

Aston Clinton School

Together we: Aspire, Care and Succeed



Restrictive Interventions and Reasonable Force Policy

Date agreed by Full Governing Body	Autumn 2026
Date to be reviewed	Autumn 2027
Committee accountable for review	Full

This policy complies with the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education under section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The governing body has due regard to this in relation to recording and reporting each significant incident involving the use of force by members of staff. [DfE Guidance](#)

1. Vision, Values and Ethos

The school's approach to behaviour, safety, and the use of restrictive interventions is underpinned by our shared vision to **Aspire, Care, and Succeed**.

- **Aspire:** We maintain high expectations for behaviour, relationships, and learning, and support pupils to develop self-regulation, resilience, and positive choices.
- **Care:** We place the safety, dignity, and emotional wellbeing of pupils and staff at the centre of all decisions, recognising that behaviour is often a form of communication.
- **Succeed:** We work proactively to remove barriers to learning and support all pupils to succeed, particularly those who are vulnerable or have experienced adversity.

The school is committed to trauma-informed practice, recognising the impact that adverse life experiences can have on a child's behaviour, emotional regulation, and sense of safety. We also adopt a restorative approach, seeking to repair relationships, rebuild trust, and promote reflection and learning following incidents.

Restrictive interventions are therefore used only as a last resort, where necessary to prevent harm, and never as a behaviour management strategy or punishment.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out:

When and how restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion, may be used:

- The safeguards in place to protect pupils and staff
- Procedures for recording, reporting, review, and support
- How the school minimises the need for restrictive interventions through prevention and de-escalation
- This policy aligns with:
 - Department for Education guidance on reasonable force (effective from 1 April 2026)
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Equality Act 2010

3. Definitions

This guidance uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

- **Restrictive intervention:** a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil.
- **Reasonable force:** a term used in legislation which includes physical restrictive interventions.
- **Significant incident:** any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff as described in
- **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.

4. Who May Use Restrictive Interventions and When

All members of school staff may use restrictive interventions, including reasonable force, **only** to prevent or stop a pupil from:

- Causing injury to themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Causing serious damage to property
- Causing serious disorder to the school or to their classmates

The use of force is never permitted as a punishment and must always reflect the school's values of care, respect, and proportionality.

5. Trauma-Informed Decision-Making

Before using any restrictive intervention, staff must consider:

- What the behaviour may be communicating
- Whether the pupil is experiencing emotional dysregulation or distress
- Known triggers, unmet needs, or previous trauma
- Whether the intervention may escalate fear or loss of control

Staff must always seek to reduce stress, restore calm, and maintain a sense of safety for the pupil.

6. Assessing The Situation

Before intervening, staff must consider:

- Reasonability: Does the circumstances and the context warrant the decision?
- Necessity: Are there alternative strategies that could safely manage the situation?
- Proportionality: Is this the least restrictive option for the shortest possible time?
- Welfare and dignity: What is the physical and emotional impact on the pupil?

The pupil's age, size, health, SEND, and lived experience must be taken into account at all times.

7. Unacceptable Uses of Force

The following are **never acceptable**:

- Use of force as punishment
- Any action that restricts breathing, airway, or circulation
- Pressure to the neck, chest, or abdomen
- Covering the nose or mouth

If a pupil is unintentionally taken to the ground, staff must release or reposition them as quickly as possible into a safer position.

8. Use of Seclusion

Seclusion may only be used:

- To protect others from harm
- When a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation

The pupil must be supervised at all times and allowed to leave as soon as the risk of harm reduces. Seclusion must never be used to punish or isolate a pupil.

9. Pupils with SEND and Additional Needs

The school recognises that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to restrictive interventions. Where there is a known risk:

- A risk assessment must be in place
- Prevention and de-escalation strategies must be identified
- Staff must receive appropriate training

Where appropriate, behaviour support plans are developed with pupils, parents/carers, and professionals, setting out agreed strategies and approaches.

10. Recording and Reporting

All incidents involving restraint, reasonable force, or seclusion must be recorded promptly and accurately on CPOMS. All actions must be followed and checked. Staff should reflect post incident to improve outcomes for pupils. A written report of the incident should be emailed to parents and should include the following

- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance
- brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
- details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable

11. Post-Incident Support and Restorative Practice

Following any restrictive intervention:

- Pupils and staff are medically checked where appropriate
- Injuries are recorded and treated
- A restorative conversation takes place to repair relationships
- Pupils are supported to share their views in an accessible way
- Staff are offered a debrief and emotional support

The focus is on learning, reflection, and reducing the likelihood of future incidents.

12. Prevention and De-escalation

The school prioritises whole-school and individual strategies to minimise the need for restrictive interventions, including:

- Consistent expectations and calm communication
- Early identification of triggers
- De-escalation techniques
- Relational and restorative approaches

Non-restrictive strategies must always be attempted first.

13. Monitoring, Review and Governance

The school regularly reviews data on restrictive interventions to:

- Identify patterns and triggers
- Ensure equity and proportionality
- Improve practice and training

The Governing Board provides oversight and challenge to ensure the policy reflects the school's values and legal duties.

14. Training and Support

Staff receive regular training in:

- Trauma-informed practice

- De-escalation and prevention
- Lawful and safe use of restrictive interventions

The school accesses local support and training, including **Norfolk STEPS**, to ensure best practice.

15. Review

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated in line with statutory guidance and safeguarding requirements.