



RADLEY

**Restrictive Interventions Including Use
of Force to Restrain / Control Pupils and
Physical Contact with Pupils**

March 2026

Restrictive Interventions Including Use of Force to Restrain/Control Pupils and Physical Contact with Pupils Policy

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and further guidance issued by the DfE in April 2026 [Restrictive interventions including use of reasonable force in schools.pdf](#) enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including himself); or
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Restrictive intervention – a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. It includes physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways. Restrictive interventions include:

Reasonable force – Physical contact by a member of staff on a pupil to control or restrain their actions/movements in order to prevent or stop (1) a pupil from committing any offence, (2) a pupil causing personal injury to any person including the pupil themselves, (3) damage to property, or (4) disruption to education and good order at the school. Reasonable force can also include physical restraint, such as holding a pupil's arms back to prevent a fight but is not limited to this. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time; for example, guiding a pupil to safety by the arm or blocking a pupil's path.

It should be noted that restraint may or may not include direct physical contact. For example, holding a pupil's arms to their sides or removing a pupil's crutches would both be considered forms of restraint.

Seclusion – a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others, and preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction, blocking, or making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave. Seclusion is only used in extremis at Radley College.

The staff to which this power applies are defined in Section 95 of the Act as:

- any teacher who works at the school, and
- any other person whom the Warden has authorised to have control or charge of pupils, but it does not include Prefects.

The statutory power conferred by Section 93 is in addition to the common law power of any citizen in an emergency to use reasonable force in self-defence, to prevent another person from being injured or committing a criminal offence. There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force and each case must be judged on its circumstances and those exercising the power to use force must also take proper account of any particular special educational need and/or disability.

The types of force which deemed to be reasonable by NMS 15.1 are:

- passive physical contact resulting from standing between two pupils or blocking a pupil's path;
- active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the hand or arm; ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of his back; or, in more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds.

Decisions on whether circumstances justify the use of reasonable force will depend on:

- the seriousness of the incident,
- the chances of achieving the desired result by other means,
- the relative risks associated with physical intervention compared to using other strategies.

Where possible a clear oral warning to the pupil that force may have to be used should be given.

College staff are encouraged to minimise the need to use restrictive interventions through prevention and de-escalation measures such as:

- training in how the school and classroom environment can support all boys to achieve and thrive;
- sharing best practice for whole-class behaviour management;
- training on effective communication strategies, such as using appropriate tone of voice and empathy to aid de-escalation;
- development of working staff-boy relationships and trust;
- recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform improvement planning;
- giving boys time, space and strategies to calm down before their behaviour escalates;
- adopting an individualised approach to boys based upon their needs (staff must take account of any known SEND, medical conditions, or vulnerabilities which may increase risk during restraint).

Examples of situations that particularly call for judgements of this kind are:

- a pupil attacking another pupil or member of staff;
- pupils fighting and hence causing risk of injury to themselves or others;
- a pupil committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate damage to property;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury of damage by accident, rough play, or by the misuse of dangerous objects or materials;
- a pupil persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave the classroom;
- a pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson; or
- a pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school sporting event or school visit.

The guidance also emphasises that:

- It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.
- Pupils should not be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example, by covering the mouth and/or nose, or applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen.
- Any form of restraint should be avoided where possible

- Where appropriate, the pupil should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible.

Other physical contact with pupils

... it is not illegal to touch a pupil.

The DfE says that it is not illegal to touch a pupil and that there are occasions when physical contact with a pupil is 'proper and necessary'.

Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary include:

- When comforting a distressed pupil.
- When administering first aid
- When congratulating or praising a pupil.
- When demonstrating how to use a musical instrument.
- When demonstrating exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching.
- When giving first aid.

These examples would not ordinarily need to be reported, but if you have any doubt as to whether the use of physical contact was necessary then please complete the form.

Recording incidents where physical contact has been used

- Communications: All situations of use of force / restraint covered in this policy (other than those in the above bullet points) need to be recorded on the [Report Form which is available here](#) as soon as practicable after the incident.
- The DSL (or deputy) must be informed on the same day and will review all incidents to determine any safeguarding implications, patterns of concern, or need for further action. Parents should be notified on the same day by the Tutor following discussion with the DSL. Exceptions to this are when doing so would be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil. In this instance, the Tutor must report the incident to any parent(s) who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm or, if there are none, to the local authority within whose area the pupil is ordinarily resident. Details should include:
 - time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
 - brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary
 - brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
 - details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable.
- Recording: Details of the incident leading to the use of force or restraint should be recorded in CPOMS, including any follow up actions.
- Review: Incidents where reasonable force or restraint have been necessary will be reported to the termly Safeguarding Report to Council.