Truro and Penwith Academy Trust

# Mithian School

*Physical Restraint Policy*

2026 - 2027

## Introduction

Mithian School is committed to a positive behaviour strategy that seeks to reward children for choosing to behave responsibly and appropriately. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where staff may need to exercise physical restraintand this policy outlines the school's approach in those circumstances.

## Background

The DfE document **Use of Reasonable Force** states that reasonable force can be used by all members of school staff and can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder.

## Terminology

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 pupils. Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed. The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the teacher concerned.
Whether the force used is reasonable will always depend on the particular circumstances of the case. The use of force is reasonable if it is proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent. This means the degree of force used should be no more than is needed to achieve the desired result. Staff should consider: How is this intervention in the best interests of the child? Is it proportionate to the circumstances it is intended to prevent? Is it necessary to do this now? Have de-escalation strategies been tried? What would theappropriate Team Teach technique be in this situation?

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and safety with the intention of reestablishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allows the pupil to regain self-control.

Force is used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil 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.

As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.

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

## Aims and Objectives

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 some slight injury occurring.

Reasonable force can be used to: remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so; prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit; 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; restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Staff should: Tell the child what they are doing and why, tell the child what s/he must do for staff to remove the restraint ( this may need frequent repetition), involve another member of staff if possible, use simple and clear language and relax the restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

Reasonable force cannot be used as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

We adhere to the legal requirement to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and for disabled pupils.

At Mithian School, key staff are trained by instructors from PRICE training to ensure understanding of strategies to de-escalate situations, when it is reasonable to use reasonable force and of the legitimate and appropriate physical techniques that should be used if required.

Staff must inform parents about serious incidents that involve the use of force.

In deciding what is a serious incident, teachers should use their professional judgement and consider the pupil's behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident; degree of force used; length of time of incident; effect on the pupil or member of staff; the child's age.

All use of reasonable force in serious incidents must be reported to the HT immediately and must be recorded on CPOMS by the staff involved; this record will be monitored by the SLT as necessary.

All complaints about the use of force should be investigated thoroughly, speedily and appropriately.
It may be necessary sometimes to assist a child to move away from a situation they are struggling to cope with to a safer or more comfortable place where they have a better chance of regaining their composure. As a general rule, the best way to monitor and support a child is to be in the same room with them. As a general rule, it would not be reasonable to hold a door shut.

Risk assessments must be compiled for pupils who may need physical restraint and a Handling Plan together with a Behaviour Support Plan must be in place for these children; the class teacher and SENCo is responsible for ensuring that these are in place. Risk assessments for children should address: strategies to be used prior to intervention, ways of avoiding triggers if these are known, involvement of parents/ carers and pupil to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take, briefing of staff to ensure that they know exactly what action they should be taking ( this may identify a need for training or guidance), identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate and the school's duty of care to all pupils and staff.

**People who are responsible for Physical Restraint**

Mrs. Evey Evison ~ Headteacher
Mr Chris Watson ~ Chair of Governors

**Date of Policy: September 2026**
**Review: September 2027**