date records of staff Team Teach training status, including expiry dates and refresher needs, and ensuring compliance with reaccreditation requirements
- Monitoring use of interventions: Reviewing and monitoring the frequency and nature of restrictive physical interventions across the school and reporting findings to senior leaders during bi-weekly supervision meetings.
- Data analysis and reporting: Analysing restrictive physical intervention data on a half-termly basis and providing summaries, trends, and recommendations to senior leaders.
- Staff guidance and support: Offering advice, coaching, and practical support to trained staff regarding the prevention, de-escalation, and safe use of restrictive physical interventions.
- Debrief and reflective practice: Supporting post-incident debriefs with staff and, where appropriate, advising on reflective practice to promote learning and reduce the need for future interventions.
- Policy implementation: Ensuring that Team Teach practices within the school are consistent with current legislation, Team Teach guidance, and the school's Restrictive Intervention Policy.

All Staff

All staff share responsibility for ensuring the safe and appropriate use of restrictive physical interventions within the school. Staff must:

- Respond appropriately to incidents. Support with any incidents that occur while they are present. If a staff member is not Team Teach trained, or believes they are not the most suitable person to intervene, they must immediately call for support
- Follow Team Teach principles. Carry out any restrictive physical interventions strictly in accordance with their Team Teach training and the student's individual behaviour risk assessment.
- Report concerns. Report any concerns about colleagues who may be using restrictive interventions incorrectly or inappropriately, or who are employing holds that appear unnecessary.
- Record interventions promptly. Ensure that all restrictive physical interventions they are involved in are recorded on CPOMS on the same day as the incident and the Department Leader and Team Teach trainers are tagged into the incident.
- Maintain Behaviour Risk Assessments. Teachers and Class Leads - Ensure that Behaviour Risk Assessments are up-to-date, accurate, and clearly identify the agreed restrictive interventions for each student. All staff working in class – ensure that they read, understand and implement the content of the Risk Assessment.
- Support staff competency. Teachers and Class Leads - Ensure that Team Teach trained staff within their class are confident and competent in using the interventions specified in students' behaviour risk assessments. Where further guidance or practice is needed, staff should seek support or refresher training from the school's Team Teach trainers.

5. Training

At Woodlands we have adopted the accredited Team Teach method of positive behaviour management. The training equips staff with practical de-escalation and crisis intervention strategies that can be used to minimise risk and manage conflict safely and respectfully.

Woodlands has three accredited Intermediate Team Teach trainers who deliver Level 2 training across the school to some staff.

- All staff in the Provisions classes and WISERR classes will undertake Team Teach training or be put on to the next available course when they join the departments.
- Some staff in the SLD classes will undertake Team Teach training to ensure there are trained staff in all departments.

Staff trained in Team Teach are trained to carry out some restrictive physical interventions. Staff that have not been trained in Team Teach are not able to carry out any restrictive physical interventions. The exception to this is an emergency or unforeseen situation. Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that all members of staff have a legal power to use "reasonable force" and there may be occasions when, in order to fulfil our duty of care, staff that are not Team teach trained have a right and a duty to intervene.

6. Planning for the use of restrictive physical interventions (RPIs)

When planning for the use of restrictive physical intervention, staff must first liaise with their Department Leader and the Team Teach trainers to discuss the most appropriate RPI to use. The RPI that has been identified to be best suited to the student must be written into their Behaviour Risk Assessment (B1) (See appendix 1) under the heading "Restrictive Physical Interventions" and signed off by the Department Leader and then shared with parents. Parents must be given the opportunity to discuss the RPI should they wish to.

The class teacher should ensure that they and their team are confident in using the identified RPI and seek further training from the Team Teach trainers, should they need to.

7. Use of restrictive physical intervention (Planned RPIs)

We know that use of restraint and physical restrictive intervention can have long-term consequences on the health and wellbeing of children and young people, and that it can have a negative impact on staff who carry out such interventions. Physical intervention should only ever be used as a last resort, when all other de-escalation strategies have been exhausted or are deemed inappropriate. The paramount consideration is that the action is reasonable, proportionate and necessary, taken in the best interest of the student and that it reduces rather than increases risk.

There will, however, be times when the only realistic response to a situation will be physical restrictive intervention. If a student is about to run into a busy road, for example, or a student is attacking a member of staff or another student and refuses to stop when asked, then reasonable force to stop this may be necessary.

It may also be necessary to use reasonable force if a student refuses to agree to a search (see the schools Behaviour policy, section 8, searching and confiscation), a 'forced' search can only be carried out if the member of staff has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student is in possession of a prohibited item or if conducting the search will prevent the student harming themselves or others, damaging property or causing disorder

Physical intervention must only be in accordance with the following:

- **Justification for intervention** Staff must have reasonable grounds to believe that a student is:
 - at immediate risk of harming themselves or another person,
 - at risk of causing serious damage to property,
 - committing (or about to commit) an offence, or
 - seriously compromising good order or discipline.
- **Dynamic risk assessment:** The staff member managing the incident must carry out a dynamic risk assessment to determine the least restrictive intervention necessary. Wherever possible, this should align with the strategies identified in the student's Behaviour Risk Assessment, except in emergency situations (see paragraph 8).
- **Training requirement:** Only staff who are currently Team Teach trained are authorised to carry out restrictive physical interventions.
- **Minimum force principle:** The minimum amount of force necessary to prevent injury, harm, or serious damage must be used.
- **Duration:** Restrictive physical intervention must be used for the shortest possible time required to safely manage the situation.
- **Purpose:** Physical intervention must always be an act of care and control, never of punishment. It must not be used to force compliance or as a response to non-compliance where there is no immediate risk to people or property.
- **Aftercare and reporting:** Following any restrictive physical intervention, appropriate debriefing, recording, and reporting procedures must be followed in line with this policy.

If a situation becomes unsafe and dangerous, and when Team Teach interventions cannot be carried out safely but there is still a high risk of harm to the student or others, the school may call the police for support (999 call). We may also contact the CAMHs crisis team, where they are involved. Parents will be informed of all serious incidents and will be invited to support, if they can.

8. Use of restrictive physical interventions in unforeseen and emergency situations

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that all members of staff have a legal power to use "reasonable force"; there are occasions when, to fulfil our duty of care, we not only have a right but also a duty to intervene.

On occasion, staff may find themselves in unforeseen or emergency situations when they have no option but to use reasonable force to manage a crisis. In exceptional circumstances (where permitted techniques are ineffective or staff are unfamiliar with the action they should take) staff manage the situation as best they can and act 'in loco parentis.'

When a restrictive physical intervention has been used in an emergency situation, then it must be recorded on CPOMS and written into the student's behaviour risk assessment under the heading 'Restrictive Physical Intervention' and shared with parents.

9. Use of seclusion rooms

Definition: Seclusion is defined in government guidance as "placing a child or young person involuntarily in any environment in which they are alone and prevented from leaving".

The Government guidance 'Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention June 2019 section 5' states:

5.18 Seclusion (which may be described alternatively in different settings, for example single separation in secure children's homes) is a form of restraint referring to the supervised containment and isolation of a child or young person away from others, in a room/area from which they are prevented from leaving. It should only be used to contain severely disturbed behaviour, including which is likely to cause harm to others, and for the minimum time necessary. Staff would normally stay with the individual to support them and monitor their progress until they are ready to resume their usual activities.

At Woodlands we **do not** promote the routine use of seclusion rooms, and their use is not included in Behaviour Risk Assessments, as part of the agreed plans to support students who may present with violent or dangerous behaviours. In exceptional circumstances, if a student puts themselves or others at significant risk of harm, a safe space may be used, for the shortest possible time. If this happens there must always be at least two adults present and a senior member of staff must be notified immediately. If a student is secluded, the incident must be fully recorded; recording should include information about attempts to support students to de-escalate and the outcome of each attempt. Any use of seclusion must be shared with parents or carers. The Behaviour Risk Assessment must be updated to reflect the exceptional use of seclusion, with the agreement of the parents.

Use of quiet safe spaces

There are some small rooms in and around the school site that are quiet and safe and students that are struggling to learn alongside their peers may access these spaces alongside staff where they continue to be supported to engage in learning, as and when they are ready.

These rooms are not seclusion rooms, because they remain unlocked and students are free to leave the space and to re-join peers in the main learning space.

10. Post-incident support

Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent "side-effect" of ensuring that the service user remains safe.

Following any incident of restrictive physical intervention, it is important for the Department Leader to ensure that staff and students involved are given emotional support and basic first aid treatment for any injuries.

11. Reporting, recording and monitoring the use of restrictive physical interventions (RPIs)

All incidents involving restrictive physical intervention must be recorded on the same day, onto CPOMS under the B4 restrictive physical intervention tab and the Department Leader and Team

Teach trainers must be tagged into the incident. Parents must be informed of the incident on the day it occurred.

Use of physical intervention is monitored by the Department Leaders, Team Teach trainers and the Senior Leadership who have responsibility for behaviour. The data generated via CPOMS is used to help determine training needs, support and specialist interventions needed.

12. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the following policies that can be found on the school website <https://www.woodlands.luton.sch.uk/school-policies/>

- Behaviour Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

13. Monitoring this policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and full governing board annually.

