



“Show me your way, Lord teach me your paths.” Psalms (25.4)

POLICY ON RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS, INCLUDING REASONABLE FORCE

Rationale:

Almondsbury CE Primary School is committed to creating a **safe, calm and supportive learning environment** in which pupils can thrive academically, socially and emotionally. The school prioritises **positive relationships, prevention, early intervention and de-escalation**. Restrictive interventions are **not routine behaviour management strategies** and are used **only when absolutely necessary** to prevent serious harm.

This policy replaces the previous **The Place of Physical Contact in Managing Children’s Behaviour (2025)** and is written in line with the Department for Education’s statutory guidance: ***Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)***, which replaces *Use of reasonable force in schools (2013)*.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEN and Disability Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Purpose of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- Set out the school’s **legal responsibilities** relating to restrictive interventions
- Clarify **when and how** restrictive interventions may be used
- Ensure **safeguarding, dignity and welfare** remain central to decision-making
- Provide transparency for pupils, parents, staff, governors and inspectors
- Support staff to act **lawfully, confidently and proportionately**

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (sections 93 and 93A)
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest edition)
- DfE statutory guidance on restrictive interventions (April 2026)

Key Principles

At Almondsbury CE Primary School:

- Restrictive interventions are **always a last resort**
- **Prevention and de-escalation** come first
- Any action must be **lawful, necessary, proportionate and time-limited**
- **Minimal force** is used for the **shortest possible duration**
- Restrictive interventions are **never used as punishment**

- Pupils' **dignity, rights and safety** are prioritised at all times

Terminology and Definitions

Restrictive Interventions

An umbrella term describing **any action that limits a pupil's movement, liberty or independence**, whether physical or non-physical.

Restrictive interventions may include:

- Use of reasonable force
- Physical restraint
- Non-physical restraint
- Seclusion

Reasonable Force

The **proportionate application of physical contact** by a member of staff to prevent serious harm.

All school staff have a **legal power** to use reasonable force, but only in specific circumstances defined by law.

Physical Restraint

The use of physical contact to **restrict a pupil's movement** where they are actively resisting and there is an immediate risk of harm.

Non-Physical Restraint

Actions such as **blocking a pupil's path or standing between pupils** to prevent harm, without touching them.

Seclusion

Preventing a pupil from leaving a space, whether locked or unlocked, where their liberty is restricted.

Who May Require this policy to be enacted?

For those pupils who may behave in such a manner as to require the implementation of this policy and its actions, there could be risk assessments written to provide information as to what intervention might be required (See Appendix 1 and 2).

When Restrictive Interventions May Be Used

Restrictive interventions may **only** be used to:

- Prevent injury to the pupil or others
- Prevent a criminal offence
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent serious disorder where there is a real risk of harm

They **must not** be used:

- To punish
- To enforce compliance
- To manage low-level disruption
- For staff convenience

Prevention and De-escalation

The school takes active steps to **reduce the likelihood** that restrictive interventions are needed, including:

- A strong whole-school behaviour culture
- Trauma-informed and relational approaches
- Early identification of distress
- Consistent routines and clear expectations
- Individual Behaviour Plans and reasonable adjustments
- Team Teach de-escalation strategies

Restrictive intervention is considered **only after de-escalation has failed** or when there is an **immediate and serious risk**.

Physical Contact and Appropriate Touch

Appropriate physical contact is a normal part of school life and may include:

- Comforting a distressed pupil
- Guiding for safety
- Supporting learning activities
- Providing first aid

All physical contact must be:

- Non-abusive
- In the best interests of the pupil
- Proportionate and respectful
- Open and transparent

Safeguarding Boundaries (Prohibited Practices)

The school **does not permit**:

- Any technique restricting breathing or circulation
- Pressure to the neck, throat, chest, abdomen or back
- Holding a pupil face down or deliberately on the ground
- Actions causing pain, humiliation or degradation

If there is any concern about injury, **medical advice will be sought**.

Planned and Emergency Interventions

Planned Interventions

- Based on risk assessment and individual planning
- Recorded in a Behaviour Support Plan which clearly identifies the physical support provided
- Shared and agreed with parents
- Regularly reviewed

Emergency (Unplanned) Interventions

- Used in response to unforeseen, immediate risk
- Once an emergency intervention occurs, a plan must be developed to reduce future risk

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

The school recognises that pupils with SEND may be at **increased vulnerability**.

The school will:

- Make reasonable adjustments
- Use proactive planning and early support
- Involve parents and external professionals
- Review incidents to reduce recurrence

Seclusion

Seclusion is:

- Used **only** to prevent immediate harm
- **Never** a punishment
- Always supervised
- Fully recorded and reported
- Seclusion is avoided wherever possible

Recording and Reporting (Statutory)

From **1 April 2026**, the school **must** record every **significant incident** involving:

- Reasonable force
- Physical or non-physical restraint
- Seclusion

Records must include:

- Names of pupils and staff involved
- Date, time, location and duration

- Rationale for the intervention
- Type of intervention used
- Any injuries or medical needs
- SEND status where applicable

Parents/carers will be **informed as soon as practicable on the same day**, unless doing so would risk serious harm.

CPOMS will be used to meet these requirements.

The recording of the incidents will follow the Appendix 3 format.

Post-Incident Support

After any restrictive intervention:

- Pupils will be supported and helped to regulate
- Staff will be debriefed and supported
- Plans and risk assessments will be reviewed
- Learning will inform future practice

Complaints and Allegations

Concerns will be managed:

- In line with the Complaints Policy
- In accordance with safeguarding and allegations procedures
- With reference to the Local Authority Designated Officer where relevant

Training and Accountability

- Staff receive regular training (including Team Teach)
- The Headteacher ensures training is up to date
- Governors monitor data and patterns of use
- Practice is reviewed to reduce reliance on restrictive interventions

Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body will:

- Review incident data termly through the headteachers' report and via onsite visits
- Ensure statutory duties are met
- Use analysis to inform school improvement

References

- Department for Education. *Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (2026)*.
- Department for Education / Department of Health and Social Care. *Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention (2019)*.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest edition)

SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHILD	
THE CHILD - KNOWLEDGE OF BACKGROUND AND NEEDS	THE ADULT: SELF-KNOWLEDGE
<i>Is the action appropriate considering:</i> <i>the child's age?</i> <i>the child's gender?</i> <i>the child's cultural background?</i> <i>the child's developmental level?</i> <i>any previous background of abuse?</i> <i>the child's need for dignity and respect?</i>	<i>Is the action appropriate in the light of:</i> <i>your feelings, are they under control? Is there a desire to punish the child?</i> <i>any possible insecurity on your part and your need to feel in immediate control? Have other strategies been overlooked?</i> <i>your own needs. For example, your own need to have an outlet for your anger or to have an outlet for expressing or receiving physical affection?</i> <i>your awareness of the messages the child is giving about physical contact - both verbal and non-verbal?</i>

Appendix 2

PUPIL/STUDENT RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

NAME OF PUPIL/STUDENT:	
ESTABLISHMENT:	
AGE:	

HAZARD INDICATORS:

History of Aggressive Behaviour Y N Current behaviour observed by range of people Y N

SPECIFIC INCIDENTS:

DATE:	INCIDENT:	EVIDENCE PROVIDED BY:

PATTERNS:

Do incidents take place under specific circumstances? Y N
 Do incidents take place with identifiable people? Y N
 Are there identifiable triggers? Y N

DETAILS:

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BEHAVIOUR PROFILE:

How long has behaviour been exhibited? RECENT MEDIUM-TERM LONGSTANDING
 Have different strategies been tried? YES NO

DETAILS OF WHAT HAS WORKED AND WHAT HASN'T:

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ASSESSMENT:

Level of Risk based on current evidence to:			
Pupils/Students	H	M	L
Staff	H	M	L
Visitors	H	M	L
Buildings	H	M	L
Level of Cumulative Risk			
	H	M	L

ACTION/ CONTROL:

(Current plan e.g. IEP)

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Signature:..... Designation:..... Date:

Scheduled Date for review of Risk Assessment:

PUPIL/STUDENT RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

This form has been prepared to assist relevant staff to consider a pupil's behaviour in the context of a risk assessment. It is written so that it can be shared with colleagues and parents/guardians.

The following is provided as guidance on completion of the form and where appropriate to support and explain the language used.

HAZARD INDICATORS

The purpose of the Indicators is to identify if there is a history of behaviour which might cause concern for the pupil's or others' wellbeing. The expectation is that you tick a relevant box and then expand the information under specific incidents. A Hazard is the potential to cause harm and aggressive behaviour including causing physical or psychological harm.

PATTERNS

The aim is to identify if there is some form of pattern to the behaviour as this might identify practical steps which can be taken to address the issue. A trigger will usually be an occurrence, a place, a time or an individual that results in the behaviour being exhibited. There may not be a pattern.

BEHAVIOUR PROFILE

The aim is to give an indication of how long the behaviour has been occurring and what strategies have been tried to modify it.

ASSESSMENT

The aim with the assessment is to use the information provided to give an indicator of the risk. In this case a high risk is viewed as one where harm is felt certain to occur if action is not taken, a medium risk is where it is likely that harm will occur if action is not taken, whilst a low risk is where no harm is felt likely but some additional measures may still be recommended.

ACTION/CONTROL

The Action to be taken will depend on the outcome of the assessment. Action could involve simply monitoring the situation, reviewing behaviour strategies, changes to curriculum, provision of additional support or exclusion.

Appendix 3

Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils: Incident Record (included in the Red Bound Book)

Details of pupil or pupils on whom force has been used by a member of staff (name of staff)	
Date, time, location of incident	
Names of staff involved (directly or as witness)	
Details of other pupils involved (directly or as witnesses), including whether any of the pupils involved were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social reasons	
Description of incident by the staff involved, including any attempts to de-escalate and warnings given that force may be used	
Reason for force used and description of force	
Any injury suffered by staff or pupils and any first aid and/or medical attention needed	
Follow up, including post-incident support and any disciplinary action against pupils	
Any information about the incident shared with staff not involved in it or external agencies	
When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the incident and any views they have expressed	
Has any complaint been lodged (details should not be recorded here)	
Report compiled by: Name and role: Signature: Date:	Report countersigned by: Name and role: Signature: Date: