

We are an ambitious and inclusive Trust of schools
strengthening communities through excellent education.



Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions Policy

Responsibility for approval: Executive Team
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1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 We are an ambitious and inclusive Trust of schools, strengthening our communities through excellent education. We are committed to providing excellent education for every child, every day, and aim to strengthen and work with our communities to continue to improve

2.0 Scope and Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines on the use of reasonable force and restrictive intervention by staff members to ensure the safety and well-being of students, staff, and visitors within the school environment. The policy aims to create a safe and supportive learning environment while respecting the rights and dignity of all individuals. This policy applies to all staff members, including teachers, administrators, support staff, and any other individuals authorized to supervise students within the school premises or during school related activities.

3.0 Definition

- 3.1 For the purpose of this document:
- The Ted Wragg Multi Academy Trust is referenced to as the Ted Wragg Trust or TWT or the Trust.
 - For clarity, this policy will use the following definitions:
 - Reasonable force: Physical contact by a member of staff on a student to control or restrain their actions/movements. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances. Any use of reasonable force is an example of a restrictive intervention and may or may not involve the use of restraint.
 - Restrictive interventions: Any planned or reactive action which limits a student's movement, liberty or freedom to act independently. Restrictive interventions may include use of equipment, medication or seclusion. Restrictive interventions may or may not involve the use of reasonable force.
 - Restraint: A form of restrictive intervention involving direct physical contact and force where the intention is to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a student. Restraint may also include mechanical or chemical restraint. Restraint may or may not involve the use of force.
 - These terms are not necessarily mutually exclusive categories. For example, depending on the circumstances, if two members of staff briefly physically pull apart two students who are fighting, all three definitions could be relevant
 - Please note- as with the interchangeable terminology noted above, references to reasonable force within the rest of this policy also apply to the terms restrictive interventions and restraint.

4.0 Legal Framework

- 4.1 This Policy will be published on the Trust's website and will be included in the Trust's Policy Monitoring Schedule.

5.0 Who can use reasonable force?

- 5.1 All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. Staff who are likely to need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions are trained regularly in its safe and lawful use and in preventative strategies by fully qualified instructors.

6.0 Guiding principles

- 6.1 The decision on whether it is reasonable to use force and/or other restrictive interventions, depends on the individual circumstances of each situation. In assessing whether force and/or other restrictive interventions are reasonable in a situation, the member of staff should use their professional judgement. Factors staff might want to consider include but are not limited to:
- 6.2 **Necessary:** Staff will consider whether there are reasonable alternative ways to manage a situation and achieve the desired outcome. Staff will assess whether the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the consequences of the behaviour that it intends to address. Where possible, staff will communicate with other staff members to understand any broader risks in the environment.
- 6.3 **Proportionate:** Staff will use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce the relevant risks. Staff will consider the personal circumstances of the student such as medical conditions, special educational needs or other vulnerabilities, their characteristics such as age and size, and must consider relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.
- 6.4 **Student's Welfare:** Staff will consider the impact on the student's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. For example, students who have experienced an adverse life event, with diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, past trauma or neglect, communication difficulties, or other needs, may find the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions particularly distressing. Staff will seek to maintain respect for a student's dignity. This may include, where possible, considering the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers. Where possible, staff will clearly and calmly communicate to the student what is happening, why it is happening, and explain what the student needs to do. For students with difficulties with speech, language and communication, or with English as an additional language, verbal and/or non-verbal strategies will be used to ensure the student understands what is happening and has adequate time to process information and respond. Staff will seek to understand how the student is feeling and use this information to determine whether the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.

7.0 Application

- 7.1 Using reasonable force in a school setting involves careful consideration of various factors to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff. Here are the key practical considerations.
- 7.2 **Assessment of the Situation**
 - Immediacy of Threat: Evaluate whether the situation poses an immediate threat to the safety of students, staff, or property.
 - Severity of the Threat: Identify whether the threat involves physical harm, significant disruption, or damage to property.
 - De-escalation Attempts: Ensure that all non-physical de-escalation techniques have been attempted and proven ineffective before resorting to physical force.
- 7.3 **Proportionality and necessity**
 - Minimum Force: Use the least amount of force necessary to control the situation.
 - Duration: Apply force for the shortest possible time to achieve the desired outcome.
 - Proportionate Response: Ensure that the level of force used is proportionate to the severity of the threat

7.4 Training and Preparedness

- Staff Training: Ensure all staff members are aware and have an understanding of the use of reasonable force and restrictive intervention policy and principles. All relevant staff will have enhanced training.
- Refresher Courses: Provide regular refresher training to maintain staff competence in handling such situations

7.5 Physical and Emotional Safety

- Avoiding Harm: Take care to avoid causing unnecessary pain or injury to the student.
- Emotional Support: Be mindful of the emotional impact on the student and provide support following the incident.

7.6 Legal and Ethical Considerations

- Compliance with Laws: Ensure that any use of force complies with relevant local, state, and federal laws.
- School Policies: Adhere to the school's policies and procedures regarding the use of force.
- Rights and Dignity: Respect the rights and dignity of the student at all times.

7.7 Documentation and Reporting

- Incident Reporting: Document the incident in detail, including the circumstances leading up to the use of force, the actions taken, and the outcomes.
- Parental Notification: Inform the student's parents or guardians about the incident as soon as possible.
- Review and Follow-up: Participate in a review of the incident to identify any lessons learned and to plan any necessary follow-up actions, such as counselling or additional support for the student.

7.8 Debriefing and Support

- Debriefing Sessions: Conduct debriefing sessions with the staff involved and the student to discuss the incident and address any ongoing concerns.
- Support Services: Provide access to support services for both staff and students affected by the incident, including counselling if necessary.

7.9 Environmental Considerations

- Safe Environment: Ensure that the environment where the force is used is as safe as possible, minimizing the risk of accidental injury (e.g., removing obstacles that could cause tripping or falling).
- Witnesses: When possible, have another staff member present as a witness to the intervention.

7.10 Communication

- Clear Instructions: Communicate clearly with the student throughout the intervention, explaining why the force is being used and what is expected of them.
- Calm Demeanour: Maintain a calm and controlled demeanour to help de-escalate the situation and reassure the student.

8.0 Use of Reasonable force to search students

- 8.1 Head teachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a student or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the student may have a prohibited item. A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for legally prohibited items. The decision to use reasonable force should be made on a case-by-case basis. Staff should refer to the [Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools guidance document](#) for detailed advice on searching a student.

9.0 Unacceptable use of force

- 9.1 School staff will never use force on a student for the purpose of punishment. Students will never be deliberately 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. The use of force can be dangerous, particularly where it occurs on the ground. If a student is unintentionally held on the ground, staff will release their holds or re-position into a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible. Where needed, the student should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible.

10.0 Reporting and Recording

- 10.1 Governing bodies of maintained schools and the proprietors of other schools must ensure that a procedure is in place for recording each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil, as part of the school's duty under section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- 10.2 Incidents must be recorded by the staff member(s) involved as soon as possible after the event and must be made in writing using the form below.
- 10.3 The requirement to record applies even if the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan.

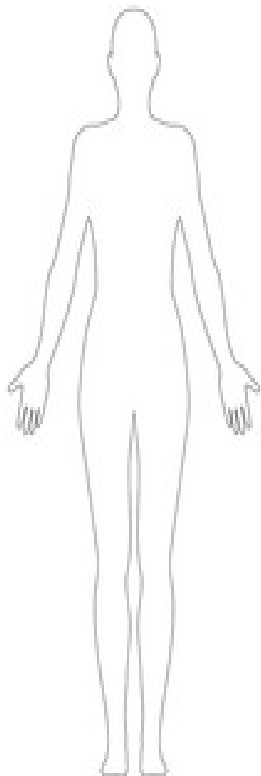
11.0 Complaints

- 11.1 If any complaints are raised regarding reasonable force or restrictive interventions the matter will be investigated using our complaints process. The school will initiate the investigation as soon as possible and report any findings back through the appropriate channels.

12.0 Appendices

- 12.1 **Appendix 1:** Recording and Reporting the Use of Reasonable Force by Staff

Recording and Reporting the Use of Reasonable Force by Staff

Date of Incident:	Time of Incident:	Location of Incident:
Pupil (s) Involved - Name (s):	Year Group:	Specific Needs of the Pupil(s) involved:
Staff Members Involved – Name (s):	Staff member recording the incident – Name: Role within the incident (circle) – witness / person using reasonable force	
Body map indicator: 	<input type="checkbox"/> Details of the incident: <input type="checkbox"/> Length of time intervention was used <input type="checkbox"/> Brief account of the incident – including what led to the incident <input type="checkbox"/> Identified potential triggers (if known) <input type="checkbox"/> Any preventative / de-escalation strategies used <input type="checkbox"/> Type and degree of reasonable force used- Please tick box and detail contact/restraint used: <input type="checkbox"/> Guided support <input type="checkbox"/> Low-level restriction <input type="checkbox"/> Medium-level restriction <input type="checkbox"/> High-level restriction	

	<input type="checkbox"/> Any physical injuries sustained (if applicable) and to who – state none if this is the case.
Decision making / assessment of why the use of force was necessary:	
Was the possible use of reasonable force explained to the student in advance of using it?	
Was there a need for any post incident support for the pupil or staff? If so, detail this below:	
When and how were parents notified of the incident and by who:	
Detail any follow up action / learning below. E.g. risk assessment / safety plan / safe place	
Signed (Staff Member):	
Date:	
Signed (Headteacher):	
Date:	
LADO informed:	
Outcome:	