



POSITIVE HANDLING AND RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION POLICY

Responsible: Governing Body & SLT

Agreed: September 2025

To be reviewed: Annually (or in event of incident review/legislation change)

Reviewed: April 2026 - Updated in light of updated government guidance

1. Introduction

St. Peter & St. Paul CE Primary School is committed to safeguarding the welfare, dignity and rights of all children and staff. We aim to proactively minimise the need for restrictive interventions through positive relationships, early support, reasonable adjustments and effective de-escalation strategies.

This policy sets out the school's approach to **restrictive interventions**, including the use of **reasonable force** and **seclusion**, and ensures compliance with statutory duties that came into force in **April 2026**.

This policy has regard to:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (sections 93 and 93A)
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025
- *Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools* (DfE, April 2026)
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

2. Aims

- To promote a calm, safe and caring Christian learning environment
- To prevent and de-escalate behaviour wherever possible
- To ensure restrictive interventions are used only when necessary, proportionate and lawful
- To safeguard the dignity, welfare and rights of children
- To meet statutory recording, reporting and governance duties

3. Definitions

Restrictive intervention

Any action (physical or non-physical) that prevents, restricts or subdues a child's movement, or keeps them confined to a space.

Reasonable force

Physical contact used to restrict movement, applied using the minimum force necessary for the shortest possible time to reduce risk.

Restraint

An intervention that limits a child's movement and may or may not involve physical contact.

Seclusion

Keeping a child confined, away from others, and preventing them from leaving (physically or psychologically). Seclusion is **not a disciplinary sanction**.

Significant incident

Any incident where force goes beyond ordinary physical contact (such as guiding or comforting) or where seclusion or restraint is used.

4. Prevention and De-escalation

The school prioritises prevention over reaction. Staff will:

- Build positive, trusting relationships with children
 - Use early intervention strategies (distraction, reducing audience, calm language)
 - Recognise early signs of distress or dysregulation
 - Offer time, space and support to self-regulate
 - Make reasonable adjustments for children with SEND
 - Work in partnership with parents and professionals
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5. When Restrictive Interventions May Be Used

Restrictive interventions may only be used as a **last resort** to:

- Prevent harm to the child or others
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent a criminal offence
- Prevent serious disorder

Staff must consider:

- **Necessity** – are there less restrictive alternatives?
 - **Proportionality** – is this the least restrictive option for the shortest time?
 - **Welfare** – impact on the child's wellbeing, dignity and emotional needs
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6. Use of Reasonable Force

When force is unavoidable, staff must:

- Use the minimum force for the shortest duration
- Clearly communicate what is happening and why
- Stop as soon as the risk reduces
- Involve another adult where possible
- Maintain the child's dignity and privacy

Unacceptable practices include:

- Any intervention used as punishment
 - Actions restricting breathing or blood flow
 - Pain-compliance techniques
 - Holding on the ground unless unavoidable and then only briefly
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7. Seclusion

Seclusion is **not about behaviour management or consequences**. It is:

- Used **only for safety**
- When a child is **highly dysregulated**
- And is being **prevented from leaving** a space
(physically *or* in a way that makes them believe they're not allowed to leave)

Because it restricts liberty, it is tightly regulated and **must be recorded and reported**.

Seclusion may be used **only as a safety measure**, when a child is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation and presents a serious risk.

Safeguards:

- The space must be safe and non-threatening

- The child must be supervised at all times
- Seclusion must end as soon as risk reduces
- Seclusion must never be used as a punishment

Any use of seclusion is a **recordable and reportable incident**.

Removal from class or working with a senior leader as a behavioural consequence, where the child is regulated and not prevented from leaving, does not constitute seclusion and is managed under the school's Behaviour Policy.

8. Children with SEND

Where restrictive intervention is foreseeable:

- A **risk assessment must be completed**
- A **Positive Handling / Behaviour Support Plan** must be in place
- Plans should be **co-produced** with parents and, where appropriate, the child
- Reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 must be considered

Plans will be reviewed regularly and **after any significant incident**.

9. Training and Authorisation

- All staff may use reasonable force under the law
- Staff likely to need restrictive interventions must receive appropriate training
- The school uses **React** accredited training
- Training records are maintained by the school

10. Recording Incidents (Statutory)

All significant incidents of:

- reasonable force
- restraint (with or without physical contact)
- seclusion

must be recorded **as soon as practicable, and no later than the same day**, on CPOMS.

Records must include:

- Names of child and staff involved
- Date, time, location and duration
- SEND status and relevant vulnerabilities
- Events leading up to the incident and triggers
- De-escalation strategies used
- Type and **degree** of force or restriction
- Reason for use
- Injuries and medical support
- Post-incident support provided

11. Reporting to Parents (Statutory)

Parents/carers must be informed **in writing on the same day** wherever possible.

Reporting may be withheld only if doing so would cause **serious harm** to the child. In such cases, the incident must be reported to the local authority instead.

12. Post-Incident Support

- Medical assessment where appropriate
- Emotional support for children, staff and witnesses

- Debrief within 48 hours, led by an uninvolved adult where possible
 - Repair of relationships
 - Review of support plans
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13. Governance and Monitoring

- SLT will regularly analyse incident data
 - Governors will review anonymised data to:
 - identify patterns and repeat incidents
 - monitor proportionality and equity
 - ensure compliance with statutory duties
 - inform training and policy review
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14. Complaints and Allegations

- Complaints will be managed under the Complaints Policy
 - Allegations against staff will follow *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
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