



LEIGHSWOOD

SCHOOL

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS POLICY

Completed By:	James Pearce
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Aims and Objectives of the Policy

To minimise the need for restrictive interventions through prevention and de-escalation, and to ensure that when such interventions are required, they are used safely, proportionately and lawfully to keep pupils, staff and the wider community safe.

Statement of Intent

We are committed to a caring, respectful and safe environment. We promote proactive support, trauma-informed practice, and the dignity and welfare of every pupil. Where restrictive interventions are necessary, we will use the least restrictive approach for the shortest time, record and report as required, and review incidents to improve practice.

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out how the school minimises the need to use restrictive interventions and, when necessary, how such interventions are used safely, proportionately and lawfully. It applies to all staff and activities on and off site, including trips and transport.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Department for Education guidance “Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools” (April 2026),
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (sections 93 and 93A),
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025,
- Equality Act 2010,
- Articles 3, 5 and 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998.

3. Definitions

- **Restrictive intervention:** any means to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of the body or part of the body of a pupil, including physical and non-physical actions.
- **Reasonable force:** the legal term for physical restrictive interventions—using no more force than necessary for the least amount of time.
- **Significant incident:** any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact (e.g. first aid, guiding, demonstrations).
- **Seclusion:** a non-disciplinary safety measure in which a pupil is confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving, with continuous supervision; used only to protect others from harm when the pupil is highly dysregulated.
- **Restraint:** a non-disciplinary intervention that immobilises or limits movement; can include actions with or without direct physical contact (e.g. removing a mobility aid).

4. Guiding Principles

- **Necessity:** consider whether effective, less restrictive alternatives exist and whether the intervention will reduce, not escalate, risk.
- **Proportionality:** select the least restrictive option for the minimum time, taking account of age, size, needs and vulnerabilities, including equality implications.

- **Welfare and dignity:** consider impact on the pupil, communicate clearly and calmly, and reduce/stop if distress escalates.

5. Who Can Use Reasonable Force and When

All members of staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances to:

- prevent or stop a pupil from causing injury to themselves or others,
- committing a criminal offence,
- damaging property,
- or causing disorder amongst pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Staff likely to need to use restrictive interventions will receive appropriate training.

6. Unacceptable Uses of Force

- Never use force as punishment.
- Do not use methods that affect airway, breathing or circulation (e.g. pressure to neck or abdomen, covering mouth/nose).
- Avoid ground holds; if one occurs unintentionally, release or reposition to a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible.

7. Seclusion

Seclusion is not a disciplinary measure. It may be used only as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is highly dysregulated and not acting with intent. The space must be safe and non-threatening; the pupil must be supervised throughout; and they must be allowed to leave as soon as the immediate risk reduces. All seclusion incidents must be recorded and reported as set out in Section 11.

8. Other Appropriate Physical Contact

The school does not operate a “no contact” policy. Appropriate contact (e.g. first aid, guiding or escorting, comforting a distressed pupil, demonstrations in PE or music) is permitted where in pupils’ best interests and in line with safeguarding and this policy.

9. Pupils with SEND and Other Vulnerabilities

We seek to understand triggers and provide proactive support to reduce the likelihood of restrictive interventions being required. Where there is an identified risk, a written risk assessment and behaviour support plan will be in place, co-produced with the pupil (where appropriate), parents and relevant professionals, and reviewed after any significant incident.

10. Deciding to Use a Restrictive Intervention

Before intervening, staff should:

- (a) assess necessity;
- (b) select the least restrictive option;
- (c) consider the pupil’s needs and dignity; and
- (d) communicate clearly.

If the intervention escalates the situation, staff should reassess and alter their approach. Quick decisions may be required; staff will be supported for reasonable, well-judged actions taken in good faith to keep people safe.

11. Recording and Reporting Duties (from 1 April 2026)

11.1 Significant use of force: Each significant incident must be recorded in writing as soon as practicable (ideally the same day) by the staff involved.

Records must include at minimum:

- names of pupil(s) and staff;
- relevant pupil needs and SEN code;
- time, date, location and approximate duration;
- a brief account of what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers and de-escalation strategies used;
- the type and degree of force applied;
- why it was necessary;
- and any post-incident support including medical treatment.

Parents must be informed in writing as soon as practicable and, wherever possible, the same day, with specified minimum information. Limited exceptions apply where notification would likely cause significant harm.

11.2 Seclusion and non-contact restraint: Each incident must be recorded as above and parents informed in writing as soon as practicable (endeavouring to do so the same day) in line with the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025.

Records will be kept on Cpoms and stored in line with GDPR regulations

12. Post-Incident Support and Debrief

Where appropriate, pupils and staff should receive prompt medical assessment and treatment for any injuries.

A structured, restorative debrief should follow, ideally led by an uninvolved member of staff, to understand what happened and why, repair relationships and identify learning. The school will monitor wellbeing and provide additional support if needed, including for witnesses.

13. Data, Monitoring and Governance

Leaders will regularly review and analyse data on restrictive interventions to:

- improve policies and practice;
- target staff development;
- understand pupils' patterns and triggers to strengthen support plans;
- and identify any disproportionate impacts on pupils with protected characteristics or SEND.

Governors will scrutinise compliance and impact appropriately.

14. Training

Staff identified as more likely to require the use of restrictive interventions will receive appropriate, accredited training that reflects this policy, along with preventative and de-escalation strategies. Training needs are reviewed regularly and after incidents.

15. Searching Pupils

Only the Headteacher and authorised staff may search a pupil or their possessions where there are reasonable grounds to suspect possession of a prohibited item. Reasonable force may be used to search for items prohibited by law, not for items banned only under school rules. Staff must follow the DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance and the school's local procedures.

16. Complaints and Allegations

Complaints are handled under the school's Complaints Policy. Allegations about staff are managed in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the school's Complaints Policy.

17. Equality, Safeguarding and Data Protection

We will have due regard to the Equality Act 2010, including the public sector equality duty, and will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. All actions under this policy must promote safeguarding and welfare. Records will be kept securely and processed in line with data protection law.

18. Linked Policies and Documents

Relationships and Behaviour Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
SEND Information Report
Health and Safety Policy
Complaints Policy
Searching, Screening and Confiscation procedures
Behaviour Support Plans and Risk Assessments
Restrictive Intervention Incident Report Form.

Appendix A: Parent Notification Letter (Template)

Subject: Notification of Incident Involving Use of Restrictive Intervention

Dear Parent/Carer of [Pupil Name],

I am writing to inform you that an incident occurred today involving your child which required the use of a restrictive intervention. As required under statutory guidance effective 1 April 2026, we are providing you with the key information as soon as practicable.

Summary of the Incident

- Date:
- Time:

- Location:
- Approximate duration of the intervention:

Why the Intervention Was Necessary

Brief explanation of the assessed risk and reasoning.

Type of Intervention Used

Describe type of force/seclusion/restraint and degree of force if applicable.

Injuries and Post-Incident Support

Details of any injuries, first aid, medical assessment and any wellbeing support provided.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the incident further, including possible triggers and strategies to reduce recurrence. Please contact [Name/Role] to arrange a discussion.

Kind regards,

[Name]

[Role]

Leighswood School

Appendix B: Staff Quick Guide

A. Decision Flow

- Is it **NECESSARY**? Immediate risk of injury, serious disorder, criminal behaviour, or serious property damage.
- Is it **PROPORTIONATE**? **Use the least restrictive option for the shortest time.**
- Consider **WELFARE**: age, size, SEND, trauma/medical factors; maintain dignity; avoid airway/breathing/circulation risks; avoid ground holds.
- Seclusion only as a non-disciplinary safety measure with continuous supervision; allow child to leave as soon as risk reduces.

B. During the Intervention

- Use **minimal** force for **minimum** time.
- Continuously reassess **necessity** and **proportionality**; adjust or stop if distress escalates.
- Seek assistance if required.

C. After the Intervention

- Check for injuries (pupil and staff) and provide/arrange medical support.
- Complete same-day incident record including at minimum:
 - names of pupil(s) & staff,
 - relevant needs/SEND code,
 - time/date/location/duration,
 - what happened and triggers,
 - de-escalation used,
 - type/degree of force or nature of restraint/seclusion,
 - why necessary,
 - post-incident support.
- Notify parents in writing as soon as practicable (same day where possible) unless a safeguarding exception applies.
- Restorative debrief and wellbeing check for pupil and staff
- Review plans and risk assessments.