

# Physical Interventions and Restraints Policy

2025 - 2026

**‘Because Children Deserve Better’**

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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to provide a framework for the use of physical interventions, including restraints, required to create a school environment where everyone feels, and is, safe.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and further guidance issued by the DfE in July 2013 ([Use of reasonable force - Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies](#)) enables Pivot staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a learner from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

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

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.

DfE Guidance and The Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 state that **schools cannot use force as a punishment**. Also, whilst force can be used to search for and confiscate prohibited items it **cannot** be used to search for items banned under the school rules. (See Screening, Searching and Confiscation policy – 25/26)

### Who can use reasonable force?

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

- All members of Pivot staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.
- It can also apply to people whom the Head has temporarily put in charge of learners such as agency staff (with appropriate training), unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying learners on a school organised visit.

### The types of force which are deemed to be reasonable

- Passive physical contact resulting from standing between two learners or blocking a learner's path;
- Active physical contact such as leading a learner by the hand or arm; ushering a learner away by placing a hand in the centre of their back; or, in more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds.

### Other physical contact with learners

The Department for Education says that it is not illegal to touch a learner and that there are occasions when physical contact with a learner is 'proper and necessary'.

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

- Holding the hand of the child
- When comforting a distressed learner.
- When congratulating or praising a learner.
- When demonstrating physical skills e.g., musical instrument, during PE lessons, handwriting.
- When giving first aid.

### **Minimising the need to use force**

Use of force is only used as a last resort and procedures are in place in Pivot provisions to create a calm and orderly environment within a supportive school climate that lessens the risk and threat of violence of any kind. Effective relationships are developed between staff and learners. Personal, Social, Health Education and Zones of Regulation activities support learners in managing conflict and coping with feelings. Staff are also given guidance and training in how to support learner behaviour.

## **3. Physical interventions**

At Pivot we define a physical intervention as any reasonable use of force used to support a learner who is building towards crisis. This can range from a low-level prompt touch all the way to a physical restraint. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned. This should always depend on the individual circumstances and be based on an assessment of risk. This assessment should include the risk to the learner and others.

## **4. Restraints**

Restraint means to hold back physically or to support a learner to safety using appropriate physical intervention. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances and is always in response to a safety concern. Staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in some cases, it may not always be possible to avoid injuries.

### **What to do in circumstances when the use of physical restraint is needed**

- Staff should not hesitate to act *in a necessary, reasonable and proportionate manner* provided they follow the guidelines in this policy.
- Where possible, the consequences of refusing to stop the behaviour should be explained and it should be communicated to the learner that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
- A calm and measured approach to the learner is required by staff.
- In any application of physical restraint, the minimum reasonable force should be used to calm down the situation.
- Following a restraint, learners should be closely monitored by a member of staff and where applicable, checked by a first aider once the situation is safe to do so.

## **5. Recording and Reporting**

Following an incident that required physical intervention, staff should consider what and how this information needs recording and reporting depending on the type of intervention. This should be in accordance with this policy.

## Recording Incidents

- Minor or everyday use of reasonable force is recorded in every day behaviour logs. For example, guiding a learner into the building after break to ensure their safety.
- More serious incidents involving the use of physical restraint must be reported to the **Head and Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible after the incident**. These must be recorded on Arbor (Pivot MIS) ensuring you 'add a physical intervention' to the behaviour incident log and complete a 'Restraint Record Sheet' (Appendix 2) attaching it to the Arbor log.

## Informing others

After a restraint the following people **must** be informed within **24 hours** of the incident, leaders should prioritise these conversations and we would strive for them to happen on the same day:

- Parent/Carers by phone call or email
- If the learner has a social worker, they should be informed by phone call or email
- If the learner is a Looked After Child, the social worker, the corporate parent (children's social care) will be notified as well as the Head of the Virtual School by phone call or email

## Post Incident Support

Care is taken after an incident to ensure both staff and learners are supported including meeting immediate medical needs, rebuilding relationships and reflecting on the incident so that lessons can be learned. These restorative conversations should be documented in an appropriate way and included as part of the incident report on Arbor for learners. Staff should have a separate conversation with a senior member of staff using the form in appendix 1 and these should be forwarded to HR and filed in their personnel files. Heads notify the Directors of incidents, and Directors monitor incidents where force has been used and consider the implications, agreeing any necessary actions required.

## Complaints and Allegations

If a complaint is made, it is considered in relation to Pivot's complaints procedure and guidance on dealing with allegations of abuse by staff. Further guidance is available in ['Use of Reasonable Force – Advice for Headteachers, Governing Bodies and Staff'](#) - DfE document.

## 6. Staff Training

All staff working with learners are expected to be trained in Team Teach Positive Behaviour Training: Level 2 as a minimum and each academy will have staff who are trained in Advanced Modules or hold Intermediate or Advanced trainer certificates. It is an expectation that new staff complete this training during their probation period if they do not hold a valid certificate.

Staff also receive further targeted training throughout their employment to support them to work effectively with our learners in line with the Pivot Training and Development Statement.

## 7. Linked Policies

This behaviour policy is linked to the following policies:

- Suspension and Permanent Exclusions Policy

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy
- Screening, Searching and Confiscation Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Training and Development Statement

## 8. Appendix 1: Staff follow up meeting RPE form

<b>Staff name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Incident date:</b>	<b>SLT initials:</b>
How are you feeling following the incident?	
Have you been injured? Yes / No (please circle)	
If yes, how did the injury occur?	
If yes, have you recorded it? (please tick)                      On Arbor                      On the RPI Form	
What do you think could be implemented to avoid this happening again in the future?	
How would you rate the effectiveness of the support offered during the incident?	
Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you need any further support after this incident?	
SLT notes from meeting:	
Staff signature:	Full name:
SLT signature:	Full name:

Once completed please return to HR.

## 9. Appendix 2: Restraint record sheet

Restraint record sheet					
Please complete all sections of the form following a restraint. Once complete attach to the relevant Arbor incident entry. If you need help with completing it, please see the Pastoral and Welfare Lead in your setting.					
Seen by Headteacher (initials):		Date:			
Pupil's name:		Class:		Date:	
		Time:		Length of restraint:	
Place/activity:					
Staff involved:					
Witnesses:					
<b>Describe the lead up to the incident, include all de-escalation techniques you have used.</b>					
<b>What did you try to do to avoid the restraint?</b>					
De-escalation (tick any strategies you used)					
Verbal advice and support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diversion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Time out - offered	<input type="checkbox"/>
Firm clear directions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reassurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Time out - directed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zones of Regulation toolbox	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tactical ignoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reminder of consequences	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limited choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prompt touch	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reminders of success	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distraction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take-up time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Others:	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Reason for restraint:</b> to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do					
Committing a criminal offense	<input type="checkbox"/>	Damage to property (including their own)		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Injury to self or others	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>What happened following de-escalation:</b> (include your dynamic risk assessment)					



<b>Physical intervention strategies:</b> (Tick any strategies which you used)			
Shepherd/steering		Friendly escort (Two person)	
Help hug/sideways hug		Single elbow (Two person)	
Beanbag		Figure of four (Two person)	
Double-elbow		Double-elbow (Two person)	
Half shield		Sitting friendly escort (Two person)	
Full shield		Others (specify):	
<b>Injuries:</b> (the first questions in each column must be completed)			
Pupil checked for injuries by a member of staff?		Injury to staff?	
Yes      No		Yes      No	
Any injuries noted?		Name of staff injured:	
Yes      No			
Description of injury:		Type of injury:	
Referred to first aider?		Name of staff injured:	
Name of first aider:		Type of injury:	
Treatment given (if applicable)		Treatment given (if applicable)	
<b>Follow up to incident:</b>			
Time – out		Returned to class	Completed missed work
SENCO informed		Debrief with child	Other:
<b>Parents/carers informed by:</b>			
Phone call by (name):		Letter sent by (name):	Face to face by (name):
Email sent by (name):		Text sent by (name):	Other, please specify:
<b>Other relevant paperwork completed/updated</b> (tick all applicable):			
Arbor Entry	Positive Handling Plan	Behaviour Monitoring Sheet	Other:
First Aid Log	Individual Pupil Risk Assessment	Restorative conversations record	
Staff signature:		Date:	