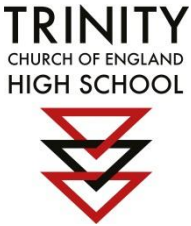


PHYSICAL INTERVENTION POLICY

 <p>TRINITY CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL</p>	Reviewed by:	Head and Leadership Team
	Approved by:	Head
	Date approved:	March, 2025
	Date adopted:	1 st September, 2025
	Next review due by:	End of 2027/28 academic year

AIM/PURPOSE

The main aim of the policy is to ensure that staff have clear guidelines, are aware of their responsibilities and are able to ensure the safety of students and themselves.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The right of all members of school staff to use reasonable force is laid down in legislation. If physical intervention is used, it needs to be in a necessary, reasonable and proportionate way. The school does not adopt a 'no contact policy'.

It is the express intention of the school that all members of staff are empowered to intervene in any situation involving students with due regard to the information outlined in this policy.

The Department for Education (2013) outlines the following:

1. Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
2. In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
3. 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.

School will make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs (SEND) when implementing this policy.

What is reasonable force?

1. 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.
2. 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 such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
3. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
4. As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control students and to restrain them. 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.

5. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two students are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
6. 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.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AT TRINITY CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

Staff need to ensure that all other means to de-escalate a situation have been used. Any threat should be assessed, taking into account the child, the objects, the environment and the situational factors. Knowledge of the child should be used to try and distract and de-escalate and scripts and language of choice should be used to discourage the child from any risky course of action. Help should be sought by considering if the risks can be reduced by finding other adults with strong relationships or de-escalation expertise with the child. Support from trained colleagues should be considered and whether the physical environment or space (changes to light or noise for example) can be adapted. Members of staff have a duty of care to students, but are not required to put their own safety at risk. The member of staff involved should try to keep talking, in a calm voice, explaining what is happening and why. That way, it is clear to everyone that the teacher is in control. The incident should be “logged” afterwards and parents will be informed on the same day. While using force can cause complications, so too can standing by and doing nothing, since the duty of care law requires a member of staff to do all that is reasonably expected to protect children’s welfare.

There are important rules that all members of staff should know: don’t pin children to the ground, don’t obstruct their breathing and never apply pressure to joints. Make all efforts to avoid the need for physical intervention. Only use as a last resort.

When can reasonable force be used?

- Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
- In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- 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 cannot:

- Use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Post-incident support

When pupils/students are dysregulated and unable to control their emotions, physical intervention may be unavoidable. In these circumstances, it is the behaviour of the child or young person, which determines the degree of force required to bring them under control, which may lead to injury rather than the intention of the member of staff to cause harm.

Incidents that require use of physical interventions can be upsetting for children and young people, school staff involved and parents.

After incidents have subsided, it is important that the following is considered for staff and children:

- Thoughts, feelings and emotions

- Emotional 'first aid'
- Physical check

It is recommended that staff have a post-incident review, which will focus on actions and behaviours which will review the incident for the individual child and the needs of the wider staff and school community:

- Who did what, when, why and how?
- What was the outcome?
- What does it tell us about what we already know about the young person?
- What have we learnt and what or how does this inform our practice?
- When will the plan be reviewed or developed to aim to reduce the risk of physical intervention being required in any future incidents?
- How long after the incident should a further review take place? (i.e. if physical intervention has reduced, why? If it has increased, why?)

Power to search students without consent

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, headteachers and authorised staff (members of the pastoral team) can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following "prohibited items:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco, cigarette papers and vapes
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Searches will always be carried out by two members of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practical to summon another member of staff.

Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

What about other physical contact with students?

- It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.
- Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:
 - When comforting a distressed pupil
 - When a pupil is being congratulated or praised;
 - To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;
 - To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching; and
 - To give first aid.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This will involve key personnel including the Leadership Team, those with significant pastoral responsibility and representatives of the wider staff.

The policy will be reviewed by the Leadership Team and approved by the Head.