



Shropshire Church of England Academies Trust

Restrictive Intervention Policy

Presented & Approved by Trust Board	Education Standards, Outcomes Committee 03/03/2026
Name of Chair of Trust Board	Malcolm Maclean
Date Signed	Effective from: 1 April 2026
Version	1.0
Date of Next Review	April 2027



Version control:

Version:	Date of approval:	Reason for changes:	Key changes made:
V1.0	10/02/2026	Document creation	<p>This policy replaces individual school Physical Intervention Policies.</p> <p>This trust-wide policy has reframed Physical Intervention to Restrictive Intervention in line with DfE terminology</p> <p>Embedded the expanded scope (reasonable force, restraint <i>and</i> seclusion)</p> <p>Strengthened the safeguarding framing</p> <p>Added the statutory recording and reporting duties effective from April 2026</p> <p>Brought prevention, de-escalation and SEND considerations to the fore</p> <p>Clarified governance and monitoring responsibilities.</p>



1. Purpose and Ethos

This policy sets out the Trust's approach to **restrictive interventions**, including the use of **reasonable force**, in line with the Department for Education guidance *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools* (DfE, effective April 2026).

The Trust is committed to: - Promoting positive behaviour and emotional regulation - Preventing situations that may give rise to restrictive interventions - Ensuring that any restrictive intervention is used **only as a last resort**, is **lawful, proportionate, necessary and time-limited**, and maintains the **safety and dignity** of all involved

Restrictive interventions are a **safeguarding matter**, not a behaviour management strategy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff working with pupils, including teachers, support staff, supply staff, volunteers and any adults authorised by the CEO/Headteacher/Head of School.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is underpinned by:

Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006

DfE: *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools* (2026) –

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Equality Act 2010

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

4. Key Definitions

Restrictive intervention

Any action that intentionally limits a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom in order to prevent harm.

Reasonable force

Force used to prevent injury, damage, serious disorder or a criminal offence, and which is proportionate to the risk.

Restraint

The use of physical contact to hold a pupil in order to restrict movement. This may include force or non-force restraint.



Seclusion

The supervised confinement of a pupil away from others where they are prevented from leaving, used only to manage serious risk.

Everyday physical contact

Appropriate physical contact (e.g. guiding, comforting, first aid) that does **not** constitute a restrictive intervention.

5. Principles Governing Use

Restrictive interventions:

- Are used **only when there is a significant risk of harm**
- Are **never used as punishment, discipline or to enforce compliance**
- Must be the **least restrictive option available**
- Must be proportionate to the risk and **used for the shortest time possible**
- Must prioritise safety, dignity and emotional wellbeing

6. Prevention and De-escalation

The Trust places strong emphasis on prevention, including:

- ✓ Positive behaviour cultures
- ✓ Early identification of risk
- ✓ De-escalation strategies
- ✓ Individual support and risk assessments for pupils who may require additional support

Restrictive interventions should only be considered when de-escalation strategies have failed or are inappropriate due to immediate risk.

7. Authorisation and Training

All staff have the legal power to use reasonable force. However:

Only staff who have received appropriate training should use physical restraint

Staff are expected to act within their competence

No member of staff is expected to place themselves at risk of serious injury



8. Use of Restrictive Interventions

When restrictive intervention is necessary, staff must:

Use calm, clear communication

Use the minimum force necessary

Continuously monitor the pupil's safety

Cease the intervention as soon as risk reduces

Prohibited practices include:

- Restricting breathing or circulation
- Holding around the neck
- Ground restraint unless unavoidable and proportionate

9. Seclusion

Seclusion may only be used:

- To manage immediate risk
- With continuous supervision
- For the shortest time possible
- Never as a disciplinary sanction

All incidents of seclusion must be recorded and reported.

10. Recording and Reporting (Statutory Duty)

From April 2026, schools have a **statutory duty** to record and report all **significant incidents** involving:

- Reasonable force
- Restraint (including non-force restraint)
- Seclusion

Schools must complete the form in Appendix A. See also guidance in Appendix B.

Records must be completed promptly and include:



- Context and antecedents
- De-escalation strategies used
- Nature and duration of the intervention
- Any injuries or distress

Parents/carers must receive a written account as soon as practicable (usually the same day) using appendix A and Appendix C

11. Post-Incident Support and Review

Following an incident:

- Pupils and staff must be supported
- A debrief should take place
- Behaviour support plans and risk assessments reviewed if required

12. SEND and Vulnerability

The Trust recognises the disproportionate impact of restrictive interventions on pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities.

Schools must:

- Use individual risk assessments
- Work proactively with families and external agencies
- Monitor patterns and disproportionality

13. Monitoring and Governance

The Trust operates a tiered governance structure to ensure effective oversight of restrictive interventions.

Headteacher/Head of School

- Ensure the policy is implemented consistently
- Ensure all significant incidents are recorded and reported in line with statutory requirements
- Analyse patterns, trends and any disproportionality within the school



- Ensure appropriate follow-up, staff support and review of risk assessments

Local Governing Board (LGB)

- Receive summary information on restrictive interventions as part of safeguarding oversight
- Seek assurance that systems are robust and consistently applied
- Monitor patterns and themes (not individual incidents)
- Escalate concerns to the Trust where necessary

Trust / Education Performance Standards Committee

- Receive Trust-level assurance reports
- Monitor trends across schools, including SEND disproportionality
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties and DfE guidance
- Commission Trust-wide actions, training or policy review where required

14. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Exclusion and Suspensions Policy



Restrictive Intervention Policy – Appendices

Appendix A: Restrictive Intervention Record (Template)

See accompanying document which **MUST** be completed following every instance of Restrictive Intervention/Seclusion.

Appendix B: Guidance for Staff – Completing a Restrictive Intervention Record

This guidance supports staff in completing the Restrictive Intervention Record accurately and consistently.

Key principles

- Records are safeguarding documents and may be shared with parents/carers and external agencies.
- Records should be factual, timely and written in professional language.

What to include

- Describe what happened, not opinions or assumptions.
- Clearly record de-escalation strategies attempted.
- Be specific about the type and duration of any restrictive intervention.
- Record any injuries, distress or medical support provided.
- Ensure parental notification is completed and logged.

Timescales

- Records should be completed on the same day wherever possible.
- Headteacher/Head of School review should take place promptly.

Appendix C: Parental Notification – Standard Wording

Schools must provide parents/carers with written notification following any significant restrictive intervention.

Suggested wording:

Dear [Parent/Carer],

I am writing to inform you that today an incident occurred at school involving your child, which required staff to use a restrictive intervention to ensure safety.



The intervention was used only after de-escalation strategies had been attempted and was applied for the shortest time necessary to manage risk. Your child's wellbeing was monitored throughout.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you and to work together to support your child going forward.

Please contact the school if you would like to arrange a meeting or have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

[Headteacher/Head of School]

Appendix D: Trust-Level Reporting Summary (Termly)

Schools will submit a termly summary to the Trust for assurance purposes.

The summary will include:

- Number of restrictive intervention incidents
- Breakdown by type (reasonable force, restraint, seclusion)
- SEND and vulnerability analysis
- Any injuries or safeguarding concerns
- Actions taken or planned

Reports will be reviewed by the Education Performance / Standards Committee (Spring term minimum).