

Title of Policy/Procedure	Restrictive Intervention Policy
Reviewer(s):	Dan Clarke Alison Lowe
To be read in conjunction with the following policies:	DfE document 'Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools.' April 2026
Consultation Process	Behaviour and Safeguarding Board BKAT Headteachers
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Primary School Policy on Restrictive Intervention

Including Use of Seclusion and Behaviour Support Planning

This policy is to be applied in conjunction with the DfE document 'Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools.' April 2026

1. Introduction

The use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion, can have a significant impact on the pupils, staff members and parents involved, as well as the wider classroom. However, there are times when the use of restrictive interventions will be lawful and necessary; for example, to keep individuals and the wider school community safe.

2. Guiding Principles

- The welfare and dignity of the child is paramount.
- Interventions must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary.
- De-escalation must be attempted unless there is immediate risk of serious harm.
- The least restrictive option must always be used for the shortest time possible.
- All incidents must be recorded, reported and reviewed.

3. 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.

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 the guidance. 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.

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.

4. Determining when use of restrictive interventions is appropriate

There will be times when school staff may need to use restrictive interventions, and they should know this option may be available to them. The decision on whether it is reasonable to use a restrictive intervention depends on the individual circumstances of each situation. To make this assessment, the member of staff should consider the following:

Is it necessary?

- Staff should consider whether there are other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage a situation.
- Staff should assess whether a restrictive intervention is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself.
- Where possible, staff should communicate with other staff members to understand any broader risks in the environment.

Is it proportionate?

- Staff should use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce the relevant risks.
- If the intervention itself is escalating the situation, staff should reconsider their approach and attempt an alternative strategy.
- Staff should consider the personal circumstances of the pupil such as medical conditions, special educational needs or other vulnerabilities, their characteristics such as age and size, and must consider relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.

Have you considered the pupil's welfare?

- Staff should consider the impact on the pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. For example, pupils who have experienced an adverse life event, with diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, past trauma or neglect, communication difficulties, or other needs, may find the use of restrictive interventions particularly distressing.
- Staff should seek to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity. This may include, where possible, considering the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers.
- Where possible, staff should clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why, and explain what the pupil needs to do.
- For pupils with difficulties with speech, language and communication, or with English as an additional language, verbal and/or non-verbal strategies should be used to ensure the pupil understands what is happening and has adequate time to process information and respond.
- Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped. This list of factors is not exhaustive, and staff should also take into account other relevant considerations.

Who can use reasonable force

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain 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

Staff who are likely to need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions should be adequately trained in its safe and lawful use and in preventative strategies. Training in our school will be provided by TeamTeach.

Mitigation Principles against restrictive intervention

Our school has the principle of minimising the need to use restrictive interventions, through prevention and de-escalation. Whole school and individual approaches which support this are outlined below:

Whole-school measures:

- consideration of how the school and classroom environment supports all pupils to achieve and thrive
- sharing of best practice for whole-class behaviour management, and for managing communal spaces such as corridors and playgrounds
- training staff in effective communication strategies, such as using appropriate tone of voice and empathy to aid de-escalation
- development of working staff-pupil relationships and trust
- recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform improvement planning

Individual approaches include:

- working closely with parents to support individual pupils
- strategies to support individual pupils based on their identified needs, including the development of Individual behaviour support plans. Where a pupil has a disability, schools have a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to support pupils with reasonable adjustments, making sure they can benefit from what the school offers
- giving pupils time, space and strategies to calm down before their behaviour escalates

Use of reasonable force to search pupils

Head teachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item. The authorised member of staff conducting the search should always seek the co-operation of the pupil before conducting a search. If a pupil is not willing to co-operate, consideration should be given as to why this is. Advice should also be sought from the Head teacher, DSL or other staff who may have information about the pupil. The decision to use reasonable force to search a pupil should be made on a 'case by case' basis. The member of staff should consider whether conducting the search will prevent the pupil harming themselves or others, damaging property or from causing disorder; as in section 4 above, the pupil's welfare is paramount and use of reasonable force to search a pupil should be a last resort. Staff should refer to [Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools](#) guidance document for detailed advice on searching a pupil. A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for legally prohibited items, but not to search for items banned under the school rules only.

5. Individual Behaviour Support Plans (IBSP)

In cases where a pupil's behaviour presents a potential risk of harm to themselves or others, we will work collaboratively with the pupil, their parents/carers, and relevant professionals to develop an Individual Behaviour Support Plan **(IBSP)**. This plan will outline proactive strategies to address the pupil's specific needs, identify potential triggers, and implement measures to prevent and de-escalate challenging situations. A risk assessment will also be in place to support the safety of children and staff.

Our goal is to support the pupil in achieving their full potential while fostering a positive and safe learning environment for all.

6. Recording and Reporting

PLEASE REFER TO PAGES 14-16 of DfE '[Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools](#)' April 2026 for further detail on recording and reporting arrangements.

- All incidents will be recorded before end of working day on CPOMs and reported to parents. A written record of the incident will be provided to the parents/carers on the same day where practically possible or by the next working day to ensure all staff involved have the opportunity to contribute to the report and agree the contents. Schools are not required to report to parents if in doing so it would likely result in serious harm to the pupil; in this circumstance the local authority will be contacted.
- Include antecedents, de-escalation attempted, degree and duration of intervention.
- Record injuries, pupil views and follow-up actions.
- Headteachers monitor each incident report on the day and complete a termly review of all incidents to ensure continued best practice.
- The Trust and Governors receive bi-termly reports within the Behaviour and Safeguarding report.