



Lincolnshire Gateway
Academies Trust

Care, Control and Restraint Policy and Guidelines

Date reviewed:	May 2026	
Approved by:	Board	July 2026
Next review due by:	May 2028	

For Office Use Only:

Policy Version: 2.0

To make changes to this policy, please
email admin@lincolnshiregateway.co.uk.

PREFACE

This policy provides guidance on the physical management of pupils who present challenging behaviour or may be in possession of prohibited items, as outlined in the Behaviour Policy.

The policy has been developed in line with current statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education, including

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024),
- Behaviour in Schools (2022),
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974,
- Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2022). It also takes account of relevant legislation including:
 - The Children Act 1989,
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Equality Act 2010

This policy should be read alongside the academy's Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures, plus Assaults on Academy Staff Procedures'.

Good practice is based on:

- good relationships between staff and students;
- the positive promotion of good behaviour;
- clear procedures and processes which are reinforced in and outside the classroom;
- clear recording of all incidents;
- effective links with parents;
- a recognition that some children presenting violent behaviour may have been subject to abuse. Please refer to "Child Protection Procedures".

Leaders are responsible for ensuring staff receive appropriate training and support.

PRINCIPLES

The academy is committed to promoting positive behaviour and responding to incidents in a way that prioritises safety, dignity and wellbeing. All staff must adopt a trauma-informed and child-centred approach, recognising that behaviour may be a form of communication.

The use of physical intervention, including restraint, will always be a last resort, used only when necessary to prevent harm or serious disruption. Any such intervention must be reasonable, proportionate to the circumstances, and applied for the shortest possible time.

The academy ensures that all pupils:

- feel safe
- are treated fairly and with respect
- are able to learn without disruption

Staff are entitled to a safe and supportive working environment.

Key Terminology:

Restrictive intervention: any action that limits a pupil's movement, including physical and non-physical methods.

Reasonable force: the use of no more force than necessary for the shortest time, in line with legal powers held by academy staff.

Significant incident: any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff as described in 'Other physical contact with pupils' within this document. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

Seclusion: a non-disciplinary intervention involving 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. Seclusion is not used routinely. Any use must be exceptional, authorised by senior leaders, risk assessed, time-limited, and recorded.

Restraint: a term used in legislation referring to 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.

THE POLICY

The purpose of a 'Care, Control and Restraint Policy' is to support the educational and other aims of the academy and to ensure that the conduct of all members of the academy community is consistent with the values of the academy.

Aims:

- mutual respect - to value others irrespective of age, gender, creed or race;
- respect for property;
- care and consideration for others;
- self-respect;
- self-discipline.

The rights implicit aims include:

- the right to be safe;
- the right of fair treatment;
- the right to be treated with respect;
- the right to be able to learn and teach without unnecessary interruption.

Responsibilities:

Pupils:

- allow others to learn
- resolve disagreements appropriately
- not bring prohibited items into the academy

Staff:

- provide appropriate learning
- treat all pupils fairly and with respect

The Academy Ethos

It is essential to maintain a caring, welcoming ethos which establishes a safe, secure and potentially stable environment.

The academy takes all reasonable steps, through their student management and staff training systems, to minimise the likelihood of physical intervention becoming necessary and to ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements to use only the minimum force consistent with effectiveness.

2 Procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour is graded in the following levels of severity:

- Uncooperative but not disruptive;
- Uncooperative and disruptive;
- Uncooperative and verbally abusive;
- Distressed or dysregulated behaviour which is unlikely to cause harm;
- Possession of inappropriate items within the academy;
- Serious disruption that impedes the rights of others to their educational entitlement;
- Violent 1 - a danger to property and/or people e.g. throwing objects;
- Violent 2 - extreme danger to people/self - complete loss of control.

The first five situations could be dealt with by all authorised staff. Whereas the last three situations should involve the presence of another adult (usually senior management).

Staff should remain involved and retain responsibility for managing behaviour, even in serious situations.

Recommendations

- It is better to defuse than intervene.
- Do not put yourself at risk.
- Alert colleagues and summon assistance as needed
- Use distraction techniques where safe
- Remove the audience
- Request prohibited items to be handed over
- Involve senior leaders or the police where appropriate

In cases where it is known that a child is likely to present problems:

- Consider assigning a member of staff to work solely with a child who is displaying difficult behaviour, if this is possible. Remember the type of supervision is important. It should not be seen as for control only, as this may further provoke the child. Instead, the contact should be as constructive as possible.
- If a child continues to be violent, even after staff intervention and after a lapse of time and other children or staff continue to be at risk, the Police should be called.

3 De-escalation techniques

Staff must prioritise de-escalation at all times. Following any incident, appropriate support should be provided to all parties, including time to recover, restorative approaches, and ongoing emotional support.

Violent or distressing incidents can impact both pupils and staff. A period of calm and reflection should be allowed, recognising that individuals may require continued support over time.

All individuals have the right to raise concerns or make complaints and should be supported to do so. Alleged assaults must be reported in line with academy procedures, and staff or pupils may involve the Police where appropriate.

Further guidance is available in the 'Assaults on Academy Staff Procedures' and the Child Protection Procedures.

4 Physical management – escorting/restraint and searching of students

Reasonable force may only be used to:

- prevent a pupil from injuring themselves or others
- prevent serious damage to property
- prevent serious disruption to the good order of the academy
- prevent a pupil committing a criminal offence

Physical Intervention and Restraint

Physical intervention may take a number of forms, ranging from low-level physical contact to more restrictive forms of control, including restraint.

Low-level contact, such as guiding a pupil by the arm or positioning oneself between pupils, may be used to support compliance or prevent escalation. More restrictive interventions, including restraint, should only be used where there is an immediate risk of harm.

When physical restraint is used, staff must ensure that:

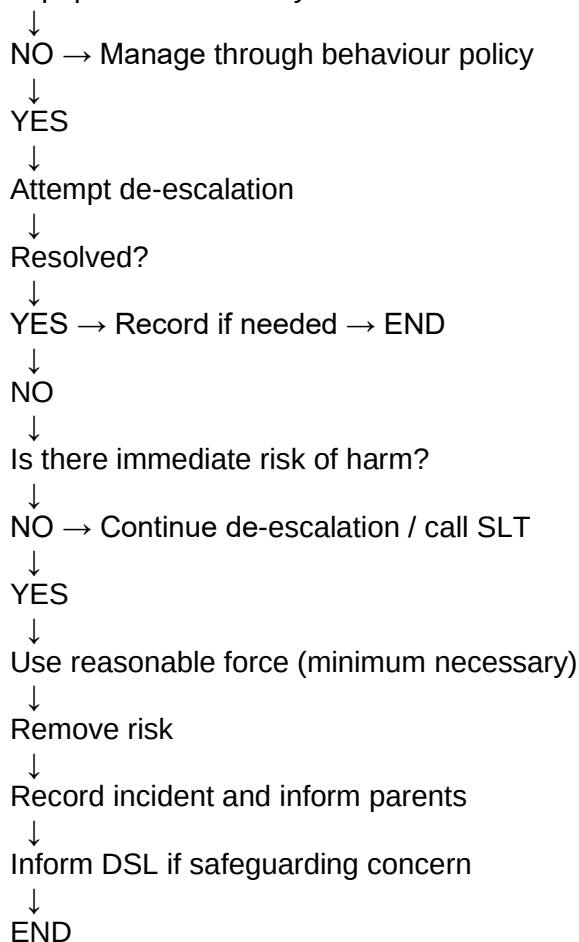
- the minimum amount of force is applied
- the intervention is proportionate to the risk
- the duration of the intervention is as short as possible

Certain practices are strictly prohibited, including techniques that restrict breathing, inflict pain, or involve holding a pupil in a prone (face-down) position, except in the most extreme and unavoidable emergency situations.

Following any incident involving restraint, a review must take place to consider whether the intervention was necessary and proportionate and whether additional support or planning is required to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

BEHAVIOUR INCIDENT FLOW

Is pupil behaviour risky?



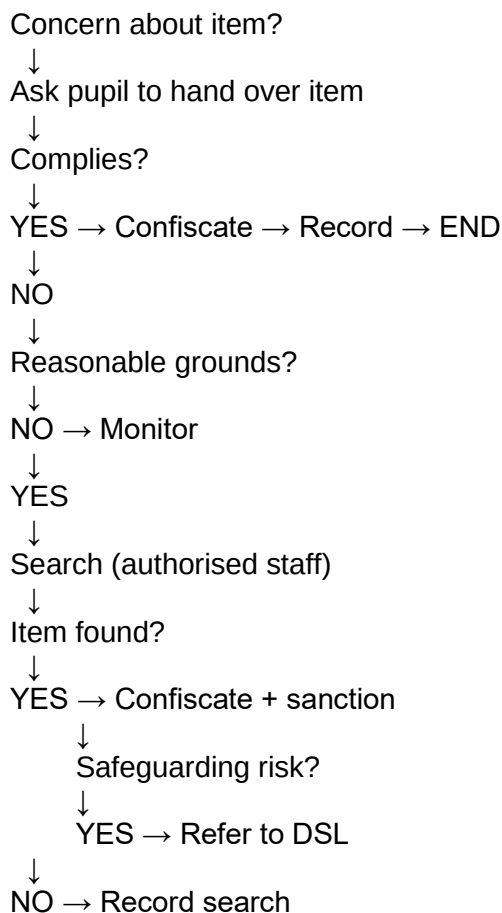
Searching Pupils

The academy must ensure pupils do not possess prohibited or harmful items. Staff may request that pupils voluntarily hand over such items. Where pupils refuse, authorised staff may conduct a search without consent if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil is carrying prohibited items.

Searches must be conducted in a manner that respects the dignity and privacy of the pupil. Wherever possible, searches should be carried out by a member of staff of the same gender as the pupil and in the presence of a witness. In exceptional circumstances, where there is a risk of serious harm and it is not reasonably practicable to comply with same-sex and witness requirements, a search may still be conducted.

The power to search without consent applies to a range of prohibited items, including weapons, illegal drugs, stolen property and other items that may cause harm. Any items found must be dealt with in accordance with statutory guidance and the academy's safeguarding procedures.

SEARCH DECISION FLOW



Strip Searches

A strip search, defined as a search involving the removal of clothing beyond outer garments, is a highly serious safeguarding matter.

Under no circumstances should academy staff conduct a strip search. Such searches may only be carried out by the police and must be undertaken in accordance with statutory guidance.

If a strip search is deemed necessary, the academy must:

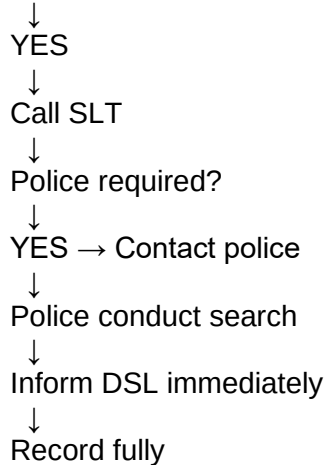
- immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- ensure that an appropriate adult is present to support the pupil
- maintain clear and accurate records of the incident
- inform parents or carers unless doing so would place the pupil at risk

The welfare and dignity of the pupil must remain the primary consideration at all times.

SERIOUS INCIDENT FLOW (POLICE / STRIP SEARCH)

Serious risk (weapon/drugs)?



5 Absconding - internal truancy

Where a pupil attempts to leave the academy and there is a risk of harm to themselves or others, staff may take reasonable and proportionate steps to prevent this. Physical intervention should only be used where necessary and in line with this policy.

If a pupil resists and there is no immediate risk, staff should de-escalate and allow them to leave to avoid escalation. Doorways should not be blocked for older pupils. Staff should seek assistance and consider informing senior leaders or the police where there is concern about safety or potential criminal activity.

For younger pupils, or those with special educational needs who may not recognise danger, closer supervision or physical intervention may be required to prevent harm.

In extreme situations where a pupil is acutely distressed and presents an immediate risk of serious harm to themselves or others, physical restraint may be used to prevent them leaving. This must be followed by appropriate support, review, and, where necessary, involvement of external professionals to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

Where pupils are unable to recognise risk, staff have a duty to keep them safe. This may include restricting access to certain areas or, in exceptional circumstances, securing access to unsafe environments. Such measures must always be necessary, proportionate, and not used as a substitute for adequate staffing or supervision.

6 Reporting and recording

All incidents involving force must be recorded promptly and include:

- Names of pupil and staff directly involved
- The events leading up to the incident
- Any relevant needs or circumstance of the pupil, including whether the pupil has identified SEND and their SEN status code
- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- Why the intervention was deemed necessary
- Details of any physical injuries sustained

- Any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts

In the case of reasonable force being used, a brief account of the incident, any known identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and the type and degree of reasonable force applied. Records must be completed promptly, reviewed by a senior leader, and shared with parents where appropriate. Safeguarding concerns must be referred to the DSL.

Assaults or Allegations of Assault

If there is an assault on a member of staff by a child or parent then guidance is provided by the 'Assaults on Academy Staff' procedure.

In the case of an accident/injury involving a student or a member of staff then this should be noted in the academy's Accident Report Form/Book. Where there is an allegation of abuse, please refer to the Child Protection Policy.

Reports should be completed on the same day, unless there is an exceptional reason why this is not possible.

Searching students

If a student is found to be in possession of illegal substances, offensive weapons or stolen property a report will be written and parents will be informed as soon as is practicable.

7 Staff support systems

The academy will:

- identify a member of staff with a specific responsibility for control and restraint;
- identify senior members of duty staff who can be contacted at all times;
- consider establishing a common code to alert the senior staff member to an alarm call for immediate assistance;
- make provision for staff or students who require counselling - physical intervention can be a stressful situation for all parties.

8 Training needs

All relevant staff will receive appropriate training, including:

- creating a positive ethos within the academy in line with the academy Behaviour Policy;
- advice and training in de-escalation;
- control and restraint;
- the lawful searching of students;
- safeguarding awareness;
- where appropriate, accredited physical intervention techniques.

9 Monitoring and evaluation

The frequency and nature of physical interventions will be monitored in relation to pupils and staff. This will inform leadership oversight, policy development and training.

Incident records will support monitoring and review, ensuring the use of reasonable force remains appropriate.

This policy will be reviewed every two years and approved by the Board of Trustees at each review.