



GRAYSWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Church of England (Aided)

Positive Touch Policy

Policy schedule	
Written	Spring 2025
Shared with Governors and Staff	Spring 2025
Next review	Spring 2027

Touch and the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention for all Staff working with Children & Young People

Policy and Guidance for Staff at School

1. Introduction

At Grayswood CE Primary School our mission to 'Love one another as I have loved you' (John 15:12) is underpinned by our school vision which embodies the values of *perseverance*, *teamwork*, *love*, *forgiveness*, *kindness* and *respect*. This is the context in which this policy should be read and implemented. We believe that pupils need to be safe, know how to behave, and know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. For a very small minority of pupils the use of restrictive physical intervention may be needed, and, on such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention will be used.

The majority of pupils behave well and conform to the expectations of our school. We have responsibility to operate an effective behaviour policy that encompasses preventative strategies for tackling inappropriate behaviour in relation to the whole school, each class, and individual pupils. Restrictive physical intervention will only be used as part of a graduated response in the context of the school's Behaviour Policy and individual behaviour plans.

All the school staff need to feel able to manage inappropriate risk and behaviour, and to have an understanding of what and how challenging behaviours might be communicated. They need to know what the options open to them are, and they need to be free of undue worries about the risks of legal action against them if they use appropriate physical intervention. Parents need to know that their children are safe with us, and they need to be properly informed if their child is the subject of a Restrictive Physical Intervention, including the nature of the intervention, and the rationale for its use.

2. Definition of 'restrictive physical intervention'

The Law allows for teachers and other persons authorised by the Headteacher to use Restrictive Physical Intervention to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following: -

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property
- engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintain the good order and discipline at the school

"Restrictive Physical Intervention" is the term used by the DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families) to include interventions where bodily contact using force is used. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorised by the Headteacher has to, in specific circumstances, use "reasonable force" to control or restrain pupils.

There is no legal definition of "reasonable force". However, there are two relevant considerations:

- the use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of an incident warrant it
- the degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent

The definition of physical force also includes the use of mechanical devices (e.g. splints on the pupil prescribed by medical colleagues to prevent self-injury), forcible seclusion or use of locked doors. It is important for staff to note that, although no physical contact may be made in the latter situations, this is still regarded as a Restrictive Physical Intervention.

3. When the use of restrictive physical interventions may be appropriate in school

Restrictive Physical Interventions will be used when all other strategies have failed, and therefore only as a last resort. However, there are other situations when physical management may be necessary, for example in a situation of clear danger or extreme urgency. Certain pupils may become distressed, agitated, and out of control, and need calming with a brief Restrictive Physical Intervention that is unresisted after a few seconds.

The safety and well-being of all staff and pupils are important considerations. Under certain conditions this duty must be an over-riding factor.

Who may use restrictive physical intervention in school:

- staff who have been trained in positive touch are authorised by the Headteacher to have control of pupils, and must be aware of this policy and its implications
- we take the view that staff should not be expected to put themselves in danger, and that removing pupils and themselves is the right thing to do. We value staff efforts to rectify what can be very difficult situations and in which they exercise their duty of care for the pupils

4. Planning for the use of restrictive physical interventions in school

Staff will use the minimum force needed to restore safety and appropriate behaviour.

The principles relating to the intervention are as follows: -

- Restrictive Physical Intervention is an act of care and control, not punishment. It is never used to force compliance with staff instructions
- staff will only use it when there are good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary and in the pupil's and/or other pupil's best interests
- staff will take steps in advance to avoid the need for Restrictive Physical Intervention through dialogue and diversion and at the level of understanding of the child or young person
- only the minimum force necessary will be used to prevent severe distress, injury, or damage
- staff will be able to show that the intervention used was in keeping with the incident
- every effort will be made to secure the presence of other staff, and these staff may act as assistants and/or witnesses
- as soon as it is safe, the Restrictive Physical Intervention will be relaxed to allow the pupil to regain self-control
- a distinction will be maintained between the use of a one-off intervention which is appropriate to a particular circumstance, and the using of it repeatedly as a regular feature of school policy
- escalation will be avoided at all costs, especially if it would make the overall situation more destructive and unmanageable
- the age, understanding, and competence of the individual pupil will always be taken into account
- in developing Individual Education/Behaviour Plans, consideration will be given to approaches appropriate to each pupil's circumstance

- pupils and staff will be supported and debriefed after every incident of Restrictive Physical Intervention, as it is essential to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved at these times

5. Acceptable forms of intervention in school

There are occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with pupils for a variety of reasons, for example:

- to comfort a pupil in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age)
- to gently direct a pupil
- for curricular reasons (for example in PE, Drama etc)
- in an emergency to avert danger to the pupil or pupils
- in rare circumstances, when Restrictive Physical Intervention is warranted

In all situations where physical contact between staff and pupils takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the pupil's age and level of understanding
- the pupil's individual characteristics and history
- the location where the contact takes place

Physical contact is never made as a punishment, or to inflict pain. All forms of corporal punishment are prohibited. Physical contact will not be made with the participants neck, breasts, abdomen, genital area, other sensitive body parts, or to put pressure on joints. It will not become a habit between a member of staff and a particular pupil.

6. Developing a positive handling plan in school

If a pupil is identified for whom it is felt that Restrictive Physical Intervention is likely, then a Positive Handling Plan will be included within the pupil's behaviour plan and risk assessment. This Plan will help the pupil and staff to avoid difficult situations through understanding the factors that influence the behaviour and identifying the early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours that may be developing.

The plan will include:

- involving parents/carers and pupils to ensure they are clear about what specific action the school may take, when and why
- a risk assessment to ensure staff and others act reasonably, consider the risks, and learn from what happens
- a record needs to be kept in school of risk reduction options that have been examined and discounted, as well as those used
- managing the pupil, strategies to de-escalate a conflict, and stating at which point a Restrictive Physical Intervention is to be used
- identifying key staff who know exactly what is expected. It is best that these staff are well known to the pupil
- ensuring a system to summon additional support
- identifying training needs

For some pupils, school may also need to take medical advice about the safest way to hold a child with specific medical needs.

7. Guidance and training for staff

Guidance and training is essential in this area. We need to adopt the best possible practice. In school this is arranged at a number of levels including:

- awareness for governors, staff and parents
- behaviour management for all staff
- managing conflict in challenging situations - all staff
- specific training on Restrictive Physical Intervention techniques - all staff

8. Complaints

It is intended that by adopting this policy and keeping parents and governors informed we could avoid the need for complaints.

All disputes that arise about the use of force by a member of staff will be dealt with according to Surrey's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies. See the school's complaints policy – page 7:

<https://www.grayswoodschool.co.uk/search/default.asp?pid=0>

9. School procedures - The use of restrictive physical interventions by staff

This procedure supports the application of the Surrey County Council policy and guidance on the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention. All staff should study the policy statement carefully – it can be found on CPOMs and on the school website.

1. The person responsible for authorising staff to use restrictive physical intervention as part of a structured and planned intervention within this school is the Headteacher.
2. The person responsible for ensuring that all planned use of restrictive physical intervention is risk assessed is the SENDCo.
3. Copies of all risk assessments are held on CPOMs and are reviewed regularly and after every use of force.
4. As of January 2025, the people who are authorised to use reasonable force in planned restrictive physical interventions are those who have had positive touch training. No other person should engage in a planned intervention.
5. Training will be up-dated at least every 3 years for staff who are most likely to be required to use restrictive physical intervention.
6. Training records are held in the safeguarding folder in the Headteacher's office.
7. Those not involved in risk assessment but whose roles include the supervision of children may use reasonable force in an emergency unplanned intervention where it is necessary to prevent a serious injury from occurring.
8. Every use of restrictive physical intervention is to be reported the same day to the Headteacher or the senior teacher in charge if the Headteacher is offsite. The Headteacher or senior teacher will ensure that a parent of the child who has had force used against them is notified that day.

9. In addition, the details of each use of physical intervention must be recorded on CPOMs. The person leading the planned or unplanned intervention must complete a CPOMs incident form. The Headteacher will review every use of physical intervention

10. A First Aider will check for injuries, provide first aid if required and arrange for medical aid.

11. The Headteacher will report injuries to HSE.

12. This policy will be reviewed yearly by the Senior Leadership Team and shared with staff and school governors.

Linked policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Behaviour
- Complaints