

# Restrictive Interventions and Reasonable Force Policy

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Directors on :	Spring 2026
This Policy will be reviewed by the GLC Board on :	Spring 2028

## **GLC Mission Statement**

The GLC’s mission is to develop active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community.

This will be achieved through:

- High quality teaching that deliberately develops competencies of curiosity, creativity, communication and critical-thinking;
- An inspiring and meaningful curriculum;
- The development of productive relationships by instilling the values of compassion, resilience, responsibility and aspiration to prepare our young people for learning and life;
- A commitment to the wellbeing of our staff;
- A culture of professional generosity, collaboration, challenge and support throughout the GLC;
- The development of effective external partnerships for the benefit and wellbeing of our community.

## **Equalities Statement**

The GLC’s commitment to equality is enshrined in our mission statement to develop ‘active and thriving citizens within a diverse, truly fair and equal community’.

We are a vibrant, innovative and successful organisation: we work hard to be the place of choice to work and to learn. Across the 5 academies of the GLC, we pledge that everyone enjoys an equality of opportunity. We work tirelessly to ensure that individual characteristics including age, ethnicity, socio-economic background, academic ability, disability, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation are not discriminated against in any way. We create inclusive environments characterised by mutual respect where difference is celebrated.

# The GLC Policy for Restrictive Interventions and Reasonable Force

At The GLC [Gateway Learning Community] we are committed to maintaining the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff. Each academy within the [GLC] recognises that there are occasions when the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils is necessary. Members of staff have the legal power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property. A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for any prohibited items but not banned items if a student is refusing to be searched. The decision to use reasonable force should be made on a case-by-case basis. The member of staff should consider whether conducting the search will prevent the students harming themselves or others, damaging property or from causing disorder. (see GLC Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy).

## About this policy

This policy is in line with DfE advice: Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force in schools; Guidance for schools in England, April 2026.

[Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools - GOV.UK](#)

The law allows all adults who are authorised by the Headteacher to be responsible for pupils to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a pupil:

- Committing a criminal offence (or for younger children that which would be an offence)
- Causing personal injury, injury to others or damage to property
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline

Staff should not hesitate to act in these situations provided they follow this policy and the attached guidance; however, they should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of their professional colleagues.

## Definitions:

- **Restrictive interventions** refers to a range of ways that staff may restrain or restrict a pupil;
- **Control** means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading/guiding a pupil out of a classroom;
- **Restraint** a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This 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.
- **Handling:** refers to any physical intervention applied by a member of staff where it is necessary to make physical contact with a pupil in order to manage their conduct or ensure their own or others safety. Handling strategies may be restrictive or non-restrictive and include shepherding, guiding, supporting, blocking, confining, holding and, in the most extreme cases, restraining;
- **Reasonable in the circumstances** means using no more force than is needed to control or restrain;
- **Reasonable force** describes the amount of force that staff can (in certain circumstances) use on a pupil. Force is usually used to control or restrain. It should always be the minimum force needed to regain and ensure safety and control for everyone involved or present. Reasonable force covers a broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their careers;
- **Significant incident:** any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.
- **Seclusion:** a non-disciplinary intervention 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.

## Objectives of using reasonable force/restrictive interventions and reasonable force:

- The key objective in using any form of force or restraint is to maintain the safety of pupils and staff and to maintain good order.

- The use of force or restraint may also be used to prevent serious damage to property.

Staff can use a restrictive intervention - including reasonable force - to prevent or stop a pupil from:

- causing injury to themselves or others;
- committing a criminal offence;
- damaging property;
- causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.
- remove a disruptive child from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- To search a student (if they are refusing) for any prohibited items but not banned items as outlined in the behaviour policy. The member of staff should consider whether conducting the search will prevent the students harming themselves or others, damaging property or from causing disorder.

The key principles are that any physical intervention should be:

- In the interest of the pupil/s;
- Reasonable and proportionate;
- Intended to reduce risk;
- The least intrusive and restrictive of those options available that are likely to be effective.

Any restraint carries a risk of physical and psychological harm, and should be avoided where possible - staff must always assess whether it's necessary and proportionate.

#### **Our approach: 'Prevention is better than cure'**

All GLC academies provide a comprehensively planned and adapted curriculum that provides appropriate levels of challenge to all pupils. We maintain effective behaviour policies that are known and understood by all staff and pupils, and emphasise the importance of positive, effective relationships in school. We create calm, respectful and orderly environments to minimise incidents that may require any physical intervention. We de-escalate incidents when they do arise. **Restrictive interventions and reasonable force** is our method of last resort for a tiny minority of situations, after all other approaches have been tried or in situations of clear danger or extreme urgency: **95% of crisis situations can be dealt with through calm, dignified and skilled intervention** [the use of non-confrontational approaches and understanding of messages received from body language are vital].

We utilise only the minimum force required to resolve the situation safely, and ensure that the risks involved in physically intervening are outweighed by the risks of not doing so. How we respond always has regard to the circumstances and to the age and understanding of the child or young person. Staff will always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury (both physically and psychologically), but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil. No member of staff is required to employ and physical intervention strategy if they are not comfortable or confident to do so effectively.

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

All staff and volunteers must work together to:

- Create a calm environment that minimises the risk of incidents that might require using force/**restrictive interventions and reasonable force**;
- use our pedagogical approaches to teach pupils how to manage conflict;
- undertake measures to find out what factors may be influencing the pupil's behaviour;
- identify early warning signs, patterns and hotspots that indicate where foreseeable behaviours are developing;
- de-escalate incidents as they arise using shared language and strategies;

- only use force/**restrictive interventions and reasonable force** when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force/**restrictive interventions and reasonable force**.

In many circumstances, assertiveness skills and positive strategies can be effectively used to diffuse situations, such as:

- using a calm facial expression and warm, open body language;
- Using a warm, calm tone of voice with the pupil;
- Calmly reminding the pupil of the GLC expectations, their choices and the consequences of not following an instruction;
- Avoiding having too many members of staff or pupils present when trying to de-escalate a situation;
- Use of a distracter such as a whistle or loud bell to interrupt the behaviour long enough for other methods of verbal control;
- Withdrawal of attention (audience) e.g. if an action such as damage to property is threatened;
- Other techniques designed to defuse a situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour, in which case the incident could be dealt with later when emotions are running less high;
- The employment of other sanctions consistent with The GLC's primary and secondary policies on behaviour and relationships.

Considerations before using a restrictive intervention:

- **if it's necessary:** there might be alternative ways to manage the situation and achieve the desired outcome/ Staff should consider whether an intervention would reduce risks or escalate the situation further;
- **if it's proportionate:** staff should use the least restrictive intervention for the least amount of time, and consider the individual circumstances of the pupil (including age, size, developmental stage and any medical needs);
- **the pupil's welfare:** staff should consider the impact that the use of force or restrictive interventions can have on a pupil, for example for pupils who have experienced adverse life events. Staff should also seek to maintain respect for their dignity.

### **Unacceptable use of force**

It is illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment. Pupils should not be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation. For example, by covering the nose or mouth or applying pressure to the neck or abdomen.

If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should release them, or re-position into a safer alternative as quickly as possible.

### **Staff authorised to use reasonable force/positive handling: restrictive interventions**

Normally, only staff who have been trained in Safer Handling techniques will restrain pupils, with due regard to recommendations including staff ratios and safety protocols. However, in an emergency situation all staff are authorised to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils, should the need arise, until trained colleagues arrive. All staff must use their professional judgement in deciding at what point to intervene and must always act in the best interests of children. Staff should ensure that adult assistance is requested before any physical intervention, although it is understood that circumstances may lead to the need for intervention prior to the assistance arriving.

### **Application of force/restrictive interventions and reasonable force:**

- Only the minimum force should be used. As far as possible, staff should not use force/**restrictive interventions and reasonable force** handling unless, or until, another responsible adult is present to support;
- Before intervening physically, an adult will, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and explain what will happen if he/she does not;

- The adult should continue to communicate with the pupil using positive instructional language and explaining what you want them to do. A calm and measured approach to the situation is needed from the adult. The age and level of understanding of the pupil and the severity of the incident are important factors to consider.
- Staff must always bear in mind their legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and pupils with SEND.
- GLC staff are not expected to put themselves in danger. The GLC does not expect staff to go beyond what is deemed reasonable. It is acceptable for any member of staff to decide that they will not use physical intervention for personal reasons.

### **Effective restrictive interventions and reasonable force**

When **restrictive interventions and reasonable force** becomes necessary:

#### **DO**

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why;
- Use the minimum force necessary;
- Attempt to use body positioning, positive gestures and positive instructional language to guide and coax pupils away from harm;
- Involve another member of staff;
- Block, interpose, and lead pupils to prevent them from injury and/or damage;
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition), and give a clear countdown for this;
- Continue to communicate with the pupil and other staff throughout the incident about what you are doing and give timeframes;
- Use simple and clear language given in a calm manner;
- Use best practice guidance (Safer Handling training) regarding where to place hands and feet when holding or restraining (eg hold limbs above major joints);
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance.

#### **DON'T**

- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control);
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil;
- Attempt to reason with the pupil;
- Involve other pupils in the restraint;
- Touch or hold the pupil in any way other than that necessary to control or restrain, using only the methods from Safer Handling training (for example, no twisting, pulling, bending or forcing);
- Pick up a child;
- Make contact with sexually sensitive areas of the body;
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck, lying face down or pulling arms across the child's chest or lap;
- NEVER use physical intervention strategies as a punishment or to deliberately inflict pain;
- Hit, strike, kick or trip up the pupil.

### **Post-incident review**

There are 4 clear stages following an incident:

- Record/report
- Assess
- Post-incident support, and
- Monitoring

### **Recording and reporting:**

All incidents that necessitate the use of force/**restrictive interventions and reasonable force** to control pupils **must be recorded** by all staff member[s] involved as soon as possible (within 24 hours). Each GLC academy

will maintain a bound and numbered book or time stamped electronic version. Parents will always be informed of such incidents on the same day.

The following details must be included in the report:

- the name/s of the pupil(s) and staff involved;
- any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including if the pupil has SEND;
- the time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention;
- details of any physical injuries;
- any support provided after the incident, including any medical treatment for injuries;
- A brief account of the incident, including what led up to it, any known triggers that may or were involved, and any preventative or de-escalation strategies used;
- The type of reasonable force used, including how it was assessed as necessary or not necessary.

A written report of the incident will be provided to each of the pupil's parents/carers as soon as possible, including where the use of force or restrictive intervention has been agreed as part of a pupil's plan. Please see appendix 1 for a proforma.

Staff must:

- Inform a member of SLT as soon as possible;
- Record the facts surrounding the incident carefully, clearly and without judgement on CPOMs;
- If staff/pupils have been injured during the incident this must be recorded on the relevant form and given to the Head of School or Deputy Head of School.

#### **Assess**

- Parents/carers of the pupil involved will be included in discussions about further actions and support. A regulation plan will be implemented, or updated, which includes strategies to prevent and deal with recurrence of incidents. Plans will take account of age, gender, additional/special needs and social context;
- A risk assessment and pupil support plan may also be completed and shared with staff and parents.
- The regulation plan will normally be reviewed termly alongside the strategies and risk assessment but if needed, the individual targets and strategies may be adjusted weekly/fortnightly;
- Staff will be kept informed about pupils who may be at risk to themselves or others through discussions with the relevant staff members.

When completing the regulation plan, staff and parents/carers should focus on action and behaviours:

- Who did what, when, why, 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?

Where a pupil's behaviour means that it's more likely that staff will need to use reasonable force or other restrictive interventions, there must be a risk assessment in place. This must be shared with key staff, the pupil and their parents/carers. The GLC will also work to manage and reduce the risk through understanding the pupil's triggers and providing staff training.

#### **Post-incident support:**

Incidents that require the use of force/**restrictive interventions and reasonable force** can be upsetting for all concerned. It is important that staff and pupils are given emotional support. After incidents have subsided it is important to ensure that staff and pupils are given emotional support and basic first-aid treatment for any injuries. Immediate action should, of course, be taken to ensure that medical help is accessed for any injuries that require other than basic first aid. The school should take action to report any serious injuries to staff or students in accordance with Thurrock LA guidelines and GLC procedures.

When supporting staff and pupils, we need to consider thoughts and emotions, including emotional first aid.

### **Monitoring use of restrictive physical interventions**

Use of physical intervention in school is monitored in order to help staff learn from experience, promote the well-being of children in their care, and provide a basis for appropriate support. Monitoring can help the school to determine what specialist help is needed for children and to assess the appropriateness of the child's placement at the school. The use of physical intervention is monitored and evaluated regularly at Leadership meetings and GLC Inclusion Panels. Individual regulation plans and pupil risk assessments are reviewed at least termly.

The GLC Inclusion Panel reviews and analyses data to ensure that the following are identified:

- areas for improvement to policies and practice;
- staff training and development needs, including the use of de-escalation techniques;
- regular patterns or triggers for key pupils, with more appropriate strategies and provisions to better support them;
- whether the use of restraint has been used disproportionately with vulnerable pupils, including those with SEND.

### **Staff training**

It is the policy of The GLC that all staff working closely with pupils are trained in the pro-active and responsive behaviour management strategies and, to complement the behaviour management approaches and strategies reflected in the primary and secondary Behaviour & Relationships Policies. Selected staff are trained in Safer Handling through an accredited provider. In cases where a risk assessment is in operation, selected staff will be identified as the key workers in any physical interventions to be used.

### **Complaints:**

- The GLC policy, and involvement of parents when an incident occurs, should help avoid complaints. However, where complaints are made these will be dealt with under the GLC Complaints Procedure.

### **Physical contact with pupils in other circumstances:**

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are times when physical contact with pupils is proper and necessary.

- Some physical contact with pupils may be necessary during PE lessons, when a student is being congratulated or praised, demonstrating how to use a musical instrument, giving first aid, dealing with distressed pupils who may need comforting and pupils with SEND. Staff will use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support.
- All staff will operate an equal opportunities approach. Staff are made aware of the appropriateness of physical contact with pupils of all ages. There may be some individuals who find physical contact unwelcome, e.g. those with a different cultural background or those who have been victims of abuse. Support plans, regulation plans and care plans for individual pupils may reflect this.

## Appendix 1

### Reporting an incident of force or restrictive intervention

<b>Pupil name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>
<b>Date &amp; time of the intervention</b>		
<b>Location and approximate duration</b>		

<b>Reason for restrictive intervention</b>	<b>Please tick all appropriate</b>
Prevent a pupil causing an injury to themselves	
Prevent a pupil causing injury to their peers	
Prevent a pupil causing injury to members of staff	
Prevent a pupil from engaging in serious disorder and disruption to a lesson, school event or trip	
To remove a pupil from a classroom or area of school where they have refused to follow an instruction to leave	
To prevent the pupil from damaging property	
To prevent the pupil from committing a criminal offence	
Conducting a search for prohibited and/or banned items which were likely to be used to commit an offence/cause injury/cause damage to property	

<b>Brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary</b>
<b>Brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force</b>
<b>Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable</b>
<b>Describe what follow up action is being undertaken</b>

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<b>Staff signatures</b>	
<b>Discussion held with parent</b>	
<b>Parent/carer signatures</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

*This form should be uploaded to CPOMS as soon as practicably possible*