

Restrictive Interventions and Reasonable Force Policy



1. Purpose of this Policy

This policy outlines how St Faith & St Martin Church of England Junior School will manage behaviour safely and lawfully, including the use of restrictive interventions and reasonable force.

The school is committed to:

- Promoting a safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment
- Minimising the need for restrictive interventions through prevention and de-escalation
- Ensuring any use of force is lawful, proportionate, necessary, and recorded
- Protecting the dignity, welfare, and rights of pupils
- Supporting staff to respond safely to incidents

This policy reflects the Department for Education guidance [“Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools” \(April 2026\)](#).

Following any significant dysregulation incident, the school will undertake a timely review of the incident and determine the most appropriate next steps to safeguard the pupil, staff and other pupils. This may include amendments to support plans, additional pastoral or SEND support, risk assessment, temporary adjustments to provision, involvement of external agencies, or, where lawful and necessary, consideration of suspension or exclusion. The school will always seek to balance safety with the pupil’s need for support and will ensure that decisions are evidence-informed, proportionate and in line with relevant guidance.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All teaching staff
- Support staff
- Senior leaders
- Volunteers and authorised adults working within the school

All school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force where necessary.

3. Definitions

Restrictive Intervention

Any action that restricts a pupil’s movement or freedom, including physical restraint or confining a pupil to a space.

Reasonable Force

Physical contact used to prevent harm or disorder, using no more force than necessary and for the shortest possible time.

Seclusion

A restrictive intervention where a pupil is confined to a space and prevented from leaving, used only to manage immediate safety risks.

Significant Incident

An incident where force or restrictive intervention goes beyond normal physical contact between staff and pupils.

4. School Ethos and Approach

At St Faith & St Martin Church of England Junior School we believe:

- Behaviour is best managed through positive relationships and proactive support
- Restrictive interventions are a last resort
- Pupils should be supported to develop emotional regulation and self-management skills
- The welfare and dignity of every pupil must be respected

The school prioritises:

- Prevention
- Early intervention
- De-escalation
- Restorative approaches

5. When Reasonable Force May Be Used

Staff may use reasonable force to prevent or stop a pupil from:

- Causing injury to themselves or others
- damage to property
- Stop a pupil committing a criminal offence
- Causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

Examples include:

- Separating pupils involved in a fight
- Preventing a pupil from leaving a classroom where there is risk of harm
- Stopping a pupil from attacking another pupil

- Preventing dangerous behaviour that could lead to injury
 - Preventing dangerous behaviour such as throwing objects
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6. Searching for Prohibited Items

Staff should be aware that, in addition to the powers described in this policy, the school has legal powers to search pupils for prohibited items in accordance with the Education Act 1996 and the Department for Education's *Searching, screening and confiscation in schools* guidance. Prohibited items include knives and offensive weapons.

Where a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is carrying a prohibited item, the search must be carried out only by a senior teacher or by a member of staff authorised by the headteacher, and in accordance with statutory requirements and school procedures.

Where lawful and necessary, reasonable force may be used to search for statutory prohibited items, but any such use of force must comply with this policy and be necessary, proportionate and recorded.

7. When Force Must NOT Be Used

Staff must not:

- Use force as a punishment
- Use techniques that restrict breathing or circulation
- Apply pressure to the neck, throat, abdomen or face
- Hold pupils on the ground
- Use unnecessary or excessive force

Any intervention must be:

- Necessary
 - Proportionate
 - For the shortest time possible
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8. Prevention and De-escalation

The school aims to minimise restrictive interventions by:

Whole School Strategies

- Positive behaviour policy
- Clear expectations and routines
- Staff training in behaviour management

- Inclusive classroom practices

De-escalation Techniques

Staff should attempt to:

- Use calm verbal communication
- Provide reassurance
- Offer space or time to regulate
- Redirect behaviour
- Use restorative approaches
- Seek assistance from senior staff

Restrictive interventions should only occur when de-escalation has failed or is not possible.

9. Pupils with SEND or Additional Needs

The school recognises that pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) may be more likely to experience distress or dysregulation.

To minimise restrictive interventions the school will:

- Conduct individual risk assessments
 - Develop behaviour support plans
 - Make reasonable adjustments
 - Work with parents, carers and external professionals
 - Identify triggers and preventative strategies
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10. Use of Seclusion

Seclusion will only be used:

- To prevent immediate harm
- To support a dysregulated pupil become more regulated
- For the shortest possible time
- In a safe supervised environment

Seclusion must never be used as a punishment.

The pupil must be allowed to leave once the risk of harm has reduced and they are regulated.

11. Recording Incidents

The school has a statutory duty to record incidents involving restrictive interventions.

Records must be completed as soon as possible and preferably on the same day using the form in appendix 1. A copy of which should be added to the pupils CPOMS file and shared with parents.

Records will include:

- Date, time and location
 - Staff involved
 - Pupils involved
 - Description of the incident
 - Risks identified
 - De-escalation strategies attempted
 - Type of intervention used
 - Duration
 - Injuries or damage
 - Follow-up actions
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12. Informing Parents or Carers

Parents or carers will be informed:

- As soon as possible
- Normally on the same day
- With written details providing a copy of appendix 1 – which must be completed following an incident.

The school will offer an opportunity to discuss:

- The incident
 - Triggers and support strategies
 - Future preventative measures
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13. Post-Incident Support

Following an incident the school will:

- Support the wellbeing of pupils and staff
- Conduct a review of the incident

- Identify lessons learned
 - Update behaviour plans where required
 - Repair relationships through restorative discussion
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14. Staff Training

Staff who may need to use restrictive interventions will receive training in:

- Behaviour management
- De-escalation strategies
- Safe physical intervention techniques
- Safeguarding and pupil welfare

Training will be reviewed regularly.

15. Monitoring and Governance

The Governing Body will:

- Review data on restrictive interventions
 - Monitor patterns and trends
 - Ensure the policy is implemented correctly
 - Ensure equality and safeguarding considerations are met
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16. Safeguarding and Equality

All actions under this policy must align with:

- The Safeguarding Policy
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998

The school will monitor the impact of restrictive interventions on pupils with:

- SEND
 - Protected characteristics
 - Additional vulnerabilities
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16. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Restrictive intervention report

Use this form to record the details of restrictive intervention incidents this will make sure you're meeting the statutory requirements.

This form should be filled in by a member of staff who used a restrictive intervention on a pupil (force, seclusion, restraint, or a combination of any of these).

You should record the incident by filling out this form as soon as possible after the event, **no later than the same day**.

Staff, pupil and incident details

STAFF DETAILS	
Name of the member of staff who used a restrictive intervention, and who is writing this report	
Role of the member of staff who used a restrictive intervention, and who is writing this report E.g. teacher	
Names and roles of any other staff involved E.g. Sarah Matthews (assistant headteacher) was present	
PUPIL DETAILS	
Name of pupil who a restrictive intervention was used on	
Names of any other pupils directly involved	
Any needs or circumstances of the pupil, e.g. if the pupil has SEND E.g. pupil has moderate learning difficulties	
The pupil's SEN code, if they have SEN (ask your SENCO if you're not sure) E.g. E – EHCP	

INCIDENT DETAILS	
Date of incident	
Time of incident	
Location of incident E.g. force used in classroom	
Approximate duration of the intervention E.g. 5 minutes	
Restrictive intervention(s) used E.g. reasonable force, seclusion or restraint	
<p>If reasonable force was used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What type of reasonable force was applied • The degree of force <p>E.g. lifted the pupil in a 'cradle hold', holding them firmly so they wouldn't kick or hit themselves or myself</p>	
Were there any physical injuries to pupil and/or staff member(s)?	<p>YES/NO</p> <p>(If yes, make sure any injuries are also recorded as set out in your school's health and safety policy and reported to the Health and Safety Executive where required)</p>
Details of any physical injuries (if applicable) E.g. red mark on wrist, scratch on left cheek	
Any support provided after the incident, including any medical treatment for injuries to pupil and/or staff member(s)? E.g. pupil seen by first aider, ice pack applied	

Incident account

This should be a **brief account** of:

- **What** happened
- **Why** you assessed that it was necessary to use the intervention you used

You should include:

- What led up to the incident
- Any potential or identified triggers
- Any preventative or de-escalation strategies you used

WHAT HAPPENED

Example report:

At lunchtime, I was on duty in the canteen. At one point, I started to hear some loud shouting. I then saw Nathaniel punch Jake in the stomach quite hard. Nathaniel's friends, Jeremiah Santos and Nancy Jacobs, then started to hold him back to stop him, but he pushed them away. Jake then tried to retaliate and punch Nathaniel, but he missed and Nathaniel pushed him to the floor.

At this point, Mr Lewis had already shouted 3 times for Nathaniel and Jake to stop, but they were ignoring him and kept fighting. Mr Lewis then approached Nathaniel and held him forcefully by the shoulders and pulled him off Jake. Mr Lewis then guided Nathaniel away by the arm and took him out into the corridor.

Mr Lewis used reasonable force for around 4 minutes when he held Nathaniel to take him away from Jake and when he guided him away from the incident. I helped Jake up from the floor by the hand and guided him by the arm into the playground, using reasonable force for around 3 minutes. I gave Jake a few minutes to calm down and then we went to the school office to find a first aider. Jake was given an ice pack for his back.

WHY I ASSESSED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO USE THE INTERVENTION I USED (IF NOT COVERED ABOVE)

Example:

I assessed that it was necessary to use the intervention because there was a risk of physical harm to pupils. Both pupils were highly dysregulated and were ignoring repeated verbal instructions to stop. I also felt the situation could quickly escalate and increase the risk of physical harm.

There was a clear risk of injury to Jake, Nathaniel, and other pupils nearby, and the situation was not resolving without physical intervention. The reasonable force used was necessary to separate the pupils, stop the fighting, and move them to a safer location so the incident could be brought under control.

I also feel that the force used was proportionate to the situation: it was only used while the pupils were dysregulated and there was an immediate risk of harm. Once the pupil had calmed down, I immediately stopped the use of force.

I confirm that the information above is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

***Note: A copy of this document must be placed on the pupil's CPOMS safeguarding file and a copy shared with parents.**