



Holmer Green Junior School

We inspire, we enable, we achieve. Together.



Use of Restrictive Force Policy

Revised September 2026

<u>Written</u>	<u>Adopted by Governors</u>	<u>Review date</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
September 2026		September 2027	Inclusion Lead – Shona Timms

At Holmer Green Junior School, the use of reasonable force is only used when completely necessary. As a school, our behaviour management is consistent and we place a focus on building positive relationships with pupils.

Purpose

As a school, all staff are 'Step On' trained. We understand that behaviour is always used to communicate a need for a child. For this reason, we monitor all behaviour closely and report changes or challenges with behaviour swiftly on CPOMS. In this policy, we will set out the process used within school to de-escalate behaviour.

Positive relationships

We understand that pupils learn best when they feel settled and safe within school. We use house points, Headteacher stickers, Star of the Week and behaviour certificates to celebrate pupils. Alongside this, we choose to use positive phrasing rather than negative phrasing. For example:

Negative phrasing	Positive phrasing
Stop being silly Don't throw the pen Stop running Don't talk to me like that Calm down I've told you not to do that Don't shout out the answer	Sit quietly, thank you Put the pen on the table / pen down Dishes in the sink Walk inside Kind words are used here, please use them Switch the computer off Take some time in your quiet place Stay seated in your chair Hands up if you know the answer Please / thank you

Building positive relationships with pupils is something we always strive for. We use a range of strategies to do this effectively:

- Greeting pupils positively
- Discussing pupils' hobbies and likes with them
- Providing adults on the playground to play with pupils
- Rewarding pupils
- Praising pupils verbally regularly

We follow a strict policy of 'praising in public and reprimanding in private.'

De-escalation

Our goal is always to de-escalate situations quickly where any child is showing emotional dysregulation.

The ways that we do this are:

- Limited choice
- Scripts

We give pupils limited choices to help them make choices without becoming overwhelmed. Some examples are:

- We can talk here or in the garden.
- Put the pen on the table or in the box.
- You can sit on your own or with the group.

Where necessary, we will adapt how we communicate these choices using resources such as pictures or using Makaton.

The use of scripts means that staff can be consistent with a pupil. Below are some examples that may be used.

‘Pupils name

I can see that you are feeling frustrated.

Would you like to talk to me about it here or in the blue room?’

‘Pupils name

I can see that you are finding it difficult to concentrate right now because ...

A movement break might help.

Would you like to do your movement break exercises in the hall or would completing your work in the corridor help you to concentrate?’

Consequences

Punishment: The infliction or imposition of a penalty as retribution for an offence.

Sanction: The detriment, loss of reward, as a means of enforcing the law.

Consequence: Something that logically or naturally follows from an action.

We do not use sanctions or punishment at Holmer Green Junior School. Our consequences are always protective or educational. Please see the behaviour policy for further details about consequences.

Restrictive interventions including use of reasonable force

The *Restrictive Interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools* guidance published by the DFE in April 2026 provides clear advice on how schools can minimise the use of restrictive interventions as well as new statutory guidance regarding recording and reporting any incidences of the use of force.

For clarity, the policy will use these definitions:

Restrictive intervention: a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This guidance uses ‘restrictive interventions’ as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

Reasonable force: a term used in legislation which includes physical restrictive interventions. All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. Reasonable means

using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in the below circumstances.

To prevent or stop a pupil from:

1. causing injury to themselves or others
2. committing a criminal offence
3. damaging property
4. causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

All use of restrictive interventions must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary. No intervention is ever used that restricts breathing or puts pressure onto the shoulders or backs of pupils.

For the safety of pupils, staff will only ever use an open hand or a closed hand as shown in the below pictures.



The restrictive measures used in school are:

- guided shoulder hug (closed hand on each shoulder, communicate intention, de-escalation script and forward motion)
- guided arm hug (closed hands above the elbows, communicate intention, de-escalation script and forward motion)
- open hand to stabilise and turn (open hand placed on the arm above the elbow, gently guide the pupil's arm in front of the body to turn them, guided shoulder hug if necessary)

Reflect, repair and restore

A follow up conversation, once the pupils are calm, is then used to facilitate reflection, learning and to ensure that positive relationships are maintained. This is important to ensure the pupil feels heard but also to ensure that the pupil learns from the situation. A restorative approach supports the process of exploring what the pupil was thinking and feeling, exploring how to rebuild relationships and identify any triggers.

Reporting

If any restrictive measures are taken, parents/guardians will be communicated with on the same day. Staff will complete the 'use of restrictive force' recording template (Appendix 1) and this will be uploaded to CPOMS. The parent/guardian will then be called so that they are made aware of the situation. After this, an email will be sent to the parent/carer to confirm that restrictive measures were used. (Appendix 2)

Appendix 1:

Use of restrictive force reporting form

What happened before the restrictive measure and what trigger did you identify?

What did you try before using restrictive force?

What restrictive measure was used?

- Guided shoulder hug
- Guided arm hug
- Open hand to stabilise and turn

What happened and how long was the restrictive measure used for?

How did you reflect, repair and restore with the pupil?

Appendix 2:

Dear _____

As we discussed via phone earlier, restrictive force was used today in the form of _____. This took place at _____. Please be reassured that this was reasonable, proportionate and necessary. Your child was not hurt in any manner. After the incident, your child reflected with _____ and was calm.