Aston Clinton School

Together we: Aspire, Care and Succeed

Restrictive Interventions and Reasonable Force Policy

Under-pinned by Trauma-Informed, Restorative and Inclusive Practice

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

At Aston Clinton School, our approach to behaviour, relationships, safety and wellbeing is underpinned by our vision: Together We: Aspire, Care and Succeed

We believe that all children thrive when they feel safe, valued, understood and connected. We are committed to fostering an inclusive culture where positive relationships, emotional wellbeing and high expectations support every child to achieve their full potential.

Aspire

We maintain high expectations for behaviour, relationships and learning whilst supporting pupils to develop resilience, self-regulation, confidence and independence.

Care

We place the safety, dignity, wellbeing and rights of pupils and staff at the centre of all decisions. We recognise that behaviour is often a form of communication and seek to understand the underlying need before responding.

Succeed

We are committed to removing barriers to learning and ensuring every child can flourish academically, socially and emotionally, particularly those who may be vulnerable, have SEND, or have experienced adversity.

The school adopts a trauma-informed, restorative, relational and neurosequential approach to behaviour. We recognise that adverse childhood experiences, attachment needs, disability, neurodiversity, social, emotional and mental health needs can affect a pupil's ability to regulate emotions, behaviour and responses to stress.

Our approach is guided by the principle of Regulate, Relate, Reason. We understand that children are not able to access learning, reflection or problem-solving when they are experiencing significant emotional dysregulation. Adults therefore prioritise helping children feel physically and emotionally safe before supporting reflection and learning.

Restrictive interventions are viewed as exceptional measures and will only be used when absolutely necessary to prevent harm or serious disorder. They will never be used as punishment, to secure compliance or as a behaviour management strategy.

2. Purpose

This policy sets out:

- The circumstances in which restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion, may be used.
- The safeguards in place to protect pupils and staff.
- Procedures for recording, reporting and reviewing incidents.
- Arrangements for post-incident support.
- How the school seeks to minimise the need for restrictive interventions through prevention, inclusion and de-escalation.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- SEND Information Report
- Equality Objectives
- Complaints Policy

- Staff Code of Conduct

3. Definitions

Restrictive Intervention
An umbrella term describing physical and non-physical actions that limit a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom of action.

Reasonable Force
A legal term which includes physical restrictive interventions. Reasonable means no more force than is necessary and for the shortest period required.

Significant Incident
Any incident where force goes beyond normal physical contact between pupils and staff.

Seclusion
A non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined away from others and preventing them from leaving.

Restraint
A non-disciplinary intervention which limits or immobilises a pupil's movement and may or may not involve direct physical contact.

4. Other Physical Contact

The school does not operate a "no contact" policy.
Appropriate physical contact forms a normal part of school life and may include:

- Administering first aid.
- Comforting a distressed pupil.
- Guiding or escorting a pupil.
- Supporting movement around the school environment.
- Demonstrating exercises or techniques.
- Supporting personal care needs.
- Appropriate congratulatory gestures.

Such contact is not considered restrictive intervention and must always be professional, appropriate and in the best interests of the pupil.

5. Who May Use Restrictive Interventions and When

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force where necessary to prevent a pupil from:

- Causing injury to themselves.
- Causing injury to others.
- Committing a criminal offence.
- Causing serious damage to property.
- Causing serious disorder within the school.

Any intervention must be reasonable, necessary, proportionate and for the shortest possible duration.

6. Trauma-Informed and Neurosequential Decision Making

Before considering restrictive intervention, staff will seek to understand:

- What the behaviour may be communicating.
- Whether the pupil is experiencing emotional dysregulation.
- Any known triggers or unmet needs.
- Any social, emotional or mental health needs.

- Any sensory needs or environmental factors.
- Any history of trauma or attachment difficulties.
- Any SEND or disability-related factors.

Staff recognise that children cannot effectively access reasoning, reflection or learning when highly dysregulated. During periods of distress, adults will prioritise regulation through calm, attuned and supportive responses.

Staff will always seek to:

- Promote safety.
- Preserve dignity.
- Reduce anxiety.
- Support regulation.
- Maintain relationships.

Restrictive intervention will only be considered when preventative and de-escalation approaches have not been successful, or when there is insufficient time to use them safely.

7. Assessing the Situation

Before intervening staff must consider:

Reasonableness

Does the situation warrant intervention?

Necessity

Is there a less restrictive alternative?

Proportionality

Is this the least restrictive option available?

Welfare and Dignity

What is the potential emotional and physical impact?

Staff must consider:

- Age.
- SEND.
- Disability.
- Health needs.
- Communication needs.
- Previous experiences.
- Cultural factors.

Environmental factors, including transitions, sensory demands, social interactions and learning environments, should also be considered.

8. Unacceptable Practice

The following are never permitted:

- Use of force as punishment.
- Deliberate infliction of pain.
- Restriction of breathing, airway or circulation.
- Pressure to the neck, chest or abdomen.
- Covering the nose or mouth.
- Humiliating, degrading or abusive treatment.

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

9. Use of Seclusion

Seclusion may only be used:

- To protect others from harm.
- As a safety response to significant emotional or behavioural dysregulation.
- When less restrictive options are insufficient.

Pupils must be continuously supervised.
As soon as the immediate risk has reduced, the pupil must be allowed to leave.
Seclusion must never be used as a disciplinary sanction or punishment.

10. Pupils with SEND and Additional Needs

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and disabilities may be more vulnerable to restrictive interventions.
The school will:

- Make reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
- Identify preventative and de-escalation strategies.
- Undertake risk assessments where necessary.
- Develop behaviour support plans where appropriate.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training.

Parents, pupils and professionals will be involved in planning and reviewing support wherever possible.
Where restrictive interventions occur repeatedly, support arrangements will be reviewed through the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process.
The school will consider whether:

- Additional reasonable adjustments are required.
- Further assessment is needed.
- Additional support should be implemented.
- External agency involvement is required.

Pupils will be supported to identify the strategies and relationships that help them feel safe, calm and regulated.

11. Recording and Reporting

All incidents involving restraint, reasonable force or seclusion must be recorded on CPOMS as soon as practicable and, wherever possible, on the same day.
Records will include:

- Names of pupils involved.
- Names of staff involved.
- Relevant SEND information.
- Time, date, location and duration.
- Antecedents and triggers.
- Preventative strategies used.
- De-escalation strategies attempted.
- Reasons intervention was necessary.
- Type and degree of force used.
- Any injuries sustained.
- Post-incident support provided.
- Recommendations and follow-up actions.

It should be recorded by the staff member(s) involved and they should endeavour to do this no later than the same day. Parents must be informed as soon as practicable after the incident and schools should endeavour to do this no later than the same day.

12. Post-Incident Support, Reflection and Restoration

Following any restrictive intervention:

- Medical support will be sought where necessary.
- Injuries will be recorded appropriately.
- Staff and pupils will be offered opportunities to debrief.
- Emotional recovery and regulation will be prioritised.
- Pupils will be supported to share their views.

Reflective and restorative conversations will only take place once the pupil has returned to a regulated emotional state and can meaningfully engage.

Where possible, such conversations should be facilitated by a member of staff not directly involved in the incident.

Where other pupils have witnessed an incident, appropriate reassurance and support will be provided.

The school's approach is to reflect, repair and restore relationships whilst promoting learning and wellbeing.

13. Prevention and De-escalation

The school prioritises prevention and early intervention through:

- Positive relationships.
- Consistent routines and expectations.
- Trauma-informed practice.
- Restorative approaches.
- Co-regulation strategies.
- Emotional literacy development.
- Early identification of needs.
- Individual support planning.
- Sensory adaptations.
- Safe spaces and regulation opportunities.
- Outdoor learning opportunities.
- Effective partnership with families.
- Curriculum adaptations where appropriate.

Staff recognise that self-regulation develops through co-regulation. Adults therefore provide calm, predictable and emotionally available responses to support regulation before learning, reflection and behaviour change.

Staff are expected to model emotional regulation, empathy and consistency.
Wherever safe to do so, non-restrictive strategies will always be attempted before restrictive interventions.

14. Monitoring, Review and Governance

The Governing Board will regularly review restrictive intervention data to ensure practice remains lawful, proportionate, equitable and effective.
Monitoring will include:

- Frequency of incidents.

- Repeat incidents.
- Patterns and triggers.
- SEND trends.
- Vulnerable groups.
- Protected characteristics.
- Effectiveness of support plans.
- Staff training needs.
- Use of seclusion.
- Equity and proportionality.

Analysis will inform:

- School improvement priorities.
- Behaviour systems.
- Staff development.
- SEND provision.
- Safeguarding arrangements.
- Pupil support strategies.

15. Training and Support

Staff will receive training appropriate to their role, including:

- Trauma-informed practice.
- Neurosequential approaches.
- Norfolk STEPS.
- Prevention and de-escalation.
- Restorative practice.
- SEND and inclusion.
- Mental health awareness.
- Safe and lawful use of restrictive interventions.

Staff directly involved in, witnessing or affected by significant incidents will be offered appropriate support and debrief opportunities.

16. Commitment to Inclusion

The school believes that the most effective way to reduce restrictive interventions is through strong relationships, inclusive practice, emotional wellbeing, high-quality teaching and environments where children feel safe, connected and valued.

Through our commitment to Aspire, Care and Succeed, we seek to build emotional resilience, strengthen wellbeing, promote positive relationships and provide every child with the support they need to flourish.

We recognise that children are most able to learn, reflect and make positive choices when they are regulated and feel emotionally safe. Our approach is therefore guided by the principle of Regulate, Relate, Reason, ensuring that supportive relationships and emotional safety underpin all aspects of behaviour support.

Restrictive interventions are exceptional measures used only when absolutely necessary to keep people safe and are always followed by support, reflection, restoration and learning.