Restrictive Intervention Policy



Signed by Chair of Governors:

Date ratified by Governing Body:

Date of Review: October 2027

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the school's approach to the safe, lawful and proportionate use of restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in order to protect pupils, staff and others from harm.

The school recognises that restrictive interventions may occasionally be necessary in order to maintain safety. However, the school is committed to minimising the use of restrictive practices through proactive behaviour support, preventative strategies and de-escalation approaches.

The use of physical intervention will always be:

- A last resort
- Necessary to prevent harm
- Proportionate and reasonable
- Applied for the shortest possible time

Restrictive interventions will never be used as a punishment or to enforce compliance with school rules.

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2. Legal Framework

This policy is based on the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 93 – Use of reasonable force)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004

- DfE Guidance: Restrictive interventions and the use of reasonable force in schools (effective 1 April 2026)

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils from:

- Injuring themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Causing serious damage to property
- Causing serious disruption to the order of the school

From 1 April 2026, schools must have regard to updated Department for Education guidance regarding the recording and reporting of significant incidents involving restrictive interventions and reasonable force.

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3. Human Rights and Equality

All practice within the school must comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equality Act 2010.

Restrictive interventions engage important rights under the Human Rights Act, including:

- Article 3 – Protection from inhuman or degrading treatment
- Article 5 – Right to liberty
- Article 8 – Respect for private life and dignity

Any intervention must therefore be:

- Lawful
- Necessary

- Proportionate
- Time-limited

The school recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, particularly for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The school will ensure that:

- Pupils are not treated less favourably because of disability or other protected characteristics
- Reasonable adjustments are made where necessary
- Behaviour support is personalised

The school also recognises that pupils with SEND may be disproportionately affected by restrictive practices, and will work proactively to reduce this.

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4. Definitions

Restrictive Intervention

A restrictive intervention is any action that restricts a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom to act independently.

Examples include:

- Physical restraint
- Guiding or holding a pupil
- Blocking movement
- Removal from an area
- Seclusion in exceptional circumstances

Reasonable Force

Reasonable force refers to physical contact used to control or restrain a pupil's behaviour, using no more force than necessary for the shortest possible time.

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5. Principles Governing the Use of Restrictive Interventions

The school operates according to the following principles:

1. Safety first – interventions are used only to prevent harm.
2. Last resort – all reasonable preventative strategies must be attempted first.
3. Least restrictive option – staff must choose the intervention that imposes the least restriction.
4. Proportionate response – the level of intervention must match the level of risk.
5. Time limited – intervention must stop as soon as the risk has passed.
6. Respect and dignity – pupils must be treated with care and respect at all times.

Restrictive interventions will never be used for punishment, coercion or convenience.

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6. Prevention and De-escalation

The school is committed to reducing the need for restrictive interventions through proactive behaviour support and early intervention.

Approaches include:

- Trauma-informed practice
- Positive behaviour support
- Restorative approaches

- Emotional regulation teaching
- Clear routines and expectations
- Strong relational practice
- Individual behaviour support plans
- Thrive principles
- Nurture principles

Staff are trained to use de-escalation techniques, including:

- Calm communication
- Redirection
- Offering time and space
- Removing an audience
- Calling for additional support

Restrictive intervention will only be used when these strategies have been ineffective or when immediate action is required to prevent harm.

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7. Safeguarding Principles

Any decision to physically intervene must be based on robust safeguarding considerations.

Staff must consider:

- The risk of harm if no action is taken
- The age, understanding and individual needs of the pupil
- The physical and emotional impact of intervention

Physical intervention must always aim to reduce risk rather than increase it.

Where possible, staff should seek assistance from colleagues.

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8. Authority to Use Reasonable Force

Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, all members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force where necessary.

This includes:

- Teachers
- Teaching assistants
- Behaviour support staff
- Senior leaders
- Other staff authorised by the Headteacher

The school recognises that situations requiring intervention can arise unexpectedly, and therefore all staff may need to act to prevent harm.

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9. Training

The school will ensure that staff receive appropriate training in behaviour support and restrictive interventions.

Training will include:

- Prevention and de-escalation strategies
- Safe physical intervention techniques
- Safeguarding considerations
- SEND awareness
- Recording and reporting requirements

Training will be:

- Appropriate to staff roles
- Regularly refreshed
- Delivered by qualified trainers

Untrained staff should only use physical intervention in exceptional circumstances where there is an immediate risk of harm and no trained staff are available.

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10. Recording and Reporting

The school will comply with the legal requirement to record and report significant incidents involving the use of reasonable force.

Records will include:

- Date, time and location
- Names of staff and pupils involved
- Description of events leading to the intervention
- Type of intervention used
- Duration of intervention
- Any injuries sustained
- Follow-up actions

Parents or carers will be informed of significant incidents as soon as reasonably practicable.

Incident data will be reviewed by senior leaders to:

- Identify patterns or triggers
- Reduce future incidents

- Monitor equality implications
- Inform behaviour planning

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11. Post-Incident Support

Following an incident:

- The pupil will be supported to regulate emotionally and return to learning
- Staff involved will have an opportunity to debrief
- Behaviour plans may be reviewed
- Additional support may be provided where necessary

The school prioritises restorative approaches and rebuilding relationships after incidents.

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12. Monitoring and Oversight

Senior leaders and the governing body will monitor:

- Frequency and nature of restrictive interventions
- Impact on pupils with SEND
- Equality considerations
- Staff training compliance

Data will be used to identify trends and reduce the need for future interventions.

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13. Commitment to Reducing Restrictive Interventions

The school is committed to actively reducing the use of restrictive interventions.

This includes:

- Continuous staff training
- Improved preventative strategies
- Early intervention for behaviour difficulties
- Individual support plans for pupils at risk of crisis

Particular attention will be given to reducing restrictive interventions for pupils with SEND.

The school recognises that positive relationships, understanding of pupil needs, and effective behaviour support are the most effective ways to prevent situations requiring physical intervention.