



RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS AND REASONABLE FORCE POLICY

Policy reviewed and agreed by: Teaching, Learning & Inclusion Policy
Date: March 2026
Next review: March 2029

Federation Ethos

At the Federation of Goring and Stoke Row CE Primary Schools, our Christian ethos shapes all aspects of school life. We believe every child is uniquely created and valued. Our approach to behaviour, relationships and safeguarding reflects our commitment to dignity, compassion, perseverance and respect.

Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, are always a last resort and are used only to protect pupils and adults from harm, prevent serious disruption, or safeguard wellbeing.

Our priority is always prevention, de-escalation and relational practice.

1. Policy Statement

This policy sets out the Federation's approach to the use of:

- reasonable force
- physical restraint
- restrictive interventions
- seclusion (where applicable)

It is based on:

- Department for Education guidance *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools* (effective April 2026)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Behaviour in Schools guidance
- SEND Code of Practice

- Safeguarding and child protection expectations

Restrictive interventions must always be:

- lawful
- proportionate
- reasonable
- necessary
- time-limited
- recorded appropriately

They must never be used as a punishment.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- safeguard pupils and staff
- minimise the need for restrictive interventions
- promote positive behaviour support
- ensure staff confidence and clarity
- protect pupils' dignity and rights
- ensure compliance with statutory recording and reporting duties
- provide transparency for parents and carers

3. Definitions

Reasonable Force

Reasonable force refers to physical contact used by staff to control or restrain a pupil's movement where necessary and proportionate to prevent harm, disorder or damage.

Restraint

Restraint involves holding a pupil physically to prevent movement where there is risk of injury or serious disruption.

Restrictive Interventions

Restrictive interventions are any actions that limit a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom to act independently.

These may include:

- physical restraint
- blocking movement
- guiding pupils
- removal from an area
- seclusion (where appropriate and lawful)

4. Legal Framework

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006:

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All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force to:

- prevent injury to a pupil or others
- prevent serious damage to property
- prevent a criminal offence
- maintain good order and discipline

Schools do not require parental consent to use reasonable force.

5. Who May Use Reasonable Force

The following may use reasonable force:

- teachers
- teaching assistants
- support staff
- supply staff
- volunteers authorised by the Headteacher
- adults supervising pupils on visits

Staff act using professional judgement and duty of care.

6. Principles Underpinning Practice

Across the Federation we:

- prioritise prevention and de-escalation
- understand behaviour as communication
- consider SEND needs carefully
- avoid escalation wherever possible
- use the least restrictive option
- use force only for the shortest necessary time
- maintain pupil dignity at all times

Restrictive interventions must never compromise breathing, circulation or wellbeing.

7. Prevention and De-escalation

Staff are expected to:

- build strong relationships
- recognise triggers
- adapt environments
- use calm language
- offer choices
- provide safe regulation spaces
- follow behaviour support plans

Where pupils are known to be at risk of requiring physical intervention:

Individual risk assessments and support plans will be developed.

8. When Restrictive Interventions May Be Used

Restrictive interventions may be used to:

- prevent injury
- stop fighting
- prevent self-harm
- prevent serious damage to property
- prevent a pupil leaving a safe supervised space where risk exists
- maintain safe order during serious disruption

Staff must always consider whether a less restrictive alternative is possible.

9. When Restrictive Interventions Must NOT Be Used

Force must never be used:

- as punishment
- to enforce compliance where no risk exists
- in ways that affect breathing
- in ways that cause pain deliberately
- as a substitute for appropriate support

The following techniques are prohibited:

- seated double embrace
- double basket hold
- nose distraction technique

10. Supporting Pupils with SEND and Additional Needs

The Federation recognises that some pupils may be more likely to require physical intervention.

Where appropriate we will:

- develop behaviour support plans
- consult parents/carers
- involve external professionals
- train key staff
- monitor patterns of intervention use

Restrictive interventions must never replace appropriate provision.

11. Seclusion

Seclusion (where a pupil is prevented from leaving a space) will only be used where:

- it is necessary to prevent harm
- it is proportionate
- it is supervised appropriately
- it is recorded

Seclusion must never be used as punishment.

12. Recording Incidents

Schools have a statutory duty to record significant incidents involving the use of force. Annex A of this policy will be used and will then be uploaded to CPOMS.

Records will include:

- date
- location
- pupil name
- staff involved
- reason intervention was necessary
- type of intervention
- duration
- outcome
- any injuries
- follow-up actions

Patterns of use will be reviewed by senior leaders.

13. Informing Parents and Carers

Parents/carers will normally be informed as soon as possible following:

- any significant restrictive intervention
- any injury
- repeated use of interventions

Communication will be supportive and transparent.

14. Staff Training

The Federation will:

- provide behaviour training
- provide de-escalation training
- provide Team Teach (or equivalent) where appropriate
- ensure key staff supporting identified pupils receive additional training

Training needs are reviewed regularly.

15. Safeguarding and Wellbeing

Following any incident:

- pupils will be supported and listened to
- staff will be supported
- incidents will be reviewed
- learning will inform future planning

Safeguarding procedures apply where concerns arise.

16. Complaints and Allegations

Complaints relating to restrictive interventions will be handled through:

- the Federation Complaints Policy
- safeguarding procedures (where appropriate)

Staff acting lawfully within this policy will be supported by the Federation.

Suspension will not be an automatic response to allegations.

17. Monitoring and Governance

The Governing Board will:

- review incident data
- ensure statutory expectations are met
- monitor safeguarding implications
- ensure training provision is appropriate

This supports accountability and continuous improvement.

18. Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- CPOMS Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy

Appendix A: Restrictive Intervention Incident Record (One-Page Template)

Pupil Name:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Year Group / Class:

Staff Involved (names and roles):

Other Pupils / Witnesses Present:

1. Reason for Intervention

(What risk was present? Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Risk of injury to pupil
- ☐ Risk of injury to others
- ☐ Risk of serious property damage
- ☐ Serious disruption affecting safety
- ☐ Risk of pupil leaving safe supervision
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

2. De-escalation Strategies Used Before Physical Intervention

(e.g. calm language, choice offered, space given, distraction, support adult)

3. Type of Restrictive Intervention Used

- ☐ Blocking movement
- ☐ Guiding / escorting
- ☐ Physical restraint
- ☐ Removal from area
- ☐ Seclusion (prevented from leaving space)
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Duration of intervention: _____

4. Description of Incident

(Brief factual account of what happened immediately before, during and after)

5. Outcome

- ☐ Situation resolved safely
- ☐ Pupil returned to learning
- ☐ Pupil supported in regulation space
- ☐ Parent/carer informed
- ☐ SLT informed
- ☐ Safeguarding concern logged (if applicable)

Details:

6. Injuries Sustained (if any)

Pupil: _____
Staff: _____
Others: _____

Was first aid required? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Follow-Up Actions

- ☐ Behaviour plan reviewed
- ☐ Risk assessment updated
- ☐ SENDCo informed
- ☐ Parents meeting arranged
- ☐ Staff debrief completed
- ☐ Further training identified

Details:

8. Parent/Carer Communication

Date informed: _____
Method: ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Meeting ☐ Other: _____

Summary of discussion:

Recorded by: _____

Role: _____

Date completed: _____

Reviewed by (SLT): _____

Date reviewed: _____