

# Restrictive Intervention

## Whole School and EYFS

**Regulation ISSR: Part 3**

**Reviewed and updated by: Mrs C Wood**

**Approval: Full Governor Board**

**Last Review: April 2026**

**Next Review: Summer 2026**

### Introduction

This policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils who may need to be positively handled. This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and pupils. These include:

- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding

This policy reflects current statutory guidance from the Department for Education: “*Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools*” (April 2026). The school recognises that restrictive interventions must only be used as a **last resort**, and places a strong emphasis on **prevention, de-escalation, and safeguarding**.

### Purpose of the policy

Good professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in school respond positively to the discipline practised by the staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances staff may need to act in situations where the use of positive handling may be required.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff (any person who works at the school and has lawful control or charge of pupils at the school) at Alderley Edge School for Girls:

- clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where positive handling is necessary and
- are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations should they occur.

The application of any form of restrictive intervention (Positive Handling) places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow the policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for restrictive intervention.

Restrictive intervention will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff, or property, are at risk.

## **Training**

Restrictive intervention training will be made available to designated staff as part of new staff induction. No member of staff will be expected to undertake restrictive intervention without appropriate training. Refresher training to members of staff will be provided through staff meetings.

## **Definitions**

### **Restrictive intervention**

Restrictive intervention refers to any action that restricts a pupil's movement, liberty, or freedom to act independently. This includes:

- Physical restraint (use of force)
- Non-force physical intervention where movement is restricted (e.g. guiding, escorting, or blocking where necessary to maintain safety)
- Seclusion (where a pupil is prevented from leaving an area they would otherwise be free to leave)

Restrictive interventions will only be used as a **last resort** where there is a risk of harm to the pupil or others.

### **Seclusion**

Seclusion is where a pupil is prevented from leaving an area or space they would otherwise be free to leave, and is isolated from others.

Seclusion will only be used where:

- There is a risk of harm to the pupil or others
- It is the least restrictive option available in the circumstances

Seclusion must never be used as a punishment and must be:

- Supervised appropriately
- Time-limited
- Recorded and reviewed in line with school procedures

### **Reasonable force**

Reasonable force is the minimum level of physical force necessary to prevent a pupil from harming themselves or others, or from causing serious damage to property. Any use of reasonable force must be:

- Necessary
- Proportionate to the risk presented
- Applied for the shortest possible time

### **Physical intervention**

Physical intervention refers to the use of non-restrictive or minimally restrictive physical actions used to support, guide, or manage a pupil's behaviour. This may include:

- Guiding a pupil by the arm, hand, or shoulder
- Standing between pupils to prevent escalation
- Escorting a pupil away from a situation

- Blocking a pupil's path to prevent harm or escalation

Physical intervention should only be used where necessary and before escalation to restrictive intervention where appropriate.

### **Physical contact**

Physical contact refers to appropriate, non-restrictive contact that is an expected and professional part of school life. This includes:

- Holding the hand of a younger pupil where appropriate (e.g. lining up or transitions)
- Comforting a distressed pupil where appropriate and in line with school practice
- Congratulating or acknowledging achievement (e.g. handshake or positive gesture)
- Demonstrating learning activities (e.g. PE, music, practical lessons)
- Providing first aid or medical support

All physical contact must be professional, appropriate, proportionate, and in line with safeguarding expectations.

### **De-escalation**

De-escalation refers to strategies used to prevent behaviour from escalating to a level where restrictive intervention may be required. This includes:

- Calm verbal communication and reassurance
- Offering choices or redirection
- Removing triggers where possible
- Allowing time and space to reduce tension

De-escalation should always be used as the first approach wherever possible.

### **Principles for Use**

Restrictive interventions will only be used when:

- There is a risk of harm to the pupil or others
- De-escalation has been attempted or is not possible

Restrictive interventions will:

- Be reasonable, proportionate, and necessary
- Be used for the shortest possible duration

Restrictive interventions will never be used:

- As punishment
- For staff convenience
- In any way that restricts breathing or causes harm

## **Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour**

Staff consistently use positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order. Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches will be taken according to the circumstances of the incident:

Verbal acknowledgment of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain; this includes negotiation, care and concern.

Further verbal reprimand stating:

- this is the second request for compliance
- an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable
- an explanation of what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues.

Warning of potential need to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies. At this point it may be necessary to summon assistance from trained staff, staff who are more familiar with the child's needs, or a member of the SLT.

Physical intervention: reasonable physical intervention using the minimum degree of contact to prevent a child harming themselves, others, or property.

## **Escalating Situations**

The 1996 Education Act (Section 550A) stipulates that reasonable physical intervention may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom, during a teaching session or elsewhere (this includes authorised out-of-school activities);
- self-injuring or placing themselves at risk;
- injuring others;
- causing damage to property, including that of the pupil themselves;
- committing a criminal offence (even if the pupil is below the age of criminal responsibility).

It does not authorise anything to be done in relation to a pupil which constitutes the giving of corporal punishment. We reject the use of corporal punishment.

## **Types of Incidents**

Incidents described above fall into 3 broad categories:

1. Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury;
2. Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property;
3. Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order or discipline.

Examples of situations which fall within one of the first two categories are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil;
- pupils are fighting;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing injury, damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of materials or objects;
- a pupil is running in a corridor or in a way which she might have or cause an accident likely to injure themselves;

- a pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave the school.

Examples of behaviour which fall into the third category are:

- a pupil persistently refusing to do as requested;
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

### **Acceptable measures of Physical Intervention**

Positive handling can only be deemed reasonable if:

- it is warranted by the particular circumstances of the incident;
- it is delivered in accordance with the seriousness of the incident and the consequences which it is desired to prevent;
- it is carried out as the minimum to achieve the desired result;
- the age, understanding and the gender of the pupil are considered;
- it is likely to achieve the desired result.

Wherever possible, assistance will be sought from another member of staff before intervention. The form of physical intervention may involve staff doing the following:

- physically interposing themselves between pupils;
- blocking a pupil's path;
- escorting a pupil;
- shepherding a pupil away.

Any such measures will be most effective in the context of the overall ethos of the school, the way in which staff exercise their responsibilities and the behaviour management strategies used.

Whenever positive handling is used, staff will keep talking to the pupil.

### **Recording and Reporting**

All incidents of restrictive intervention, including physical restraint, seclusion, and non-force interventions, must be recorded.

Records must be completed as soon as possible and on the same day wherever practicable and include:

- Date, time, and location
- Names of those involved
- What happened and why the intervention was necessary
- De-escalation strategies used
- Type and duration of intervention
- Any injuries or distress

Parents/carers will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable, normally on the same day.

All records will be stored securely on the school's safeguarding system.

Records will be stored centrally and securely; staff should not retain personal copies. A copy will be sent to the DSL and a copy will be scanned and uploaded onto CPOMS.

**See Appendix I for the recording sheet.**

The DSL will include the number of restrictive intervention Incidents in the termly safeguarding report which is sent to the Governors' Curriculum Committee.

### **Action after an Incident**

The Head will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Child Protection Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure
- School Behaviour Policy
- Exclusions Procedure

Members of staff will be kept informed of any action taken. In case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

### **Complaints**

The availability of a clear policy regarding restrictive intervention and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them. Any complaints about staff will be dealt with under the school's Complaints Policy.

### **Monitoring of Incidents**

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use restrictive intervention this will always be recorded and documented. Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Head to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour can only be contained using positive handling. This process will address patterns of incidents and evaluate trends which may be emerging and is reported to the Governors' Curriculum Committee via their meetings.

**Appendix I.**  
Restrictive Intervention Log



Day and Date of incident	
Time of incident	
Location	
Name(s) of staff involved	
Name of Child(ren) involved	
Name(s) of other staff/children who witnessed incident	
Type of Intervention	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Restraint <input type="checkbox"/> Seclusion. <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Force restriction
Brief description of incident (Please be objective and factual, outlining how incident began and progressed, details of pupil's behaviour, what was said by each individual, steps taken to defuse/calm the situation, degree of force used, how applied, and for how long.)  *The DSL may request further reports from other witnesses	
Reason why intervention was necessary	
De-escalation strategies used	
Child's response & outcome of incident	
Details of any injury suffered by the child, another child or member of staff or other damage to property	
First Aid provided? Summary of what was provided	
Parental contact made by DSL or Head of Year	
Added to CPOMS	"Restrictive intervention report made and recorded" (add date and time of incident)
Actions taken after incident to support pupil(s) and staff	
Logged on behaviour log and review of incident completed with relevant staff	

Signed:

Date:

Copy sent to DSL