



Restrictive Interventions, including the use of Reasonable Force in Schools Policy

Policy reviewed: Summer 2026

Policy to be reviewed: Summer 2028

Governor responsible for Health & Safety: Mr J. Porter

Executive Headteacher: Mr A. Gromski

Introduction

1. Purpose and scope

This policy explains how Tibberton and Hindlip C of E First Schools keep children safe by preventing and responding to situations where **restrictive interventions**, including **reasonable force**, may be required. It reflects the statutory guidance *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools* (DfE, 2026), effective from 1 April 2026.

- It applies to all staff, volunteers, supply staff, and adults working with children on school premises or during school activities.
- The policy sits within the school's safeguarding framework and must be read alongside the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policies, SEND Policy, Inclusion Policy, and Health & Safety Policy.

2. Principles

Tibberton and Hindlip C of E First Schools are committed to:

- Creating a calm, nurturing environment where children feel safe and able to learn and teachers are free to teach in an environment that is safe, secure and free from distraction
- Fostering good relationships with children and providing the highest standards in safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children
- Preventing the need for restrictive interventions through early help, emotional regulation, and positive relationships.
- Using restrictive interventions **only when absolutely necessary** to keep a child or others safe.
- Ensuring any intervention is **lawful, proportionate, transparent**, and used for the **shortest possible time**.
- Protecting the dignity and emotional wellbeing of every child.
- Working closely with parents and carers.

3. Definitions

Restrictive intervention

Any action that restricts a child's movement, liberty, or ability to act. This includes:

- **Physical restraint** such as holding, guiding, or blocking movement.
- **Non-physical restrictions** such as seclusion.

Reasonable force

A type of restrictive intervention involving physical contact used to prevent harm. It must be:

- The **minimum force** needed.
- Used for the **least amount of time**.
- In response to an **immediate risk**.

4. When restrictive interventions may be used

Restrictive interventions may be used only when:

- A child is at risk of harming themselves.
- A child is at risk of harming another child or adult.
- A child is at risk of causing serious damage to property.
- Needed to prevent an offence
- Needed to maintain safety during a crisis

Restrictive interventions must **never** be used:

- As part of routine behaviour management.
- In response to verbal refusal or non-compliance.
- As a consequence or punishment.

5. Prevention and de-escalation

All staff, through regular Team-Teach training, possess the skills to adopt effective strategies to defuse potential instances of conflict or aggression. Addressing situations in their infancy can be invaluable in managing potentially extreme behaviours. In line with the Department of Health/DfES/Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) Guidance, secondary preventative strategies are applied when 'primary prevention has not been effective'. These measures include:

- *Communication/verbal advice and support*. Early intervention needs to be assertive but non-confrontational. If students are spoken to in the mode of 'critical parent', a negative response is likely. Awareness of tone of voice, body posture and eye contact is important as communication needs to be non-threatening, calm and assured. Staff should attend to a student when they are showing signs of agitation/distress/anger and support/advice them according to the situation
- *Affection* - for the angry student whose behaviour is rooted in their insecurity, it is important that they feel accepted and respected as individuals. Reject the behaviour not the person by showing that you care despite the difficulties
- *Distraction/redirection* – is the action of diverting the student's attention from a potentially inflammatory situation to something in which they have an interest
- *Reassurance* – is about supporting, comforting and encouraging a student in a situation in which they might be feeling helpless, vulnerable, possibly defenseless and exposed to a risky environment
- *Planned ignoring* – at times, highly provocative and attention seeking behaviour can be ignored to good effect. The skill is knowing when to ignore and when to intervene. Good practice is based upon *Risk Assessment*
- *Time out* – this is to allow a student 'space' on their own; to move to a different environment with time to calm down and consider their actions. The student is more likely to calm down without the attention of an audience
- *Withdrawal* – which involves removing the student from the situation which causes anxiety or distress to a location where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are ready to resume their usual activities. This could be in a separate room; with a member of staff
- *Calm talking stance* – staff should endeavour to maintain a calm, confident and objective approach in conflict situations
- *Negotiation/being objective* – the ability to listen and talk to students and come to an agreement by setting limits and offering options. This will allow a 'back door exit' from the situation that will help keep their pride and dignity intact as well as that of the staff member(s) involved
- *Transfer adult* – if there is an incident where the adult present is seen to be aggravating the situation, it should be assessed as to whether moving the adult out of sight might defuse the situation. This should be done, if possible, leaving enough staff to control the situation

- *Success reminder* – remind the student of a previous occasion when they successfully managed a volatile situation of a similar nature. If they are feeling particularly low, look to remind them of something they did in the past that made them happy/proud/feel good
- *Support through daily routine* – a bored student is more likely to present with negative behaviours and therefore a strong daily routine of active engagement in the classroom and in social times, reduces their need to act out inappropriate behaviours
- *Physical intervention* – is an approved management strategy but should be used as a last resort when all of the above strategies have been exhausted.
- Staff must attempt de-escalation unless the risk is so immediate that delay would increase harm.

6. Children with SEND

- The school recognises that some children with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to themselves and others. They require additional support through personalised adaptations and their emotionally available adult to regulate their emotions.
- For children with identified risks, the school will:
 - Complete individual risk reduction plans.
 - Create individual behaviour support plans, identifying triggers and successful regulating activities.
 - Ensure adaptations to the curriculum and timetable support children to engage successfully and remain regulated.
 - Work closely with parents and external professionals.
 - Review plans regularly.
 - Restrictive interventions must never replace appropriate SEND provision or reasonable adjustments.

7. Other physical contact with pupils

- At Tibberton and Hindlip C of E First Schools no requests by parents or staff not to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions will be granted. This can leave staff unable to intervene where reasonable in the circumstances to fully protect pupils.
- There are many circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with pupils which does not give rise to any question over the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions. This will depend on the circumstance, but examples of occasions when physical contact is generally appropriate include:
 - to give first aid
 - to guide or escort pupils, such as holding the hand of a pupil at the front/back of the line when going to assembly, when walking together around the school or on a school trip, or when helping a pupil to a space they have chosen to access to self-regulate
 - to comfort a distressed pupil
 - to congratulate or praise a pupil, for example a pat on the back, head or a handshake
 - to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
 - to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

8. The use of reasonable force to search pupils

- Authorised senior leaders have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item. A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for legally prohibited items, but not to search for items banned under the school rules only.

Confiscation and searches

Searching and confiscation is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Searching can play a critical role in ensuring that schools are safe environments for all pupils and staff. The Headteacher, and in their absence another member of the Senior Leadership Team authorised by the Headteacher, have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item listed below.

List of prohibited items:

- Knives and weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco or vapes
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Mobile phones and smartwatches with access to the internet / communication

Any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence or to cause personal injury or damage to property of any person (including the pupil). The authorised member of staff may search the pupil's outer clothing, pockets, possessions or drawer in the presence of another member of staff and the pupil. Any incident of a search of a pupil or their possessions is recorded on our school safeguarding system.

9. Seclusion and withdrawal

Withdrawal

- A child may be removed from a situation and taken to another room with an emotionally available adult/therapeutic practitioner to help them calm or regulate. They must be supervised and able to leave.

Seclusion

This is a **restrictive intervention** when a child is placed alone in a room or area they cannot leave and may only be used:

- In an emergency to prevent harm.
- For the shortest possible time.
- With continuous adult supervision.
- With immediate recording and senior leader oversight.

10. Staff training

- We recognise that most of the time restrictive intervention will be used infrequently, that is, as a **last resort** to prevent harm to the pupil or another child, serious damage to property, prevent an offence or to maintain safety during a crisis.
- All teaching staff are by the nature of their roles authorised to use restrictive intervention as appropriate.
- Non-teaching staff require specific authorisation. This authorisation can only be given by the Headteacher or someone deputising in their absence.
- Authorised staff will be notified formally. A list of authorised staff is available and these members of the team will receive training in:
 - De-escalation and conflict management.
 - Safe restrictive intervention techniques appropriate for primary-aged children.
 - Trauma-informed practice.
 - SEND-specific strategies.
 - Statutory recording and reporting duties.
 - Training will be refreshed regularly and monitored for effectiveness.

11. Recording and reporting (statutory requirement)

Every use of reasonable force **must** be recorded in the school's Bound Book and reported.

Records must include:

- Date, time, and location.
- Staff and children involved including any special educational need of the child (record SEN code)
- Events leading to the intervention.
- Type and duration of intervention.
- Rationale for use.
- Any injuries or damage.
- Support provided afterwards.

Reports must be:

- Submitted to the Headteacher or designated senior leader on the same day or as soon as practicable.
- Shared with parents/carers unless doing so would place the child at risk. The completed page from the Bound Book will be emailed to parents following a conversation to report the use of restrictive intervention.

Records will be stored securely and monitored for patterns.

12. Support after an incident

After any restrictive intervention:

- Children will be supported to calm and feel safe.
- Staff will be offered support and debriefing.
- A restorative conversation will take place when appropriate.
- Behaviour plans and risk reduction plans will be updated where necessary, reviewing triggers and noting future risk reduction.
- Parents/carers will be informed and involved in follow-up planning.

13. Oversight and governance

Senior leaders will:

- Monitor all incidents involving restrictive interventions.
- Analyse data for patterns (e.g., frequency, staff, pupil groups, SEND, ethnicity).
- Report termly to the governing body.
- Ensure interventions reduce over time.
- Governors will:
 - Scrutinise data and challenge practice.
 - Ensure compliance with statutory guidance.
 - Review this policy annually.

14. Complaints

Complaints about the use of restrictive interventions will be managed through the school's Complaints Policy. Allegations against staff will be managed under the school's safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

15. Policy review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:
 - Legislation changes.
 - Practice evaluation identifies the need.
 - A serious incident prompts review.

Appendix 1 – Risk Reduction Plan Template

Risk Reduction Plan

Name: **Plan number:** **Date:**

Positives What is the child good at and what do they like doing?	Triggers What situations have led to problems in the past	Successful approaches What proactive interventions have been effective in preventing anxiety rising?

Describe any modifications to environment or child's routine that can be implemented to prevent anxiety rising.

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Expected practice

Strategy	What does this practice look like?
Clear firm directions Contingent touch Humour Reminders of consequences Calm talking and stance	

Additional strategies that have worked or should be avoided

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From your risk assessment what is the likelihood of the child harming himself, another child or an adult in the event of an incident. Please identify in each case.

	Self-harm	Harm to others	Harm from another	Harm to staff
Low				
Medium				
High				

Description of behaviour	Self harm	Harm to others	Harm from another	Harm to staff

Prior to intervention all staff must make a dynamic risk assessment in relation to the incident and their confidence and competence in using physical intervention techniques.

Has the child any medical issues that require the reconsideration of any Team Teach hold?

Preferred physical intervention for dealing with above incidents

Dealing with violent behaviour	•
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Appropriate personal safety response,	two person holds and escorts
Arm responses	single person holds and escorts
Neck responses	Holds for smaller pupil

Clothing, hair and bites	Seated hold required
Steer away	Separating fights

Follow up – Debrief and repair following the incident

Hear Explain Link Plan	Debrief all staff – flexibility to use other members of staff to intervene and relieve pressure off class teacher.
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Multi agency involvement

Agency	School	Parent/Guardian	Social worker	Child Protection Officer	Local Authority Officer	Other
Name						
Signature						
Date						

Name and signature of person completing this form _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2 – Pastoral Support Plan Template

PASTORAL SUPPORT PLAN

SCHOOL: DATE:

Name of Pupil:

Year Group:		DoB:	
Address:		Tel No:	
		Post Code:	
Ethnicity:			

Purpose of Pastoral Support Programme:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Does the pupil have an Individual Education Plan?

(If yes expand the IEP accordingly)

Does the pupil have an EHCP?

Specific Areas of Concern - Targets	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Number of Days Exclusion

Attendance

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(last 12 months) (current academic year)

Pupil's views	Parent / Carer's views

Other involved Agency Views (eg. Governors, EWO, Social Worker, etc

Agency	

Support Plan – Special arrangements

Rewards and Sanctions (if applicable)
Rewards –
Sanctions –

Contingency Plan (Intervention if circumstances demand) and parental support
1.
2.
3.

Date/Time of Review Meeting:

Signed:

Parent(s) Carers: _____

School: _____ Position: Executive Headteacher