

Inspection Top Tips

Physical Intervention

December 2025



Children's Homes Regulations

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(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.

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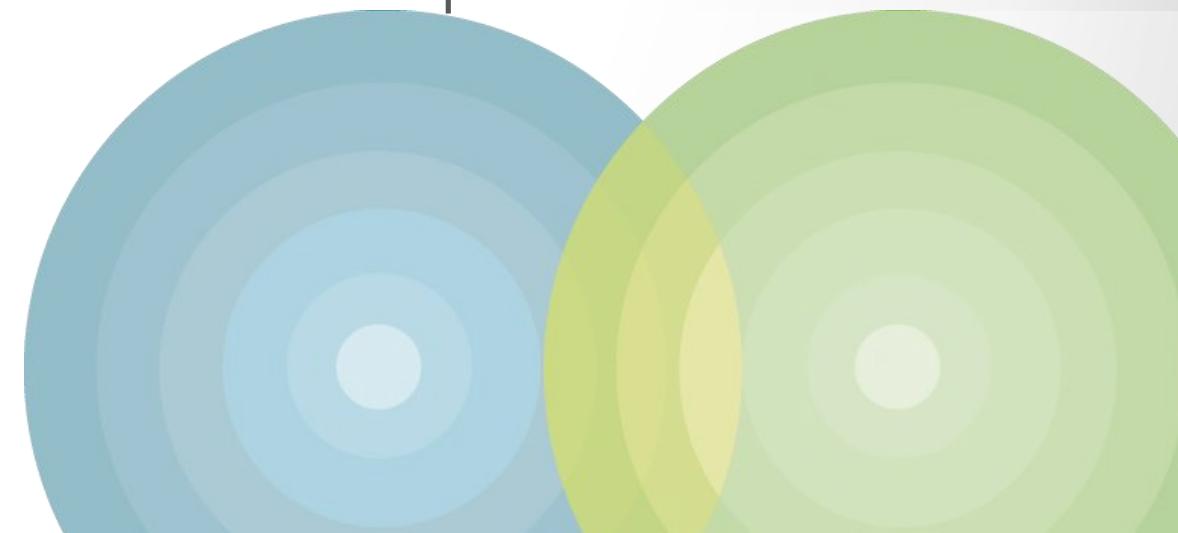


Regulation 20

Children's Homes Guide

8.2 Restraint is defined in regulation 2 and means using force or restricting liberty of movement.

9.33 Regulation 35 requires each home to prepare and implement a behaviour management policy. This policy should describe the home's approach to promoting positive behaviour and the measures of control, discipline, and restraint which may be used in the home. These measures should be set in the context of building positive relationships with children.

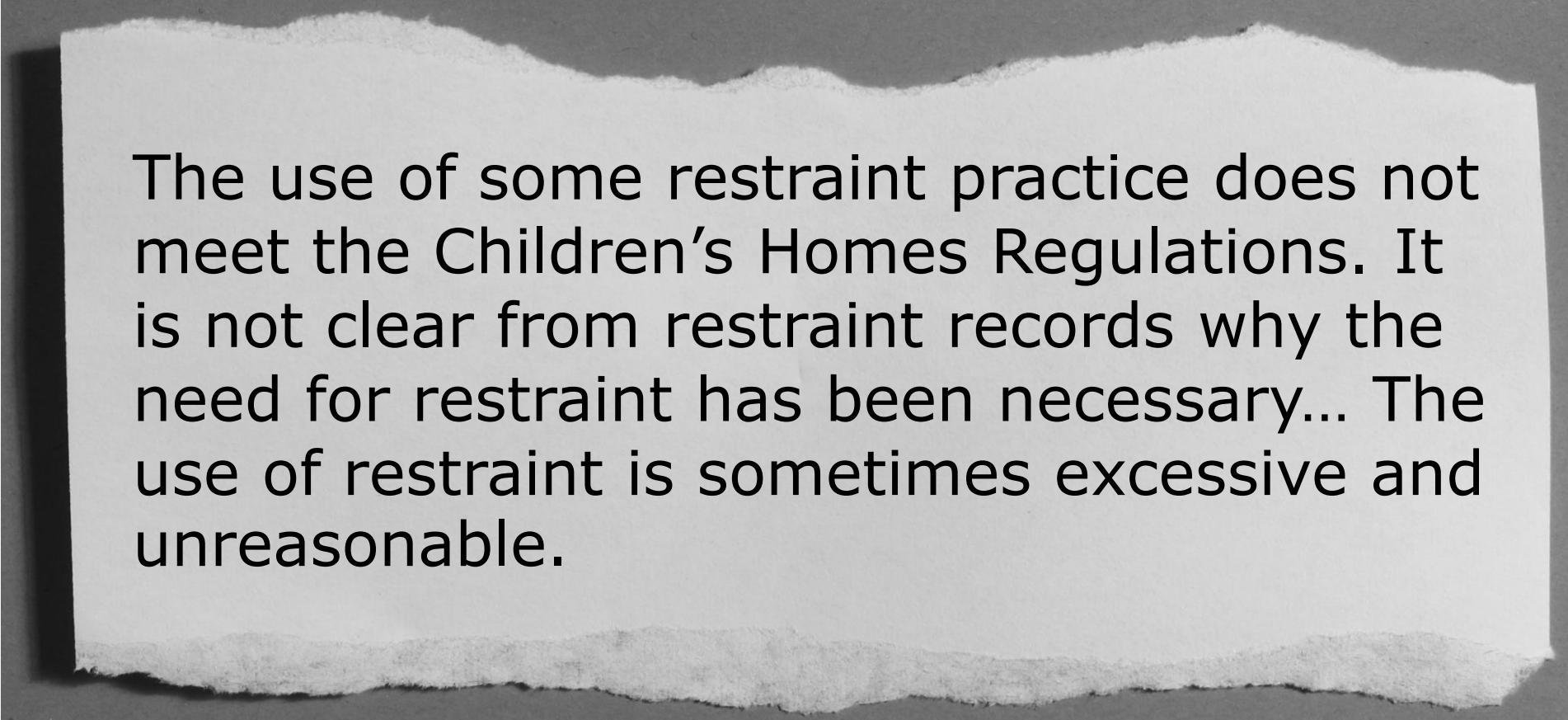


Children's Homes SCCIF Key Elements

- 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.
- Conflict management is effective and includes the appropriate use of restorative practices that improve relationships, increase children's sense of personal responsibility and reduce the need for formal police intervention.



Ofsted comment from inspection – Inadequate Home



The use of some restraint practice does not meet the Children's Homes Regulations. It is not clear from restraint records why the need for restraint has been necessary... The use of restraint is sometimes excessive and unreasonable.

Top Tips...

- 1. Staff consistently build positive, trusting relationships with children.**
This helps children feel safe, understood and valued, which significantly reduces incidents of escalation and the need for physical intervention.
- 2. Staff understand each child's known triggers, early warning signs and stress responses, as documented in individual Behaviour Support Plans.** Proactive, early intervention is used to de-escalate situations before behaviours escalate.
- 3. Staff recognise that dysregulated children require adult support to regulate their emotions.** Calm communication, appropriate body language, and emotionally available adults are used to support children to regain control safely.



Top Tips Continued...

4. **Staff actively offer children appropriate choices and involve them in decision-making.** This supports children's sense of autonomy and reduces conflict that could otherwise lead to restraint.
5. **Following incidents, reflective debriefs take place with children and staff.** These discussions focus on learning, repair of relationships, and improving future responses. Restraint is reviewed as a last resort, in line with the home's policy and regulatory requirements.



Questions to consider...

- Were there indicators that could have prevented the need for the restraint?
- Are there any patterns or trends identified from reflections that would prevent situations arising that could lead to a physical intervention?
- Was any physical intervention or restraint fully recorded including the location, time and type of physical intervention used if this was to restrain a child?
- Was the action taken in line with the regulation to keep a child safe?
- Do all staff have up to date training?

