

# Restrictive Interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools

Updated guidance April 2026

# 2025- 2026

Here at Banks Road Infant and Nursery School we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential.

We take the safety of our pupils and staff very seriously. We believe that all pupils and staff have the right to be and feel safe whilst at school or on a school-run activity.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Relationships and Behaviour Regulation, Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.



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### **Minimising the Need to Use Reasonable Force**

As a school we are firmly committed to creating a calm and safe environment which minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of reasonable force.

We use our RSHE and PSHE curriculum to explore and strengthen emotional responses to situations.

We will only use force as a last resort and strongly believe in de-escalating any incidents as they arise to prevent them from reaching a crisis point. Staff will be skilled in promoting and rewarding positive behaviour and will utilise various appropriate techniques in the management of a class environment.

Staff will only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved by not using force.

### **Staff Authorised to Use Reasonable Force**

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act (2006) and subsequent guidance published by the DfE in January 2016 entitled 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools – Guidance for Head Teachers and Staff' the head teacher of our school is empowered to authorise those members of his/her staff who are enabled to use reasonable force.

Here at Banks Road Infant and Nursery School the head teacher has empowered the following members of staff to use reasonable force:

- Teachers and any member of staff who has control or charge of pupils in a given lesson or circumstance have permanent authorisation.
- Other members of staff such as site management and administrative teams also have the power to use reasonable force if a circumstance should arise in which immediate action should be taken.

### **Deciding Whether to Use Reasonable Force**

Under English law, members of staff are empowered to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from or stop them continuing:

- committing any offence;
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil themselves); or,
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

All members of staff will make decisions about when, how and why to use reasonable force. To help staff in making decisions about using reasonable force the following considerations may be useful:

- whether the consequences of not intervening would have seriously endangered the wellbeing of a person;
- whether the consequences of not intervening would have caused serious and significant damage to property;
- whether the chance of achieving the desired outcome in a non-physical way was low;
- the age, size, gender, developmental maturity of the persons involved.

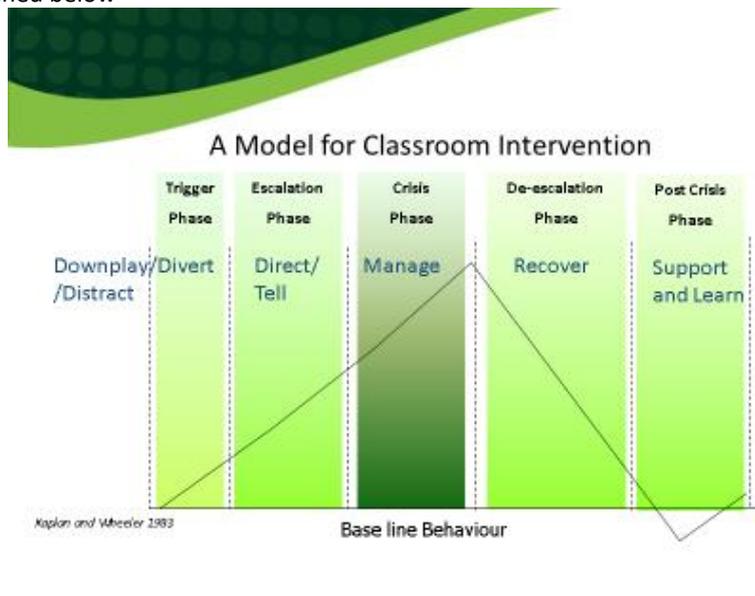
Staff are also expected to remember that physical intervention is only one option and for behaviours involving extreme levels of risk it may be more appropriate to gain support from other agencies, including the police.

Staff will be kept informed and have a duty to inform others about the plans around specific pupils who can present risks to themselves and others. This may include information about SEN, personal circumstance and temporary upset.

### **Using Reasonable Force**

When using force, members of staff should only use the minimum amount of force required in achieving the required outcome.

Staff should also use force within the context of existing good practice in nonphysical skills and techniques, such as in model for classroom practice outlined below



Staff should, where possible, avoid any type of intervention that is likely to injure a pupil, unless in the most extreme of circumstance where there was no viable alternative. Also staff should avoid using force unless or until another member of staff is present to support, observe or call for assistance.

### Recording and Reporting Incidents

The governing board will ensure that a procedure is in place, and is followed by staff, for recording and reporting, *significant* incidents where a member of staff has used force on a pupil in line with the most recent Safeguarding requirements issued to Governors and the latest advice given to OFSTED inspectors.

The record must be made as soon as practicable after the incident.

While ultimately only a court of law could decide what is 'significant' in a particular case, in deciding whether or not an incident must be reported, staff should take into account:

- an incident where unreasonable use of force is used on a pupil would always be a significant incident;
- any incident where substantial force has been used (e.g. physically pushing a pupil out of a room) would be significant;
- the use of a restraint technique is significant;
- an incident where a child was very distressed (though clearly not over reacting) would be significant.

In determining whether incidents are significant, schools should consider:

- the pupil's behaviour and the level of risk presented at the time;
- the degree of force used and whether it was proportionate in relation to the behaviour;
- the effect on the pupil or member of staff.

Staff should also bear in mind the age of the child, any special education need or disability or other social factors which might be relevant.

Sometimes an incident might not be considered significant in itself, but forms part of a pattern of repeated behaviour. In this case, although there is no legal requirement to record such incidents, schools are advised to let parents know about them.

Records are important in providing evidence of defensible decision-making in case of a subsequent complaint or investigation. Staff may find it helpful to seek the advice of a senior colleague or a representative of their trade union when compiling a report.

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026, it is a legal requirement to report incidents as soon as practicable after the event. It should be recorded by the staff member(s) involved and they should endeavour to do this no later than the same day. The record should be made in writing as soon as practicable after the incident, even if the use of restrictive interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan.

The April 2026 guidance suggests the following details as a minimum:

- names of pupil and staff directly involved
- any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code
- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and (where relevant) what type of reasonable force was applied, the degree of force, and details of any physical injuries sustained
- brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance
- any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts

Banks Road Infant and Nursery School use a bespoke health and safety recording system (following the NCC electronic health and safety system 'WellWorker' ending). This pro forma enables members of staff to report, using a standardised format, any significant incident where force has been used, or any incident where violence to staff has occurred or been threatened. The above list is included on our reporting form.

A written report of the incident made to parents will include the following details as a minimum (the school would always aim to speak with parents in person about an incident in addition to the written report):

- 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

#### **Recording and reporting the use of seclusion and non-force related restraint:**

These incidents will be reported to include the following detail:

- names of pupil and staff directly involved
- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code
- brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance
- details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable
- any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts

#### **Post-incident support**

Following the use of physical intervention staff and pupils will be supported, the immediate physical needs of all parties will be met and staff will ensure that positive relationships are maintained.

#### **Complaints and allegations**

We will also make clear to pupils that they have a right, and are able, to question/complain about the use of reasonable force.

We will ensure that mechanisms are in place for pupils, parents, carers and staff to voice the opinions, comments or concerns.

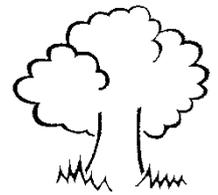
Complaints and allegations will be taken seriously in line with our policy and procedures.

#### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed by the governing board at least annually or as required.

The Head Teacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy and Sarah Williams is the Link Governor, who also has responsibility in this area.

# Restrictive Intervention Record Form



Name of child .....Class / Year Group.....

Is this child a looked after child/SEN/vulnerability? .....

When did the incident occur?

Date	Day of week	Time	Where?
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Staff involved

Name	Designation	Team Teach trained?	Involved: physically? (P) as observer? (O)	Staff signature

Please describe the incident and include:

1. What was happening before?
2. What do you think triggered this behaviour?
3. What de-escalating techniques were used prior to physical intervention?
4. Why was a RI deemed necessary?
5. Any other information relevant to include.

## Use of Reasonable Force only:

Team Teach technique(s) used (tick as appropriate)

Technique	Standing/escort	Sitting/chairs	Kneeling	Ground
Breakaway/defensive				
One person				
Two people				

Please give details below of hold, e.g. single elbow, double elbow, wrap, etc.....

How long was the child/young person held? .....

If the child/young person was held on the ground: Did they go to ground independently?\*   
 Were they taken to ground by staff?

*\*tick as appropriate*

**Good practice dictates that schools should review what happened and consider what lessons can be learned, which may have implications for the future management of the pupil. These need not be added to this form but should be incorporated in the individual plans for the child.**

Has the child/young person been held before? Yes/No

*A child/young person should have an individual plan clearly detailing reactive strategies and physical intervention approaches if they have been involved in physical interventions on more than one occasion.*

Does the individual support plan need to be reviewed as a result of this incident? Yes/No

Does the risk assessment need to be reviewed as a result of this incident? Yes/No

If yes, who will action and when? (less than four weeks)

**Complete for all incidents including seclusion:**

Who was the incident reported to, and when? .....

Was there any medical intervention needed? Yes/No

Include names of any injured person and brief details of injuries

.....  
.....

Please specify any related record forms

Accident Book  Anti Bullying and Racist Incident Record Form

Skin Map  Violent Incident Record  Complaints recorded

Other (please specify) .....

Was the pupil debriefed? Yes/No

Were staff offered a debrief? Yes/No

Was it taken up? Yes/No

Parents/carers were informed

Date	Time	By whom?	By direct contact, telephone, letter?

Form completed by:	Name	Designation	Date and time

# Restrictive Intervention Record Form for Parent/Carer



Name of child .....Class / Year Group.....

Is this child a looked after child/SEN/vulnerability? .....

Date and time of incident:

Duration of incident:

Type of intervention used e.g. reasonable force, seclusion, restraint or significant incident	
Why the intervention was used	
Type and degree of force applied	
Physical Injuries sustained	
Member(s) of staff involved	

**Terminology:**

**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.



## Appendix 7

Taken from the Education Endowment Foundation research: IMPROVING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

.....”children learn to articulate and manage their emotions, deal with conflict, solve problems, understand things from another person’s perspective, and communicate in appropriate ways. These ‘social and emotional skills’ are essential for children’s development, support effective learning, and are linked to positive outcomes in later life.”



### IMPROVING BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS

Summary of recommendations



## IMPROVING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Core skills at the heart of SEL



Core competency	Definition	Associated skills
<b>Self-awareness</b>	The ability to accurately recognise one's own emotions, thoughts and values and how they influence behaviour. The ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying emotions</li> <li>Accurate self-perception</li> <li>Recognising strengths</li> <li>Self-confidence</li> <li>Self-efficacy</li> </ul>
<b>Self-management</b>	The ability to successfully regulate one's emotions, thoughts and behaviours in different situations – effectively managing stress, controlling impulses, and motivating oneself. The ability to set and work towards personal and academic goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impulse control</li> <li>Stress management</li> <li>Self-discipline</li> <li>Self-motivation</li> <li>Goal setting</li> <li>Organisational skills</li> </ul>
<b>Social awareness</b>	The ability to take the perspective of and empathise with others. The ability to understand social and ethical norms for behaviour and to recognise family, school and community resources and supports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding emotions</li> <li>Empathy/sympathy</li> <li>Appreciating diversity</li> <li>Respect for others</li> </ul>
<b>Relationship skills</b>	The ability to establish and maintain healthy relationships with diverse individuals and groups. The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively and seek and offer help when needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication</li> <li>Social engagement</li> <li>Relationship building</li> <li>Teamwork</li> </ul>
<b>Responsible decision making</b>	The ability to make constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions. The realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions and a consideration of the wellbeing of oneself and others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying problems</li> <li>Analysing solutions</li> <li>Solving problems</li> <li>Evaluating</li> <li>Reflecting</li> <li>Ethical responsibility</li> </ul>

**THE POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY** at the Pupil and Personnel sub committee

DATE OF REVIEW BY GOVERNING BOARD: March 2027

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Pupil and Personnel committee in  
 November 2016  
 November 2017  
 November 2018  
 November 2019  
 December 2020  
 December 2021  
 March 2022  
 November 2023

May 2024  
March 2025  
March 2026

Signed: Chair of Governors \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_