

Inspection Top Tips

Physical Intervention

March 2025



Children's Homes Regulations

20.—(1) Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing—

- (a) injury to any person (including the child);
- (b) serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or
- (c) a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home.

(2) Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate.

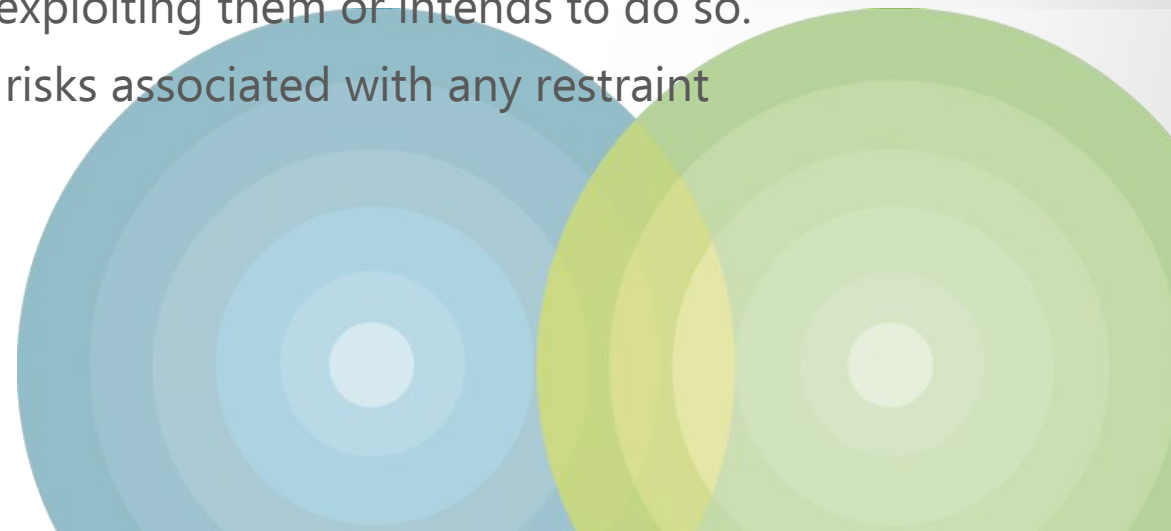
(3) These Regulations do not prevent a child from being deprived of liberty where that deprivation is authorised in accordance with a court order.

- Remember – restraint is defined in Regulation 2(1) as “using force or restricting liberty of movement”. This could include blocking a young person from leaving a room or building, high handles, removal of physical aids to movement, use of prescribed drugs on an ‘as required’ basis. You’ll want to be familiar with the 10 pages in the guidance on restraint.



Children's Homes SCCIF

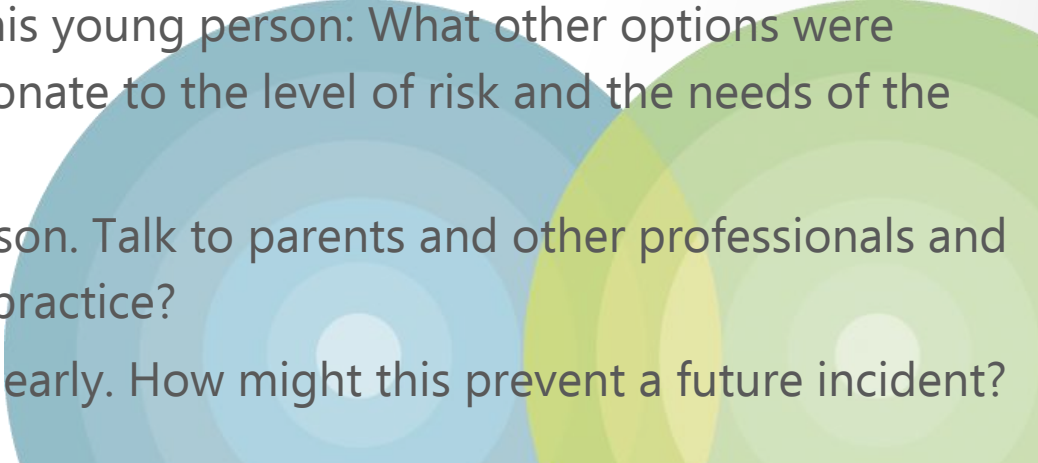
- Restraint or restrictive practice are used only when necessary to protect the child and/or those around them and must be proportionate.
- All incidents are recorded, reviewed and monitored by leaders.
- The views of the child, dependent on their age and understanding, are sought and understood.
- When restraint involves the use of force, the force used must not be more than is necessary and should be applied in a way that is proportionate
- There may be circumstances where a child can be prevented from leaving a home – for example a child who is putting themselves at risk of injury by leaving the home to carry out gang related activities, use drugs or to meet someone who is sexually exploiting them or intends to do so.
- Staff need to demonstrate that they fully understand the risks associated with any restraint technique used in the home.



"On occasions, staff do need to use physical intervention to keep children safe. However, staff do not always accurately record the reasons and the lead-up when they have had to use physical intervention. As a result, this limits the ability of managers to evaluate effectively the suitability and effectiveness of the physical intervention used... When physical interventions have taken place, debriefs are, on occasions, undertaken by staff who do not always have the skills and knowledge to fulfil that responsibility. For example, these staff do not read the physical intervention reports to ensure that they are accurate or to question or clarify the action taken. On one occasion, this resulted in a delay in reporting a notifiable incident to the regulator. The physical interventions used are not subject to the level of scrutiny needed to ensure that they are appropriate."

Top tips...

Questions to consider when debriefing a restraint:

- Ensure staff are suitably trained with an approach that matches the needs of the children. Routinely assess the effectiveness of the restraint system commissioned
 - Remember the 125 rule – a record within 24 hours (1 day), management oversight including speaking to the young person within 48 hours (2 days) and a fuller discussion with the young person within 5 days (Regulation 35(3))
 - When reflecting on any intervention consider if the action was legal and necessary in line with the regulations. Regulation 20 sets out the only purposes for which restraint can be used.
 - Train staff to set out their detailed thinking before, during and after the restraint, including their recognition of the risks of a particular intervention for this young person: What other options were available? Was minimum force used and was it proportionate to the level of risk and the needs of the young person? Managers should comment on this.
 - Always think seriously about the views of the young person. Talk to parents and other professionals and capture their views too. How will these influence future practice?
 - What is the learning from the restraint and record this clearly. How might this prevent a future incident?
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Where next...

Safeguarding for Leaders training

This 2-day group 5 training course explores in depth process, culture, risk assessment, the organisation and a root cause analysis approach to reflection tied closely to the regulations and inspection framework but absolutely focused on the experience of children and young people in care and supported accommodation settings. The course links day to day practice with the strategic view required in safe organisations

Great as an initial course or a 2-year refresher, as we adapt to the group and build on strengths.

Our next course is being delivered 9:30am-12:30pm on 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th June 2025

Please visit www.dialogueltd.co.uk/analysis for bookings

