



Restrictive Interventions Policy

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Terminology

This guidance will use the following definitions:

- Restrictive intervention: a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This guidance uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.
- Reasonable force: a term used in legislation which includes physical restrictive interventions. All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances.⁴ Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.
- Significant incident: any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff as described in 'Other physical contact with pupils' within this document. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.
- Seclusion: a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others, and preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction, blocking, or making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave.
- Restraint: a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact. For example, holding a pupil's arms to their sides or removing a pupil's crutches would both be considered forms of restraint.
- Non-force related restraint: A restrictive intervention which limits, controls or prevents a pupil's movement without the direct use of physical force. This may include actions such as blocking a pupil's exit, removing an item or mobility aid, or using a barrier or environmental restriction to prevent movement.

Policy Statement

The positive ethos, good behaviour and excellent relationships in this school mean that restrictive physical intervention will be rarely needed. However, this policy also recognises that schools and other settings have a duty of care towards their pupils and staff. It also recognises that the best interests and welfare of all children within the school community must be paramount, and that children may sometimes behave in such a way as to put themselves or others at risk. It is therefore necessary and appropriate for schools and settings to proactively plan for behaviour that may challenge these principles and to prevent injury or damage. The school recognises that children and young people who are still developing emotionally and physically may be particularly sensitive to trauma, and that adverse experiences at this stage may have long-term consequences. This policy therefore provides guidance on the use of restrictive interventions in line with current legislation, safeguarding responsibilities, core values and ethical principles.

The school is committed to minimising the need for restrictive interventions through proactive behaviour support, early intervention, de-escalation and relational approaches. Restrictive interventions will only ever be used as a last resort.

Policy Aims

This policy supports staff to minimise the use of restrictive interventions through proactive and supportive approaches to behaviour management. It ensures that any intervention used will be lawful, reasonable, proportionate and in the best interests of the pupil and wider school community. The policy provides guidance on protecting the dignity, safety and welfare of all pupils, particularly those with SEND and other vulnerabilities, and ensuring that all incidents are accurately recorded, reported and reviewed in accordance

with current statutory guidance.

The Legal Framework

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from causing injury to themselves or others, committing a criminal offence, damaging property, or seriously disrupting good order and discipline within the school. Any use of restrictive intervention must be lawful, necessary, proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances, using the minimum force required for the shortest possible time.

Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 states:

A person to whom this section applies may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of preventing a pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following, namely—

- a. Committing any offence,
- b. Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself), or
- c. Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

DfE 'Behaviour in schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff, February 2024' states:

- Teachers have power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour which occurs in school and, in some circumstances, outside of school.
- The power to discipline also applies to all paid staff (unless the headteacher says otherwise) with responsibility for pupils, such as teaching assistants.
- Headteachers, proprietors and governing bodies must ensure they have a strong behaviour policy to support staff in managing behaviour, including the use of rewards and sanctions.

DfE 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools, 2026' states:

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. To prevent or stop a pupil from:

- causing injury to themselves or others
- committing a criminal offence
- damaging property
- causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

Pupils should not be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example, by covering the mouth and/or nose, or applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen. The use of force can be dangerous, particularly where it occurs on the ground. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should release their holds or re-position into a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible.

Where appropriate, the pupil should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. For any form of restraint, including seated and standing, there is a risk of physical and psychological harm, and it should be avoided where possible.

Understanding Restrictive Interventions

Restrictive interventions are usually used either to control or restrain. In a school context, this can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm, to more serious circumstances such as breaking up a fight or to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is necessary.

Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more serious circumstances. Whilst school staff should always seek to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid accidental injury.

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves or others through physical outbursts

Schools or teachers must never use force as a punishment as this is unlawful.

Seclusion

Seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil apart from others and preventing them from leaving. This is distinct from supervised isolation or reflection spaces used as part of the school's behaviour management procedures. Seclusion should only be used where necessary to prevent harm and must never be used as a punishment. Any use of seclusion must:

- be proportionate and for the shortest possible time
- involve continuous supervision of the pupil
- take place in a safe environment
- stop as soon as the immediate risk has reduced
- be recorded and reported in line with this policy

Avoiding the Use of Restrictive Interventions

Whilst Borden does not have a 'no contact' policy, staff should avoid using any force on students unless they believe it is absolutely necessary. The legal framework above lists examples of where it may be appropriate, but the judgement that staff need to make is often finely balanced. Staff need always to consider whether the use of force is unavoidable because of an honestly held belief that the legal framework applies in the current situation. This means that where a student wants to leave the classroom, area or school site they should be allowed to do so unless they are likely to put themselves or others at risk.

The school recognises that some pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to distress, anxiety, sensory overload or communication difficulties, which may increase the likelihood of behaviours that challenge. Staff should seek to understand the underlying needs or triggers contributing to a pupil's behaviour and use proactive support, reasonable adjustments and de-escalation strategies wherever possible. Pupils with SEND may therefore require individual risk assessments, behaviour support plans or additional adjustments to help minimise the need for restrictive intervention.

Poor behaviour on its own is not a good enough reason to use force on a student. Restrictive interventions should always be a last resort when other strategies have failed. Borden will aim to avoid this eventuality by:

1. Having a positive behaviour strategy for pupils with rewards and sanctions, including using behaviour support plans where appropriate (see behaviour policy)
2. Considering environmental/sensory triggers alongside using trauma-informed and restorative approaches
3. Training staff, both in general behaviour management strategies to avoid restrictive interventions and guidance on what to do in the event of the need to use restrictive interventions with a pupil. All staff will be given basic guidance, as well as this policy. Key staff who are most likely to be placed in the situation will have specific restrictive interventions training.
4. Instigating risk assessments for pupils whose behaviours may put themselves or others at risk, particularly those with specific special educational needs, including a plan for avoiding the need for restrictive interventions.

5. Reviewing any incidents as soon as practicable (preferably on the same day) where restrictive interventions were necessary or almost necessary. The Headteacher must be informed of any need for restraint as soon as practicable so that a review can take place and the risk assessment updated if appropriate.
6. Monitoring and analysing restrictive intervention data for patterns and trends, and reviewing this policy in line with good practice and the equalities duty.

When Restrictive Intervention Becomes Necessary

Restrictive interventions should only be used where all other reasonable strategies have been considered or attempted and where it is necessary to prevent harm, injury, serious disruption or damage to property. Staff should always seek to use the least restrictive option for the shortest possible time and continue to reassess the situation throughout the intervention. However, the use of restrictive interventions on a pupil places both the pupil and the member of staff at risk and must be avoided if at all possible. Staff members are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

Where restrictive intervention becomes necessary, staff should ensure that intervention is:

- in the best interests of the child or other children
- reasonable, necessary and proportionate to the circumstances
- intended to reduce risk and restore safety
- the least intrusive and restrictive option likely to be effective, while maintaining the dignity of all concerned
- carried out in a manner that avoids physical contact that could be misinterpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct
- applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible, while allowing the pupil to regain self-control
- continually assessed to ensure that the intervention remains necessary and proportionate
- stopped immediately where the intervention is escalating the situation, with alternative strategies considered where appropriate

Restrictive interventions must never be used as a punishment.

When restrictive intervention is necessary, the staff member should always:

- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Tell the pupil what they must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Reduce and remove restraint as soon as the pupil regains control and it is safe to do so

Searching Students Without Consent

Although consent will almost always be sought, headteachers and authorised staff may use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for “prohibited items”. Please see our Searching, Screening & Confiscation Policy and/or our Behaviour Policy for further information, as per the guidance from ‘Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools July 2022’.

Post-Incident Support

Restrictive intervention often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for support and debriefing after the incident, for all involved.

A member of the leadership team must be informed immediately after a restrictive intervention has taken place (or as soon as practicable). The following post-incident procedures must be followed:

Immediate support:

- medical assessment for staff/pupil if required
- emotional support for staff/pupil in the form of a check in/debrief
- support for witnesses of the incident, whether staff/pupil, in the form of a check in/debrief

Follow up procedures:

- parents will be informed on the same day, or as soon as practicable
- reflective debrief held between staff members and leadership team, covering the triggers, deescalation techniques used and rationale for use of restrictive intervention
- restorative conversation mediated between staff member and pupil

Recording requirements:

All incidents of restrictive intervention must be reported on CPOMs and contain the following information:

- Names of staff/pupil/witnesses
- SEN status
- Time and date
- Location of incident
- Trigger factors
- De-escalation used
- Rationale
- Type/degree of force
- Restrictive intervention used (description of hold etc)
- Duration of restrictive intervention
- Injuries
- Follow-up support

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behavioural support plan, a personal risk assessment or other strategies agreed by the Senior Leadership Team.

Risk Assessments

If the school becomes aware that a pupil may present behaviours that could require the use of reasonable intervention, an individual risk assessment and/or behaviour support plan will be developed to help minimise the likelihood of intervention being required. Such planning will be proportionate to the needs of the pupil and reviewed regularly, particularly following any significant incident.

Risk assessments and support planning may include:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention
- Known triggers, including environmental or sensory triggers where appropriate
- Agreed de-escalation and calming strategies
- Reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND or other vulnerabilities
- Involvement of parents/carers and, where appropriate, the pupil themselves
- Briefing and guidance for staff, including any identified training needs
- Identification of additional support that may be required
- Consideration of the school's duty of care to all pupils and staff
- Arrangements for reviewing incidents and updating plans where necessary

Complaints

Parents and pupils have the right to raise concerns or make a complaint regarding the use of restrictive

intervention by school staff. Any complaints will be managed in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedure, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and relevant statutory guidance.

Any allegation regarding inappropriate use of force or restrictive intervention by a member of staff will be managed in line with safeguarding procedures and the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. The school will ensure that all concerns and complaints are taken seriously, investigated appropriately and responded to fairly and proportionately.