



Physical Contact and Restrictive Interventions Policy

April 2026

(To be reviewed September 2027)

Introduction

Larches High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, dignity and human rights of all pupils and staff. The school aims to create a safe, calm and inclusive environment in which positive relationships, early support and de-escalation strategies reduce the need for physical intervention. This policy is intended for a wide readership and reflects Larches High School's approach to the circumstances where physical contact with pupils may be appropriate or necessary.

This policy applies to:

- All school, staff, including teachers, support staff and temporary staff
- All pupils on roll, including those with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities (Send)
- All school activities, whether on site or off

Rationale

Restrictive interventions, including physical contact and the use of reasonable force, will only ever be used as a last resort, when necessary to prevent serious harm and in a manner that is lawful, proportionate and time limited.

Legal Framework

This policy has regard to the following legislation and guidance

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- DfES Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools 2026
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No.2) (England) Regulations 2025
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1998

The policy operates in the context of the Every Child Matters agenda and is driven by the ECM outcomes; staying safe, being healthy, enjoyment and achievement, achieving economic well-being and making a positive contribution.

Definitions

Restrictive Interventions

Any action that limits a pupil's movement, liberty or independence, whether physical or non-physical

Reasonable Force

Physical contact used to prevent a pupil from:

- Hurting themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Causing serious damage to property
- Causing serious disorder

There is no legal definition of "reasonable"; this depends on the circumstances of the incident.

Restraint

A form of restrictive intervention involving physical restriction that limits a pupil's freedom of movement/ This may include non force restraint, such as blocking movement or removing mobility aids to prevent immediate harm.

Seclusion

The supervised confinement of a pupil alone in a space where they are prevented from leaving. Seclusion is a restrictive intervention and is subject to statutory recording and reporting duties.

Guiding Principles

All physical contact and restrictive interventions will be underpinned by the following principles:

- **Prevention First:** staff will use early interventions, de escalation and relational approaches wherever possible
- **Last Resort** Physical intervention will only be used when other strategies have failed or are not appropriate
- **Minimum Force** The least restrictive options for the shortest possible time
- **Safety and Dignity** Actions must protect the pupils physical and emotional well being
- **No punishment** Force must never be used as a sanction or to enforce compliance
- **Trauma informed Practice** Staff will consider the potential impact of intervention on the pupil

When Physical Intervention may be used

Physical intervention may be used only when it is necessary and proportionate to:

- Prevent injury to the pupils or others
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent serious disorder that risks safety

All staff have a legal power to use reasonable force, but staff should only do so in line with this policy and school

Prohibited Practices

The school explicitly prohibits

- Any form of physical punishment
- Techniques that restrict breathing or circulation
- Pressure to the neck, throat, chest abdomen, nose or mouth
- Intentionally holding a pupil on the ground
- Any action likely to cause pain, humiliation or degradation

Consideration for Pupils with SEND

The school recognizes that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to restrictive interventions

- Individual risk assessments and behaviour support plans will be used proactively
- Reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 will be considered
- Intervention strategies will be tailored to individual needs

Recording of Incidents (Statutory Duty)

In line with section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 every significant incident involve the use of forces, restraint or seclusion must be recorded

- Records will include
- Date, time, location
- Identities of those involved
- Approximate duration of the intervention
- Reason the intervention was necessary
- Type and degree of force used
- Any injuries sustained
- Whether the pupil has SEND

Records will be completed as soon as practicable ideally on the same day

Reporting to Parents (Statutory Duty)

Parents / carers will be informed in writing of all significant incidents involving

- Reasonable Force
- Restraint (including non force restraint)

- Seclusion

Parents will be informed on the day if any Physical Intervention has taken place and then this will be put in writing to the parents no later than the next day so allowing an internal review to be completed. This would not be done if it were to place someone at risk of serious harm.

Post Incident Support

- Following any restrictive intervention
- Pupils will be supported to recover emotionally and physically
- Medical assessment will be sought where appropriate
- Staff involved will be offered support and debrief
- Incidents will be reviewed to identify learning and reduce recurrence

Training

The school will ensure that

- Staff receive regular training in de-escalation and safe handling
- Training is refreshed annually and monitored
- Only appropriately trained staff use planned restrictive techniques
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Identified staff at Larches have accessed basic positive handling training and updates in line with guidance.

Monitoring and Governance Oversight

The Headteacher and Governing Body will

- Monitor records of restrictive interventions
- Review patterns and trends
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties
- Use data to improve practice and reduce risk

Complaints and Allegations

Any complaint or allegation relating to physical contact or restrictive intervention will be managed in line with the schools Complaints Policy and Safeguarding procedures.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or guidance.

Appendix 1

SERIOUS INCIDENT STATEMENT

Main Pupil involved:	
Year group:	Form Group:
Other Pupils involved: (Forename/Initial only)	Their Role: Target (T), Witness (W), Participant (P), Bystander (B)
Pupil A	
Pupil B	
Pupil C	
Pupil D	
Type of Behaviour Please indicate e.g. damage, threatening behaviour, drug and alcohol abuse	SEND Yes or No
Incident Details	

Incident Date		Incident Time	
Location		Subject	
Statement: detail your record of the incident			
De-escalation techniques used:			
Verbal advice & support		Humour	Distraction
Reassurance		Options offered	Step away/given time to think
Calm talking		Time out offered	Other (please specify)
Non-threatening body language			
Forms of physical intervention used			
Held by (number)		Single elbow	
Holding only		Double elbow	
Friendly hold		Inside double elbow	
Length of hold		NO HOLD USED	
Length of time of the intervention:			
Your involvement was: (Please circle)	Target Bystander	Participant Other	Witness
Statement date			
Statement by			
Role in School			
Signed			
Date			

To be completed by person(s) involved and passed to the investigating member of SLT