



# Restrictive intervention and use of reasonable force policy

**Primary and Secondary Academies**

April 2026

## Introduction

Our academy is committed to ensuring the safety, dignity and wellbeing of all pupils and staff however we recognise that there may be occasions where it is necessary to intervene when there is an immediate risk to the safety of pupils, staff, or property.

In such circumstances, all staff will respond professionally and proportionately to incidents involving aggressive, unsafe, or dangerous behaviour.

Physical intervention will only ever be used as a last resort in line with the Department for Education guidance; '[Use of reasonable force in schools](#)'.

Our approach prioritises:

- Minimising the risk of harm to all involved
- Maintaining the dignity of the pupil
- Acting within a respectful, supportive relationship

All interventions will take place within a framework of calm, consistent, and relational practice.

## Our approach to best practice

Staff will always seek to manage behaviour through de-escalation, positive relationships, and proactive strategies before considering any form of physical intervention.

Physical intervention may be considered reasonable and appropriate where:

- There is a risk of injury to pupils, staff, or visitors
- There is a risk of serious damage to property
- A pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline
- A pupil is committing a criminal offence

Staff must always:

- Use the least restrictive option available
- Act for the shortest time necessary
- Prioritise safety and dignity

All staff recognise the importance of responding not only to behaviour, but also to the underlying emotions and needs that may be driving that behaviour.

## Determining when restrictive intervention is appropriate

Restrictive intervention must be reasonable, necessary, and proportionate in the circumstances.

### Is it necessary?

#### Staff will consider:

- Whether less restrictive strategies have been attempted or are available
- Whether intervention will reduce risk or escalate the situation
- The wider context and any environmental risks

### Is it proportionate?

#### Staff will:

- Use the minimum level of force required
- Apply it for the shortest duration possible
- Reassess continuously and adapt if the situation escalates

#### Staff must also consider:

- Age, size, and individual characteristics
- Medical needs, SEND, or vulnerabilities
- Equality considerations under the Equality Act 2010

### Has the pupil's welfare been considered?

#### Staff will:

- Consider the emotional and psychological impact of the intervention
- Maintain the pupil's dignity at all times
- Avoid unnecessary public attention where possible

#### Where appropriate, staff will:

- Communicate calmly and clearly what is happening and why
- Use adapted communication strategies (verbal/non-verbal)
- Allow processing time for pupils to respond

#### Staff will actively seek to understand:

- What the pupil is feeling
- Whether continuing, reducing, or stopping the intervention is appropriate

## Trauma informed and SEND considerations

We recognise that pupils with SEND and/or SEMH needs may be more likely to experience distress that leads to challenging behaviour.

### We acknowledge that:

- Behaviour may be a form of communication
- Triggers may include sensory overload, anxiety, trauma, or communication difficulties

### Staff will:

- Seek to identify triggers and patterns
- Use preventative and de-escalation strategies
- Adapt communication, tone, and approach

### Where appropriate, schools will:

- Work collaboratively with pupils, parents, and professionals
- Develop behaviour support plans and risk assessments
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are made in line with the Equality Act 2010

## Pupil and staff support following an incident

We will evaluate all incidents involving restrictive intervention as soon as practicable after the event to understand:

- Why the intervention was used
- The impact on pupils and staff
- Any patterns or trends
- How future incidents may be prevented

### Where appropriate:

- Pupils and staff will receive medical assessment and treatment
- Follow-up conversations will take place to support reflection and repair relationships
- Additional wellbeing support will be offered where needed

This process will form part of a wider commitment to continuous improvement and safeguarding.

## Recording the use of force

All incidents involving the use of force must be recorded in line with statutory guidance. Records must be completed as soon as practicable, and no later than the same day where possible, using the school's agreed system (e.g. CPOMS).

### The record must include:

- Names of pupils and staff involved
- Relevant pupil needs or circumstances (including SEND status)
- Time, date, location, and duration of the incident
- A factual account of what occurred, including triggers and de-escalation strategies used
- The type and degree of force used
- Reasons why the intervention was deemed necessary
- Details of any injuries or follow-up actions

Additional information may be recorded to support evaluation and improvement.

## Reporting to parents

Parents will be informed of any incident involving the use of force as soon as practicable, and usually on the same day.

### The report will include:

- Time, date, and location of the incident
- A brief explanation of why the intervention was necessary
- The type and level of force used
- Details of any injuries sustained

### This will be followed up in writing where appropriate, and a meeting may be offered to:

- Review triggers and warning signs
- Evaluate strategies used
- Agree next steps and any adjustments to support plans

## Monitoring and review

The school will monitor all incidents involving restrictive intervention to:

- Identify trends and patterns
- Evaluate effectiveness of strategies
- Inform staff training and development
- Improve practice and reduce the need for intervention over time

This policy will be reviewed regularly in line with statutory guidance and school needs.

## Appendices (forms)

The following are available for staff and are available on the intranet

### **Appendix 1**

Physical intervention incident recording form

### **Appendix 2**

Risk assessment and management plan (for pupils who present a risk of harmful behaviour)