



Faith, Family and Fascination

Restrictive Interventions (including use of reasonable force) Policy

Boutcher C.E. Primary School

Reviewed by:	Governing Body
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Last reviewed during:	Spring 2026
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Next review due by:	Spring 2028
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**"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."
*John 13:34***

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS POLICY

Boutcher Church of England Primary School fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 157 of the Education Act 2002 to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This policy is a whole school policy and applies to all pupils including those in the EYFS. Care and consideration will be given to the age of the child when following the guidance in this policy.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors, paid and unpaid, working in the school including governors.

This policy has been written using advice taken from Restrictive Interventions, Including Use of Reasonable Force, In Schools Guidance, DfE 2016.

The school acknowledges its legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs (SEND). Equality Act 2010, SEN and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years 2015. Through this policy the school recognises its obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010, and requirements for recording and reporting incidents where staff use force or seclusion on a pupil.

The use of restrictive intervention should be used as a last resort with staff taking prevention and de-escalation measures. Please read this policy in conjunction with our Behaviour policy and SEND Policy.

Definitions for the Purposes of this Policy:

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. 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.

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Who can use Reasonable Force?

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

All staff who are likely to need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions will be adequately trained in its safe and lawful use and in preventative strategies. The headteacher will carry out risk assessments to ensure that staff who regularly work alongside children where the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions may be required can do so as safely as possible.

Unacceptable Uses of Force

It is illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment.

Children 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.

Other Physical Contact with Pupils

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with pupils which does not give rise to any question over the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions.

This will depend on the circumstance, but examples of occasions when physical contact is generally appropriate include:

- to give first aid
- to guide or escort pupils, such as holding the hand of a pupil at the front/back of the line when going to assembly, when walking together around the school or on a school trip, or when helping a pupil to a space they have chosen to access to self-regulate
- to comfort a distressed pupil
- to congratulate or praise a pupil, for example a pat on the back or a handshake
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

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In assessing whether physical contact is appropriate in a given situation, the member of staff should use their judgement and have regard to:

- the school's Safeguarding Policy
- the applicable circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present
- the individual child's age
- any other material factors, including but not limited to whether:
 - the pupil has SEND or other vulnerabilities
 - any alternative strategies that do not include physical contact can be used

Seclusion

Seclusion - a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving. It should only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. In such circumstances, the pupil is not acting with intent. Seclusion should not be implemented by staff through threat of punishment.

The place to which the pupil is confined should be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil. The pupil should be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the child should be allowed to leave.

An incident involving the use of seclusion must be recorded and reported in accordance with the procedures outlined in the section on 'Recording and reporting duties'.

Seclusion is not a disciplinary response to deliberate or wilful misbehaviour.

Minimising the Need for Restrictive Intervention

To minimise the need for restrictive intervention, we will take whole-school measures and sometimes, where necessary, tailored approaches for individual children.

Whole School Measures include:

- careful and considered school and classroom environment management to support all children to achieve and thrive
- implementing a whole-school behaviour management, for classrooms and communal spaces such as corridors and playgrounds (see behaviour policy)
- training all staff in effective communication strategies, such as using appropriate tone of voice and empathy to aid de-escalation
- development of working staff-pupil relationships
- recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform improvement planning

Individual Approaches Include:

- working closely with parents to support individual pupils
- working with SEN specialist and other external agencies involved with the pupil

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- strategies to support individual pupils based on their identified needs, including the development of behaviour support plans, recognising that where a pupil has a disability, we have a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to support pupils with reasonable adjustments, making sure they can benefit from what our school offers
- giving pupils time, space and strategies to calm down before their behaviour escalates.

Determining When Use of Restrictive Interventions is Appropriate

There will be times when staff may need to use restrictive interventions. The decision on whether it is reasonable to use a restrictive intervention depends on the individual circumstances of each situation.

To make this assessment, the member of staff should consider the following:

Is it necessary?

- Staff should consider whether there are other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage a situation.
- Staff should assess whether a restrictive intervention is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself.
- Where possible, staff should communicate with other staff members to understand any broader risks in the environment.

Is it proportionate?

- Staff should use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce the relevant risks.
- If the intervention itself is escalating the situation, staff should reconsider their approach and attempt an alternative strategy.
- Staff should consider the personal circumstances of the pupil such as medical conditions, special educational needs or other vulnerabilities, their characteristics such as age and size, and must consider relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.¹⁴

Have you considered the pupil's welfare?

- Staff should consider the impact on the pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. For example, pupils who have experienced an adverse life event, with diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, past trauma or neglect, communication difficulties, or other needs, may find the use of restrictive interventions particularly distressing.
- Staff should seek to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity. This may include, where possible, considering the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers.
- Where possible, staff should clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why, and explain what the pupil needs to do.
- For pupils with difficulties with speech, language and communication, or with English as an additional language, verbal and/or non-verbal strategies should be used to ensure the pupil understands what is happening and has adequate time to process information and respond.

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- Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.

This list of factors is not exhaustive, and staff should also take into account other relevant considerations. Training on the use of restrictive interventions should equip staff to judge when it is appropriate to use restrictive interventions, including in situations where quick decisions are needed. Training should also help staff understand how to assess whether their response is reasonable under pressure. *Further guidance can be found in Appendix B.*

Consideration for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)

We recognise that some children and young people with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to themselves and others. Triggers may include pain, sensory overload, unfamiliar situations or environments or feelings of fear and anxiety. In particular, pupils who are non-verbal or find verbal communication challenging may express their needs, discomfort or confusion through actions.

We recognise that this can lead to pupils with SEND being disproportionately subject to the use of restrictive interventions and therefore we seek to understand the underlying triggers of challenging behaviour so that we can provide proactive support, create an inclusive environment and consider the impact of school policies on pupils with SEND.

Our Behaviour Policy and SEND Policy outline considerations taken to support children with SEND through developing our whole school culture and environment to support all pupils (especially those with SEND) to cope with situations that they may find distressing.

The SENDCO and Headteacher will identify and utilise staff who know individual pupils well to help identify and manage risk such as trigger points when challenging behaviour is more likely to occur, and develop proactive strategies to reduce the likelihood of restrictive interventions being used. They will also work with the pupil, parents and other professionals to develop prevention and de-escalation strategies.

Depending on the circumstances, examples of strategies may include:

- removing stimuli that may be causing distress
- changing body language, facial expression, and/or tone of voice
- supporting the pupil to express their emotions before getting overwhelmed
- engaging the pupil in an activity which can help them manage their feelings of anxiety
- distracting the pupil in something that interests them or by introducing familiar objects and activities to redirect their attention.

Where appropriate, the SENDCO will work with pupils (where appropriate) with SEND and their parents in the co-production of any necessary behaviour support plans. Behaviour support plans will outline any adjustments, such as to address aspects of the school environment which the pupil finds challenging and ways for pupils to communicate their needs effectively.

Behaviour support plans will detail circumstances where it may be appropriate for staff to have increased physical contact with a pupil. This should be discussed in conjunction with the relevant

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people, such as teachers, parents, the pupil, pastoral staff or health professionals, and parameters around its use stated clearly in the plan.

Where there is an identified risk, such as increased likelihood in the need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions, we will carry out risk assessments so as to mitigate risks such as through training and prevention strategies.

Whether the use of restrictive interventions is appropriate will depend on the circumstances, irrespective of whether it has been considered as part of a behaviour support plan. Any behaviour support plans will be reviewed with the pupil and their parent periodically and following any significant incident, so that changes can be made based on evidence of what has worked and what has not worked in practice for the individual pupil.

Where a pupil has a disability, we recognise our duty under the Equality Act 2010 to take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage so that the pupil can fully participate in the education provided by the school, and that they can enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services that the school provides for pupils.

Pupil and Staff support

We will aim to evaluate all incidents involving the use of restrictive intervention as soon as practicable after the event to understand why it was used, the impact on pupils and staff, any patterns and trends, and how the use of restrictive interventions might be avoided in future, for example by amending or introducing a behaviour support plan.

If appropriate, the pupil and staff member involved will receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. Incidents in which a member of staff uses reasonable force or seclusion on a pupil must be recorded as described in 'Recording and reporting duties' in this document. In addition, any injuries will be recorded in accordance with the school's procedures and reported as appropriate to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher (or in their absence another member of the SLT) will also hold a follow-up conversation(s) to facilitate reflection, learning and to support pupil and staff wellbeing.

This conversation will be part of the overall debriefing process and will look to understand what happened during the incident and why, based on separate reflections from both the staff and pupils involved, as well as to repair and rebuild relationships through dialogue.

This process will be facilitated by a staff member who was not involved in the incident and may also benefit from the presence of an additional person to ensure impartiality and support. We will continue to monitor pupil and staff wellbeing and provide additional support if needed, for example through further follow-up conversations, counselling or other resources. Additionally, any pupil who witnesses an incident of restrictive intervention where a peer may have been injured or become distressed will also be provided with appropriate support where necessary.

Recording and Reporting the use of force

We recognise the school's duty under section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and therefore our governing body will ensure that a procedure is in place for recording and reporting each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil.

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Recording And Reporting The Use Of Force Procedure

Where appropriate, the pupil and/or staff member should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible.

All incidents must be recorded as soon as practicable after the event to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

Incidents will be recorded in writing by the staff member(s) involved and they will endeavour to do this no later than the same day on the Reporting Restrictive Intervention Form (see *appendix a*). The requirement to record incidents in writing applies even if the use of restrictive interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan.

Parents/carers will be contacted on the same day by the Headteacher or another member of the SLT in her absence.

In exceptional circumstances, there may be exceptions to the requirement to report to parents where:

- it appears to the Headteacher that doing so would be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil. In this instance, the staff member must report the incident to any parent(s) who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm or, if there are none, to the local authority within whose area the pupil is ordinarily resident.
- A report of the incident made to parents should include the following details as a minimum:
 - time
 - date
 - location
 - approximate duration of the intervention
 - a brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance
 - a brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
 - details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable

The requirement to report applies even if the use of restrictive interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan.

Follow up written notice of any intervention requiring force will be sent to parents/carers via email or letter in due course.

Parents may also be invited to have a follow-up discussion about the incident where appropriate. This would include a further discussion about:

- any behavioural triggers or warning signs of an impending incident
- whether any agreed behaviour support plans were followed
- what de-escalation strategies were used and how effective they were
- what might be done differently in the future

The outcome of a follow-up discussion with a parent may be used to amend any existing behaviour support plans, as needed.

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Recording And Reporting The Use Of Seclusion And Non-Force Related Restraint

The governing bodies recognises its statutory duty to ensure that a procedure is in place for recording each seclusion or restraint incident under the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025.

An incident of restraint may occur with or without direct physical contact. For restraint incidents that occur without direct physical contact, they will be recorded under the procedures outlined in this section.

Recording And Reporting The Use Of Seclusion And Non-Force Related Restraint Procedure

If necessary, the pupil and/or staff member should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible.

All incidents must be recorded as soon as practicable after the event to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

Incidents will be recorded in writing by the staff member(s) involved and they will endeavour to do this no later than the same day on the Reporting Restrictive Intervention Form (*see appendix a*).

The requirement to record incidents in writing applies even if the use of seclusion or restraint in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan.

Parents/carers will be contacted on the same day by the Headteacher or another member of the SLT in their absence.

In exceptional circumstances, there may be exceptions to the requirement to report to parents where:

- it appears to the Headteacher that doing so would be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil. In this instance, the staff member must report the incident to any parent(s) who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm or, if there are none, to the local authority within whose area the pupil is ordinarily resident.
- A report of the incident made to parents should include the following details as a minimum:
 - time
 - date
 - location
 - approximate duration of the intervention
 - a brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance
 - a brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
 - details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable

The requirement to report applies even if the use of seclusion or restrain in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan.

Follow up written notice of any intervention requiring force will be sent to parents/carers via email or letter in due course.

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Parents may also be invited to have a follow-up discussion about the incident where appropriate. This would include a further discussion about:

- any behavioural triggers or warning signs of an impending incident
- whether any agreed behaviour support plans were followed
- what de-escalation strategies were used and how effective they were
- what might be done differently in the future

The outcome of a follow-up discussion with a parent may be used to amend any existing behaviour support plans, as needed.

In circumstances where a restraint incident also constitutes a significant use of force, we will only follow the reporting procedure for significant use of force incidents under section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 as outlined above. We will not report the same information twice. However, if a restraint incident does not constitute a significant incident of use of force, this must be reported under the procedures outlined in this section.

Recording and Using Data

The Headteacher (DSL) will keep records of incidents and will review them periodically to ensure that all incidents are dealt with promptly and appropriately, and that any potential patterns are identified.

The Headteacher will inform the safeguarding governor and chair of governors about restrictive interventions that occur and the effectiveness of reporting, including reference to it in any safeguarding reports and providing any relevant data.

Records will be kept confidentially and held securely in compliance with the data protection act 2018, and the UK GDPR.

The governing body will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school's procedures for recording and reporting the use of force and seclusion and restraint are complied with.

The governing body will regularly review and interrogate data on restrictive interventions to ensure the school:

- identifies and implements improvements to policies and practices, particularly where approaches have been used for some time but have not been effective.
- identifies areas of learning and development for school staff, supporting specific teachers to improve understanding and practice.
- to understand pupils' repeat patterns and triggers to interrogate the effectiveness of pupil support measures, share this information with teachers who work with those pupils to better support them and, where appropriate, their parents, to establish a behaviour support plan or revise an existing plan.
- to identify any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics, have SEN, or other types of vulnerability.

The governing body will be considerate of the limitations of data and what can be inferred from it. Analysis will be proportionate and over-interpreting small subgroups of people will be avoided.

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Complaints Relating to Restrictive Interventions (including use of reasonable force)

All complaints about the use of force will be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated.

Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.

When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff, the procedures set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead
Eilidh Verhoeven (Headteacher) 020 7237 2149

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Appendix A

Reporting the Use of a Restrictive Intervention

Did the restraint involve force?* Yes / No	Did the incidence involve seclusion or non-force related restraint?* Yes / No
<i>*Most incidents will have required either force or seclusion/ non-force. Occasionally an incident may involve both, in this scenario please circle yes for both.</i>	
Name of pupil:	
Name of Staff Member(s) directly involved:	
Time: Date: Location: Approximate duration:	
Are there any relevant needs or circumstances? Does the pupil have any specific SEND or disability?	
Please give an account of the incident, including: what led up to the incident, potential triggers identified, any de-escalation strategies used, the restraint involved (force / seclusion/ non-force), the degree of force applied. <i>Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.</i>	
Why did you assess the intervention to be necessary?	
Were any physical injuries sustained? <i>If yes, give details.</i>	
Was any post-incident support given? If yes, give details.	
Signed: _____ Print Name: _____	

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Appendix B

Restrictive Intervention Procedure

Restrictive intervention may be used only in exceptional circumstances to prevent immediate harm to a pupil or others. It is not a behaviour management strategy and must always be reasonable, proportionate, and time-limited.

1. Restrictive Intervention must only be used:

- As a last resort
 - With minimum force
 - For the shortest time possible
 - To prevent harm
 - Defensible to professional colleagues
- Never used to punish or gain compliance**

2. When Can Restrictive Intervention Be Used?

It is ONLY used when:

- There is immediate risk of harm to the child, other children or staff.
- De-escalation has failed or is not possible
- The situation is an emergency

3. Before & During a Restrictive Intervention

Where possible:

- Approach calmly but firmly
- Use clear, simple language
- Explain what behaviour must stop and that restraint will stop as soon as it is safe
- Summon help immediately
- Never involve other pupils

4. How to Apply Restrictive Intervention

You must:

- Use the least restrictive option
- Give continuous verbal reassurance
- Reduce risk of accidental injury
- Monitor: breathing, colour, consciousness

Stop immediately if there are signs of distress

Permitted actions may include:

- Blocking
- Guiding or leading by hand/arm
- Shepherding away
- More restrictive holds **only in extreme circumstances**

DO	DO NOT (NEVER USE)
✓ Keep talking calmly ✓ Ensure free airflow ✓ Use a soft surface if possible ✓ Be aware of accessories (yours and the pupil's) ✓ Stay aware of your own emotional state	✗ Face-down (prone) holds ✗ Straddling ✗ Pressure on joints or pressure points ✗ Contact near throat or head ✗ Restrict breathing ✗ Cause pain ✗ Lock a pupil in a room

7. Ending the Intervention

- Stop as soon as the risk reduces
- Support the pupil to re-regulate
- Seek medical help if there are any concerns

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8. After the Incident

- Record the incident promptly on Reporting the Use of a Restrictive Intervention form
- Inform senior staff and the SENCo as soon as possible
- Parents informed in line with school procedures (verbally on the same day by a member of the SLT, written notice in due course)

Safeguarding Reminder - Restrictive intervention is only to keep people safe and must always protect the pupil's dignity, wellbeing, and rights