WHITEFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

HEALTHY HEARTS; HEALTHY BODIES; HEALTHY MINDS

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION POLICY (INCLUDING THE USE OF REASONABLE FORCE)

The Governing Board of Whitefield Primary School adopted this policy on 29th June 2026

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Headteacher – (Summer term)

Introduction

This policy outlines Whitefield Primary School's approach to restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force. It is designed to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils, staff, and visitors while promoting a positive and supportive learning environment. This policy is compliant with relevant UK legislation, including the Education Act 1996, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Equality Act 2010, and guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on the use of reasonable force. It also takes into account safeguarding duties as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a framework for the safe and responsible use of restrictive interventions.
- Protect pupils and staff from harm.
- Promote positive behaviour management strategies.
- Ensure transparency and accountability in the use of restrictive interventions.
- Comply with all relevant legislation and guidance.
- Reflect the school's commitment to trauma-informed practice and inclusivity, particularly for pupils with SEND.
- Ensure the safety of learners with additional learning needs and ensure that arrangements for these learners are appropriate.

3. 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. 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 restrictive intervention:** an action that limits a pupil's movement or freedom without the use of physical force, such as directing a pupil to a different space, adjusting the environment, or using seclusion, and is used only when necessary to prevent harm and when less restrictive measures have not been effective
- **De-escalation:** Strategies used to calm a situation and prevent escalation to restrictive intervention.
- **Serious Incident:** Any incident involving restrictive intervention that results in significant injury, trauma, or requires external agency involvement (e.g., police, social services).

4. Principles

- **Least Restrictive:** Restrictive interventions should only be used as a last resort, when all other strategies have been exhausted or are deemed inappropriate in the immediate circumstances.
- **Proportionality:** The level of intervention must be proportionate to the risk presented by the pupil's behaviour.
- **Necessity:** The intervention must be necessary to prevent harm or serious disruption.
- **Safety:** The safety and well-being of the pupil and others must be the primary consideration.
- **Dignity:** Interventions must be carried out with respect and sensitivity, minimising any potential for humiliation or distress.
- **Transparency:** All incidents involving restrictive interventions must be documented and reported.
- **Accountability:** Staff are accountable for their actions and must be able to justify the use of restrictive interventions.
- **Inclusion:** The needs of pupils with SEND, particularly those with ASD, must be carefully considered.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Governing Body:**
  - Approving and monitoring the implementation of this policy.
  - Ensuring adequate resources are available for training and support.
  - Reviewing incident data and addressing any concerns.
- **Headteacher:**
  - Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
  - Ensuring staff are appropriately trained and supported.
  - Overseeing the investigation of serious incidents.
  - Liaising with external agencies as required.

- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):**
    - Supporting the Headteacher in implementing this policy.
    - Monitoring the use of restrictive interventions.
    - Providing guidance and support to staff.
    - Leading CPD on strategies for Positive Behaviour Management and De-escalation strategies
- **Pastoral Team, Pupil Mentor and Attendance Manager:**
    - Evolving role to meet the needs of children and their families, impacting positively on pupils' well-being, attendance, punctuality, behaviour, and overall outcomes.
- **Class Teachers and Support Staff:**
    - Implementing this policy in their daily practice.
    - Using positive behaviour management strategies.
    - De-escalating potentially volatile situations.
    - Using restrictive interventions only as a last resort and in accordance with this policy.
    - Documenting and reporting all incidents involving restrictive interventions.
- **Parents/Carers:**
    - Working in partnership with the school to support their child's behaviour.
    - Being informed of any incidents involving restrictive interventions.
    - Providing relevant information about their child's needs and triggers.
- **Pupils:**
    - Understanding the school's expectations for behaviour.
    - Knowing how to seek help if they feel unsafe or distressed.

6. Implementation

6.1 Training:

- All staff will receive training on positive behaviour management strategies, de-escalation techniques, and the appropriate use of restrictive interventions.
- Training will be regularly updated to reflect best practice and legislative changes.
- Specific training will be provided for staff working with pupils with SEND.
- Training will include practical scenarios and opportunities for reflection.
- Staff are appropriately trained, where appropriate in restrictive physical intervention.
- Medical Lead ensures any medical care plans for individual learners are up to date and staff have received appropriate/relevant training

6.2 Prevention and De-escalation:

- The school will implement proactive strategies to prevent challenging behaviour, including:
    - A positive and supportive school environment.
    - Clear expectations for behaviour.
    - Consistent application of the school's behaviour policy.
    - Early identification and support for pupils with behavioural needs.
    - Personalised provision plans that address individual needs.
    - Effective communication with parents/carers.
- Staff will use de-escalation techniques to manage potentially volatile situations, including:
    - Remaining calm and non-confrontational.
    - Using a calm and reassuring tone of voice.
    - Giving the pupil space and time to calm down.
    - Offering choices and alternatives.
    - Removing triggers from the environment.
    - Seeking assistance from colleagues if needed.
    - Use of seclusion if necessary.

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

6.3 Use of Restrictive Interventions:

- Restrictive interventions, including physical intervention, will only be used as a last resort, when all other strategies have been exhausted or are deemed inappropriate in the immediate circumstances.
- The minimum force necessary will be used to prevent harm or serious disruption.
- All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances.
- The intervention will be carried out in a way that minimises the risk of injury to the pupil and others.
- The intervention will be stopped as soon as the risk has been managed.
- Other pupils will be removed from the immediate vicinity, where possible, to minimise distress and maintain confidentiality.
- Staff will be aware of pupils individual communication needs.

Use of Reasonable Force During Searches

The headteacher, and any staff members they formally authorise, have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil is carrying a prohibited item.

Staff may use only such force as is reasonable when searching for items that are prohibited by law. Reasonable force must not be used to search for items that are banned solely under the school's own rules as set out in the ***Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools*** guidance.

6.4 Recording and Reporting:

- All incidents involving restrictive interventions, seclusions and use of non-force related restraint will be documented using the school's incident report form within CPOMS.
- The report will include:
  - 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
- Parents/carers will be informed of any incidents involving restrictive interventions as soon as possible in writing
- Parents will be invited in to have a follow-up discussion about the incident where appropriate, including details on:
  - 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
- Serious incidents will be reported to the Headteacher and relevant external agencies (e.g., social services, police) in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- The school has appropriate systems to record incidents, including reporting to relevant bodies and parents.
- Staff follow these procedures robustly.

6.5 Post-Incident Support:

- Following an incident involving restrictive intervention, the school will provide support to the pupil and staff involved.
- This may include:
    - A debriefing session with a trusted adult.
    - Counselling or therapeutic support.
    - A review of the pupil's behaviour plan.
    - Additional training or support for staff.
- The school will analyse incident data to identify trends and patterns and inform future practice.

7. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- This policy recognises that pupils with SEND may require individualised approaches to behaviour management.
- Individual Target Plans (ITPs) PPPs and Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) will be developed in consultation with parents/carers, relevant professionals, and the pupil (where appropriate).
- These plans will outline specific strategies for managing the pupil's behaviour and minimising the need for restrictive interventions.
- Staff will be trained on the specific needs of pupils with SEND and the implementation of their ITPs/PPPs/BSPs.
- The school is able to offer specialist provision for pupils with ASD SEN needs
- The school is able to effectively support the needs of neurodiverse pupils and their families within its mainstream setting
- The school's safeguarding policies and procedures take account of the increased vulnerability of learners with additional learning needs and ensures that arrangements for these learners are appropriate

8. Complaints

- Any complaints regarding the use of restrictive interventions will be dealt with in accordance with the school's complaints policy.
- Complaints will be investigated thoroughly and impartially.
- The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the complainant and relevant parties.

9. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body, in consultation with staff, parents/carers, and pupils (where appropriate).
- The review will consider:
    - The effectiveness of the policy in promoting positive behaviour management.
    - The number and type of incidents involving restrictive interventions.
    - Any complaints received regarding the use of restrictive interventions.
    - Changes in legislation or guidance.
- The policy will be updated as necessary to reflect best practice and legislative changes.

10. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Online Safety Policy

11. Communication

This policy will be made available to all staff, parents/carers, and pupils (where appropriate) via the school website and the school's CPOMs library.

Appendix 1

CPOMS recording Guide Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable force

To prevent or stop a pupil from:
1. causing injury to themselves or others
2. committing a criminal offence
3. damaging property
4. causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

CPOMS Categories (tick all that apply)

☐ Restrictive Intervention –Prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of a pupil.

☐ Reasonable Force – Minimum force to prevent harm

☐ Seclusion –Intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others

☐ Restraint – Intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement.

Record on CPOMS – SAME DAY
All significant incidents must be logged and shared with parents/carers.
What to Record
1. BEFORE: What led to the incident?
2. BEHAVIOUR: What did the child do? Who was at risk?
3. INTERVENTION: What did you do? Planned or reactive?
4. WHY: Prevent harm, damage or leaving a safe space
5. DURATION: How long? (shortest time possible)
6. OUTCOME: How did it end?
7. INJURIES: Record or state 'No injuries observed'
8. PARENTS: Must be informed the same day

How to Write

✓ Factual, clear, chronological

✓ Neutral, non-judgemental language

✗ No opinions or blame

Key Reminders

- Use least restrictive option
- Must be necessary and proportionate
- Follow behaviour plans
- Inform DSL/Senior Leader if concerns

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