



USE OF REASONABLE FORCE POLICY

Previous Date of Policy	August 2024
Reviewer(s)	Principal, Vice Principal, Director of Safeguarding, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Assistant Principal Pastoral
Approved by	Principal September 2025
Review by Date	January 2027

Roles & Responsibilities:

Principal
Vice Principal
Director of Safeguarding, Mental Health and Wellbeing
Assistant Principal Pastoral
Medical Staff

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At The Worthgate School, the term “restraint” is synonymous with a physical and positive intervention.

RATIONALE

Staff who are authorised by the Principal to have control or charge of students are allowed under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, SEN and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years 2015 and DfE Guidance issued in July 2013 to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a student from doing or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the student were not under the age of criminal responsibility);
- Injuring themselves or others;
- Causing damage to property (including the student's own property);
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its students, whether that behaviour occurs in the classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere, e.g., on a field trip.

GUIDELINES

In principle, staff are advised to avoid physical contact with students, but it is recognised that there may be circumstances where contact may be necessary. The use of reasonable force to control or restrain students should only ever be considered as a last resort in very special circumstances. Under no circumstances is physical force to be accepted between students and/or staff.

Staff are deemed to be authorised, if they have been authorised by the Principal, to have control or charge of students, even if only for a short time such as a school trip.

TYPES OF INCIDENTS

There is a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate or necessary, to control or restrain a student. They will fall into these broad categories:

1. Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury;
2. Where there is a developing risk of injury, or considerable damage to property
- 3.

Examples of situations that fall within these categories are:

- A student attacks another student or a member of staff
- Students are fighting
- A student is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- A student is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- A student is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others
- A student absconds from a class or tries to leave school (N.B. this will only happen if a student could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school)
- Student persistently refuses to obey an order to leave the classroom, where safety is a concern

REASONABLE FORCE

The term reasonable force covers the broad range of actions that involve a degree of physical contact with a student.

The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. The degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Practical Considerations:

Before intervening physically, the member of staff should ask the student who is misbehaving to stop. The member of staff should continue to communicate with the student throughout the incident and make it clear that the restraining will cease as soon as it becomes unnecessary. In some situations, it is inappropriate for a member of staff to intervene without help, unless in an emergency;

if the member of staff believes he or she may be at risk of injury. In these circumstances the member of staff should remove other students who may be at risk, and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or when necessary, telephone the police. The member of staff should inform the student that he or she has sent for help and continue to try to de-escalate the situation until help arrives.

APPLICATION OF FORCE

Physical force can take several forms. It might involve staff:

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

Staff should NOT ACT in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- Holding a student around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the student's ability to breathe
- Slapping, punching or kicking a student
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- Tripping up a student
- Holding or pulling a student by the hair or ear
- Holding a student face down on the ground

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a student in a way that might be considered indecent.

Reasonable Adjustments

The school will ensure reasonable adjustments are made for students with SEN needs or disabled students, who are on the ALS (Additional Learning Support) register. These adjustments will be disseminated to the appropriate staff that teach and support these students.

Recording Incidents

Incidents requiring the use of force will be fully documented in the same way as all other serious incidents indicating the nature of the problem and the names of all staff and students concerned. The school must inform the parents of any such serious incident. Depending on the severity of the incident, the school will decide whether an oral or written report should be given to parents. As

with all serious incidents, parents should be given the opportunity to discuss the incident with a member of the Senior Management Team as appropriate.

Complaints

If a student complains about the force used, then the matter will be investigated using our Complaints process and taking in consideration 'Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff' DfE guidance document. All complaints about the use of force will be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated.

Related Policy

Behaviour Policy

Complaints Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Screening, Searching and Confiscation Policy and Procedure

APPENDIX 1 – INCIDENT REPORT FORM**Physical and positive intervention– INCIDENT REPORT FORM-**

All Information contained in this document is strictly confidential.

Name of student Last, First, CEG NO):		M F	DOB: dd/mm/yyyy	
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Name Of School	
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Time of the incident:		Date of incident:	
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Incident Report completed by-	Full name:	Date: dd/mm/yyyy
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Position	
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Copies to	
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Events leading to this incident?

Where did this incident take place?

How did the incident begin?

Describe the incident

What was happening at the time?

Was anyone else involved?
Did anyone else see what happened? (Give details)
What behaviour was the student presenting that warranted restraint?
Was there damage to property or an assault on a student or staff during the incident
What did you do to try to defuse the situation before using restraint?
How was the student restrained? (describe) e.g. two people escort; one person wrap; supine control, For how long? By how many staff members? Were they authorised?
Did the student sustain any injuries? Yes No If Yes, please provide the details of the injuries

Was anyone else injured? Yes / No
If Yes, please provide details of person(s) , and the details of the injuries:
Was this recorded in the accident book? Yes / No
Was the student checked for injuries by a member of staff who was not involved in the incident? Yes / No
If Yes, By Whom?
Implications for future planning
What do you think this behaviour was about? e.g., attention; emotional release; task escape mechanism; other
What would you do differently next time to avoid the need for physical restraint?
Are other staff aware of the need for a planned response to the pupil Yes / No
Follow up Action:
The incident was reported by:

Parent/Carer was informed by (tick correct option(s)):

email on-line meeting face to face meeting via MDM via Agent

Elaborate if necessary (e.g., multiple forms of contact/ joint meetings):

When were they informed?

Time_____ Date_____

APPENDIX 2 - ASSOCIATED RESOURCES:

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools DfE Guidance 2024

[Behaviour in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/behaviour-in-schools)

Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards DfE (2022)

[National Minimum Standards for boarding schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/national-minimum-standards-for-boarding-schools)

Use of Reasonable Force DfE July 2013

[DfE advice template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/dfes-use-of-reasonable-force)

Keeping children safe in education-Statutory guidance for schools and Schools September 2025

Use of Force against Those Committing Crime

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/self-defence-and-prevention-crime>

DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022

http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/s_to_u/self_defence/#Use_of_Force

Related Policies:

Health and Safety Policy

Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Complaints Policy

Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy