

**Inclusion** is at the  
**heart** of our trust



# Care and Control Policy

Restrictive Interventions and  
Reasonable Force

(Phase/All Trust Schools)



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1	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2026		New Policy to cover all Trust (Phase) Schools

## Care and Control Policy

(incorporating Restrictive Physical interventions, Seclusion and use of Reasonable Force)

### 1. Policy Statement

This policy sets out Oak Learning Partnership's approach to restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, restraint and seclusion. Oak Learning Partnership recognises that restrictive interventions can have a significant physical and psychological impact on pupils and staff. They should therefore only ever be used when necessary, proportionate and lawful, and where less restrictive measures have been attempted or assessed as inappropriate in the circumstances.

Oak Learning Partnership is committed to:

- safeguarding the welfare, dignity and human rights of pupils
- preventing and minimising the need for restrictive interventions
- supporting staff to manage behaviour safely and confidently
- meeting statutory recording and reporting duties
- using data to continuously improve practice

This policy is informed by:

- 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
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- DfE guidance: Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools (July 2022)
- Safer Recruitment Consortium: Safer Working Practices (2022)

This policy should be read alongside the:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The policy has been prepared in order to support teaching and non-teaching staff and volunteers who work with pupils and explains the school's arrangements for the use of restrictive interventions. The Care & Control Policy is shared with staff, students, parents and other stake holders through:

- School website
- Parental meetings for pupils with complex behaviour needs
- EHCP review process
- Trustee and Local Governing Body (LGC) meetings

## 2. Ethos and Values

We believe that every child and young person has the right to be treated with respect and dignity. Every child deserves to be understood and supported as an individual. The use of restrictive interventions to support pupils with complex and challenging behaviour will be:

- In the best interests of the child; their safety and welfare should underpin any use of restraint
- Carried out with integrity
- Used only when necessary
- An appropriate and proportionate response
- Carried out by trained and skilled staff
- Accurately recorded and reported
- Reviewed with an intention to minimise the future use of restraint
- Part of a fully supportive provision that includes de-escalation strategies outlined in the Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Shared with parents and other stakeholders

## 3. Definitions

A decision to restrain or restrict the movements of a young person will only ever be taken to ensure safety, and under the following circumstances, 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  
(Education and Inspections Act 2006 (sections 93 and 93A))

**Restrictive intervention:** a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This guidance policy '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.

**Positive Handling** describes a broad spectrum of risk reduction strategies. Positive handling is a comprehensive approach

involving policy, guidance, management of the environment, and deployment of staff. It also involves personal behaviour, diversion, diffusion, and de-escalation. Positive Handling Plans (PHP) are plans for the positive management of pupils' challenging behaviour. They are based on a risk assessment and identify positive prevention strategies and how a pupil may need to be supported in a crisis and may be included on an engagement or behaviour plan. **This may include restrictive intervention, restraint or use of seclusion.** Positive Handling Plans will only be implemented in settings or areas of the school where staff are trained in a positive handling programme. See appendix 4 for example PHP if relevant.

The word 'staff' in the context of this Policy is taken to include, teaching and non-teaching staff and authorised regular volunteers working in our schools. The word "parent" should be read as inclusive of carers and anyone who has parental responsibility (including the local authority for looked after children).

Where this policy uses the word '**must**', this indicates a legal requirement. Where it uses '**should**', this indicates expected practice unless there is good reason not to follow it.

#### **4. Prevention and de-escalation**

Oak Learning Partnership prioritises proactive strategies to minimise the need for restrictive interventions, including:

- positive behaviour support approaches
- consistent lesson structures (5 or 7 part lesson)
- consistent routines and expectations as outlined in our climate for learning rubrics
- trauma informed practice
- counselling and sensory support offer
- environmental adaptations
- early identification of triggers
- effective communication strategies
- strong relationships between staff and pupils
- access to high-quality continuous professional development for staff
- Trust-wide expert-led inclusion support offer
- a strong culture of safeguarding and inclusive practice

Individual support may include behaviour support plans, reasonable adjustments, sensory strategies and joint working with parents and external professionals in line with our graduated approach. See appendix 4 for example Engagement/Behaviour Plan.

##### **4.1 Staff training**

Oak Learning Partnership recognises that staff training is a critical component of preventing the need for restrictive interventions and ensuring that, where they are used, they are applied safely, lawfully and proportionately.

In line with the Department for Education guidance, staff who are likely to work in situations where restrictive interventions may be required will receive appropriate training in behaviour support, prevention and de-escalation strategies, and the safe and lawful use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions. Refer to Appendix 1 for the headteacher's assessment of the school's specific training details.

Training will reflect the principles of this guidance and will support staff to assess necessity and proportionality, understand risks to physical and psychological wellbeing, recognise the impact of trauma and SEND, and make defensible professional judgements, including in situations where decisions must be taken quickly.

Oak Learning Partnership will ensure that training needs are informed by its pupil cohort, patterns and trends in incidents, and risk assessments. As an employer, Oak Learning Partnership will take reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff, including providing refresher training, access to advice and support, and additional guidance where staff regularly work with pupils who present a higher level of risk.

## **5. When restrictive intervention may be used**

Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, restraint and seclusion, may only be used in exceptional circumstances where they are lawful, necessary and proportionate, and where other less restrictive measures have been attempted or assessed as inappropriate in the circumstances.

In line with the Department for Education guidance, restrictive interventions may only be used 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

This applies while staff are lawfully in charge of pupils and extends to situations both on and off the school including educational visits. Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides the legal basis for the use of reasonable force in schools, and any such use must be reasonable in the circumstances, meaning that it must be necessary and proportionate to the risks presented at the time.

In line with the guidance, staff at Oak Learning Partnership Schools may use reasonable force or restrictive interventions to:

- remove disruptive pupils who refuse to follow instructions, when other less restrictive measures have failed or are deemed inappropriate
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that significantly disrupts others;
- prevent a pupil from leaving a area/space, in the event of a child displaying behaviours which put self or others at risk of harm
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts;
- restrain a pupil causing significant damage to property
- restrain a pupil committing a criminal offence
- move a pupil to a place deemed to be safer, in the event of a child displaying behaviours which put self or others at risk of harm
- immobilise a child who is using their specialist equipment to cause harm, damage or significant disruption.

The list is not exhaustive but provides examples of when the use of reasonable force or restrictive interventions may be used.

The decision to use a restrictive intervention is a matter of professional judgement and must always be based on the specific circumstances at the time. Before using, or continuing to use, a restrictive intervention, staff must, wherever practicable, consider the following factors, which are drawn directly from the guidance:

### **Necessity**

Staff should consider whether a restrictive intervention is required to reduce an immediate risk of harm and whether other less restrictive strategies, including de-escalation, redirection or support from other staff, are likely to be effective. Where a restrictive intervention is unlikely to successfully reduce risk, or is likely to escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself, it should not be used.

### **Proportionality**

Any restrictive intervention must be the least restrictive option available, using the minimum amount of force for the shortest amount of time necessary to reduce the risk. If an intervention is not reducing risk or is escalating the situation, staff must reconsider their approach and seek to reduce or cease the intervention as soon as it is safe to do so.

### **Pupil welfare and dignity**

Staff must consider the impact of any restrictive intervention on the pupil's physical and psychological wellbeing. Where possible, staff should seek to maintain the pupil's dignity, including consideration of the environment in which the intervention takes place, and should communicate calmly and clearly with the pupil about what is happening and why.

### **Vulnerabilities and SEND**

Staff must have regard to the individual needs and circumstances of the pupil, including any special educational needs, disabilities, medical conditions, communication needs, sensory sensitivities, past trauma or other vulnerabilities. These factors may affect how a pupil experiences an intervention and must inform decision-making before, during and after any restrictive intervention.

### **Equality implications**

Staff must consider relevant duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the need to avoid discrimination, make reasonable adjustments and ensure that responses do not disproportionately impact pupils who share protected characteristics.

Restrictive interventions must never be used as a punishment, as a disciplinary sanction, or for the purpose of compliance or convenience. They must only be used as a last resort safety measure and must cease as soon as the immediate risk has reduced.

Following any restrictive intervention, staff must ensure that appropriate post-incident actions are taken in line with this policy, including recording and reporting, medical checks where appropriate, reflection and review.

## **6.1 School leaders will make every effort to ensure that all staff:**

- Clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities
- Ensure that staff understand the legal limitations regarding use of force
- Understand that reasonable force will only be used when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force.
- Support a culture of ongoing vigilance and transparency
- Feel supported in undertaking behaviour management and de-escalation strategies
- Have access to high-quality continuous professional development and opportunities to collaborate and de-brief following incidents
- Feel empowered to request support for themselves or for a pupil

## 6.2 Prevention

The following strategies and procedures are deployed to ensure all measures possible are in place to minimise the use of positive handling:

- The deployment of appropriate staffing numbers;
- The deployment of appropriately trained and competent staff
- Creating opportunities for achievement and recognition
- Developing staff expertise through a programme of Continuous Professional Development
- Exploring pupils' voice on school life
- Appropriate curriculum design
- Use of the graduated approach to SEND support
- Clear communication channels with parents and professionals about pupils' lived experiences and needs which may impact their behaviour
- Robust transitions between settings to enable information sharing

## 6.3 Unacceptable use of restrictive intervention

Restrictive interventions must never be used as a punishment, a disciplinary sanction, or for the purpose of compliance, convenience or to manage behaviour where there is no immediate risk of harm. Any use of force or restrictive practice for these purposes is unlawful.

**Staff must not use any techniques or approaches that may restrict or interfere with a pupil's airway, breathing or circulation. This includes, but is not limited to, applying pressure to the neck, throat, chest or abdomen, covering the mouth or nose, or positioning a pupil in a way that compromises respiration. Such practices present a serious and potentially fatal medical risk and are strictly prohibited.**

The use of restrictive interventions carries inherent physical and psychological risk, particularly where they occur on the ground. **Ground restraint should therefore be avoided wherever possible. Where a pupil is unintentionally brought to the ground, staff must take immediate steps to reduce risk by repositioning or releasing holds as soon as it is safe to do so and moving to a safer alternative or standing position.**

Any restrictive intervention that presents, or begins to present, a medical risk must stop immediately. Where a pupil has been restrained, particularly where there has been any impact to breathing, circulation, consciousness or physical injury, staff must seek medical assessment and treatment as soon as practicable.

Staff must also be mindful that restrictive interventions can cause significant psychological distress. Interventions that humiliate, degrade, intimidate, threaten or deliberately cause emotional harm are unacceptable. All responses must seek to preserve the pupil's dignity and wellbeing, even in high-risk situations.

In some Oak LP schools, staff receive training in Team Teach, a comprehensive behaviour management approach that equips them with a range of de-escalation strategies and, where appropriate, certain forms of restrictive intervention. These interventions are only to be used when reasonable and necessary.

The decision regarding whether staff should undertake Team Teach training, including how many staff are trained and the level of physical intervention they are authorised to use, varies according to the needs and context of each school. This decision is made by the headteacher, supported and guided by the Executive Team. The risk assessment to guide Headteachers in their decision making

can be found in Appendix 1 of this document. If Team Teach is indicated, a list of approved Team Teach Interventions can be found in Appendix 5 of this document.

Any incident involving unacceptable practice, or where there is concern that an intervention may have compromised a pupil's safety, must be reported immediately to the headteacher who will consider if there are any other relevant reporting requirements and will ensure that appropriate action is taken to address and learn from the incident.

### 7.1 Other appropriate physical contact

Our schools do not operate "no contact" policies. The DfE is explicit in stating that schools should not grant any requests by parents or staff members not to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions. The adoption of a "no contact" policy at a school can leave staff unable to intervene where reasonable in the circumstances to fully protect pupils and staff.

There are 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 or a handshake
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

In assessing whether physical contact is appropriate in a given situation, the member of staff should use their judgement and have regard to:

- our safeguarding policies and procedures
- the applicable circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present
- the individual pupil's age and independence skills
- any other material factors, including but not limited to whether:
  - the pupil has SEND or other vulnerabilities
  - any alternative strategies that do not include physical contact can be used

### 8. Reasonable force for searching pupils

Under statutory powers, the headteacher and staff authorised by the headteacher may use reasonable force to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil is in **possession of a prohibited item**. Prohibited items are those set out in legislation and include, for example, knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items and any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Where a lawful search is taking place for a prohibited item, staff may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to conduct that search. Any use of force in this context must be necessary, proportionate and for the shortest possible time, and must be consistent with the principles set out in this policy.

Reasonable force must not be used to search for items that are banned only under the school's own rules. Where force is used during a search, this will be treated as a restrictive intervention and must be managed in line with this policy, including consideration of the pupil's welfare, dignity, vulnerabilities and any SEND or medical needs.

Any significant incident involving the use of force during a search must be recorded and reported in accordance with statutory duties. All searches must be carried out in accordance with the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation procedures, and staff involved in searching pupils will receive appropriate guidance and training.

## 9. Seclusion

Seclusion is a **non-disciplinary intervention** involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving; it should only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. In such circumstances, the pupil is not acting with intent. Seclusion should not be implemented by staff through threat of punishment.

Where seclusion is used, the place in which the pupil is confined must be safe, suitable and non-threatening, taking account of the pupil's age, needs, vulnerabilities and sensory sensitivities. The environment must not present a risk to the pupil's physical or psychological wellbeing and should allow the pupil to calm and regain regulation.

A pupil who is secluded must be continuously supervised at all times by a member of staff. This means being able to see the pupil at all times. Supervision must be active and purposeful, enabling staff to monitor the pupil's physical and emotional wellbeing, communicate appropriately, and respond immediately if the pupil becomes distressed, unwell or at risk. Examples of seclusion may include:

- A classroom
- An outdoor area
- An intervention room
- A withdrawal room

The above is not an exhaustive list but serves as an example of the types of places where seclusion may occur. Active CCTV monitoring may be used during this time if available in the space to monitor the child's wellbeing, particularly if staff are unable to be in the room/area with the child due to risk of assault or harm. Where children are in seclusion, **staff must be able to have a line of sight** (even if this is via CCTV), be **proactively engaging** with and **trying to de-escalate** the pupil. If the risk should escalate, e.g. the child is out of sight or attempting to cause significant self-harm, staff must seek more assistance and notify SLT immediately.

**Seclusion must end as soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced.** It must not continue beyond the point at which it is necessary to manage risk, and pupils must be supported to rejoin others safely when they are able to do so.

Any incident involving seclusion must be treated as a significant safeguarding event.

All incidents of seclusion must be recorded and reported in line with statutory duties as outlined in this policy.

Following any use of seclusion, appropriate post-incident actions must take place, including welfare checks, reflection, support and review of preventative strategies

**Seclusion does not include incidences where pupils may self-select to have some time away** from peers in another classroom, withdrawal space or quiet area. Use of withdrawal spaces may be recorded to monitor needs or provision but is not a restriction placed upon the pupil.

Use of internal reflection or internal exclusion are also not seclusion, the former are consequences for behaviour and align with our Behaviour for Learning Policy, whereas seclusion is a non-disciplinary measure for pupils who are highly dysregulated, a risk to others and not acting with intent.

## **10.Record keeping**

Oak Learning Partnership recognises that incidents involving restrictive interventions are significant safeguarding events.

The Trustees and Local Governing Bodies ensure that clear procedures are in place for the recording and reporting of all relevant incidents.

To assist staff and key stakeholders in determining whether a restrictive intervention has been used, there is a recording and reporting pathway in the appendices (see Appendix 6).

### **10.1 Recording of significant incidents involving the use of force**

All incidents involving the use of reasonable force must be recorded in writing as outlined in the school specific appendices with this policy (see Appendix 7). Staff should complete recordings as soon as practicable after the event and endeavour to complete records no later than the same day.

Records must be completed by the staff member(s) involved and must provide a clear, factual account of the incident. As a minimum, records will include:

- 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

The requirement to record applies even where the use of restrictive interventions has been discussed or anticipated within a behaviour support plan.

### **10.2 Reporting of significant incidents involving the use of force**

Parents must be informed in writing of each significant incident involving the use of force as soon as practicable after the incident, and senior leaders should endeavour to ensure this happens no later than the same day, unless a statutory exception applies.

Reports to parents will include, as a minimum:

- the date, time, location and approximate duration of the incident
- a brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary

- a brief description of what type of force was used and the degree of force applied
- details of any physical injuries or welfare concerns, where applicable

Staff may invite parents to discuss the incident, including any relevant triggers, the effectiveness of preventative strategies, and whether any behaviour support plans or risk assessments require review.

Exceptions to the duty to report apply only where:

- the pupil is aged 20 or over (not applicable), or
- it appears that informing a particular parent would be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil. In such cases, the incident will be reported to any parent to whom it can safely be reported, or, where this is not possible, to the relevant local authority.

### **10.3 Recording and reporting of seclusion and non-force restraint**

All incidents involving seclusion or restraint without physical force must be recorded and reported in line with Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025.

This includes incidents where restrictive interventions are used in line with an agreed behaviour support plan. Records must be completed as soon as practicable and no later than the same day wherever possible.

Where an incident of restraint also constitutes a significant use of force, the school will follow the significant incident reporting procedure set out above. The same information will not be reported twice. Where an incident involves seclusion or restraint without physical force and does not constitute a significant use of force, the reporting duties under the 2025 Regulations will apply.

Schools should record the following details as a minimum:

- 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

Parents will be provided with the information detailed above except for staff names and information relating to any other pupils.

### **10.4 Post incident support and review**

Following the use restrictive intervention, the school will ensure that appropriate and timely actions are taken to safeguard the physical and emotional wellbeing of all those involved, to understand what happened and why, and to reduce the likelihood of future incidents.

## **11. Immediate welfare and medical checks**

As soon as practicable after the incident, staff will check the pupil and any staff involved for signs of injury, distress or illness. Where appropriate, first aid will be administered and medical assessment or treatment sought. Any injuries or health concerns will be recorded in line with the

school's health and safety procedures and reported to the Health and Safety Executive where required.

### **11.1 Emotional wellbeing and safeguarding support**

Oak Learning Partnership and our schools recognises that restrictive interventions can be distressing. Consideration will therefore be given to the emotional wellbeing needs of the pupil, any staff involved, and any pupils who may have witnessed the incident. Support may include access to pastoral staff, counselling services, trusted adults or other appropriate support mechanisms.

## **12. Reflective De-brief and learning**

School staff will hold reflective debrief conversations following incidents involving restrictive interventions. These discussions are intended to support wellbeing, enable learning and improvement, and reduce future risk.

Where appropriate, debriefs will include:

- a factual review of what happened and why
- reflection on early warning signs and triggers
- consideration of what preventative and de-escalation strategies were used and their effectiveness
- identification of any alternative approaches that may reduce the likelihood of recurrence

Where possible, **debriefs should be facilitated by a member of staff who was not directly involved in the incident to support transparency and professional curiosity**, and may include the views of the pupil and their parent where appropriate. See appendix 3.

### **12.1 Review of support and risk management**

Following the use restrictive intervention school staff will review relevant behaviour support plans, risk assessments and reasonable adjustments. Changes will be made where necessary to better support the pupil, address underlying needs, and strengthen preventative measures.

### **12.2 Repairing relationships and reintegration**

Oak Learning Partnership is committed to repairing and rebuilding relationships following incidents involving restrictive interventions. Where appropriate, restorative approaches will be used to support the pupil's reintegration, rebuild trust between pupils and staff, and promote a sense of safety, dignity and belonging.

This may include a re-integration meeting, a de-brief or restorative discussion with the staff involved or other trusted adults where appropriate. The focus will be on helping the pupil to have their voice heard and to understand from the perspective of trusted adults why it was felt that the use of force or restriction was necessary at that time; the discussion should enable the child to feel safe, to be heard and to move on from the event. Where it is identified that there are ongoing support needs, these will be acted upon.

## **13. Monitoring and escalation**

Leaders will monitor incidents and post-incident actions to identify patterns, emerging risks or training needs. Where restrictive interventions occur repeatedly or where concerns arise, this will trigger further review, multi-agency engagement where appropriate, and escalation through safeguarding or SEND processes.

## 14. Governance and Accountability

Oak Learning Partnership Trustees hold overall responsibility for ensuring that all schools within the Trust maintain effective systems to minimise the use of reasonable force and restrictive interventions. Such measures must only be used when they are reasonable, proportionate, and the most appropriate course of action in situations where all other, less restrictive strategies have been assessed as unlikely to sufficiently reduce the identified risks.

To fulfil this responsibility, Trustees will ensure that Local Governing Bodies have regular oversight of data relating to the use of force and restrictive interventions within their school settings, as they are best positioned to provide robust challenge and hold leaders to account. Executive leaders across the Trust will also monitor the use of these interventions and are directly accountable to the Trustees, who seek assurance that all schools adhere to the guidance set out by the Department for Education.

In undertaking their roles, governing bodies will:

- assure itself that statutory recording and reporting duties are being met
- regularly review and interrogate data on restrictive interventions considering emerging patterns or trends to interrogate the effectiveness of pupil support measures, share this information with teachers who work with those pupils to better support them and, where appropriate, their parents, to establish a behaviour support plan or revise an existing plan.
- be mindful of any disproportionate impact on pupils with special educational needs and disabilities or other identified vulnerabilities
- use information from incidents to inform discussion about prevention, training and support
- ensure that staff are appropriately supported and trained
- ensure that learning from incidents contributes to the ongoing development of practice

Oversight of restrictive interventions will form part of the governing body's wider safeguarding and pupil wellbeing responsibilities. Governing bodies should consider the limitations of data and what can be inferred from it. Analysis should be proportionate and avoid over-interpreting small subgroups of people.

## 15. Complaints

Any complaints raised in relation to the use of restrictive interventions will be managed in accordance with Oak Learning Partnership complaints procedure.

Where an allegation is made that a member of staff has used restrictive interventions inappropriately, unlawfully or in a way that may have placed a pupil at risk, the matter will be managed in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Oak LP Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy's allegations management procedure.

Where appropriate, the school will work with external agencies to ensure concerns are managed in accordance with statutory guidance. This includes consideration of whether the concern meets the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and whether any immediate safeguarding or risk management actions are required.

The school's headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that allegations are considered objectively, based on the available evidence, and that appropriate support is provided to all parties involved. Learning arising from complaints and allegations will be used to inform training, policy review and preventative practice.

## 16. Appendices

## Appendix 1

Restrictive intervention and reasonable force within (School)

### Risk Assessment: Training Requirements for Restrictive Interventions

#### Purpose

This risk assessment supports decision-making on whether staff require specialist restrictive-intervention training (e.g., Team Teach) or general reasonable-force training, aligned with DfE April 2026 guidance. As a minimum, all our staff will be trained to understand the principles of reasonable force as outlined in this policy. The points which staff must consider and which will support their training, are outlined in appendix 2.

#### Legal and Policy Context

- Updated DfE guidance (April 2026) emphasises prevention, proportionate use of force, and new statutory recording duties.
- Restraint, seclusion, and force incidents must now be consistently recorded and reported.

#### Scoring Framework

Score each category 1–5 (1 = low risk, 5 = high risk). Total score determines training need:

- 5–12: Reasonable Force Awareness Only
- 13–18: Mixed Need – Consider partial specialist training
- 19–25: Full Specialist Restrictive-Intervention Training required

Category	Key Questions	Score (1–5)	Notes
Pupil Risk Factors	Do pupils regularly display behaviours that may require restrictive interventions?		
SEND & Vulnerability	Are there pupils with predictable risks requiring planned interventions?		
Staff Confidence & Competence	Do staff feel equipped to use de-escalation and safe interventions?		
Incident History	Are significant incidents involving force or restraint occurring?		

Environment & Operational Context	Does the setting present increased physical or supervision risks?		
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<b>Final Recommendation</b>
Based on total score, determine whether specialist training (e.g., Team Teach) or reasonable-force training is appropriate.
<b>Date completed:</b>
<b>Name:</b>
<b>Signed:</b>
<b>Review Date:</b> (12 months or sooner as per ongoing evaluation of need)
<b>Risk assessment version:</b>

This document should be completed by the Headteacher in consultation with relevant strategic leaders and shared with their Executive Team Leader, for example, Executive Directors of Education, Executive Headteachers or Phase Leaders.

## Appendix 2

### Determining when use of restrictive interventions is appropriate

There will be times when school staff may need to use restrictive interventions, and they should know this option may be available to them. The decision on whether it is reasonable to use a restrictive intervention depends on the individual circumstances of each situation.

**To make this assessment, the member of staff should consider the following:**

#### Is it necessary?

- Staff should consider whether there are other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage a situation.
- Staff should assess whether a restrictive intervention is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself.
- Where possible, staff should communicate with other staff members to understand any broader risks in the environment.

#### Is it proportionate?

- Staff should use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce the relevant risks.
- If the intervention itself is escalating the situation, staff should reconsider their approach and attempt an alternative strategy.
- Staff should consider the personal circumstances of the pupil such as medical conditions, special educational needs or other vulnerabilities, their characteristics such as age and size, and must consider relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.<sup>14</sup>

#### Have you considered the pupil's welfare?

- Staff should consider the impact on the pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. For example, pupils who have experienced an adverse life event, with diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, Equality Act 2010, past trauma or neglect, communication difficulties, or other needs, may find the use of restrictive interventions particularly distressing.
- Staff should seek to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity. This may include, where possible, considering the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers.
- Where possible, staff should clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why, and explain what the pupil needs to do.
- For pupils with difficulties with speech, language and communication, or with English as an additional language, verbal and/or non-verbal strategies should be used to ensure the pupil understands what is happening and has adequate time to process information and respond.
- Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.

### Appendix 3 Restrictive Intervention De-brief template

*Use of reasonable force, restraint and/or seclusion*

#### SECTION 1: BASIC DETAILS

School:	
De-brief chair:	
De-brief attendees:	
Date of incident:	
Time incident started:	
Time incident ended:	
Approximate duration of incident:	
Location(s) of incident:	

#### SECTION 2: PUPIL DETAILS

Pupil name:	
Date of birth:	
Year group:	
Identified SEND:	
SEND status (SEN Support / EHCP):	
Primary need (if known):	
Relevant medical, sensory, communication or vulnerability factors:	

#### SECTION 3: STAFF INVOLVED IN INCIDENT

Name and role of staff member(s) directly involved:	
Names of any witnesses:	

#### SECTION 4: DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

Brief factual account of what happened, including context and behaviours of concern:	
Known or suspected triggers or early warning signs:	
Strategies used before restrictive intervention:	
Why these strategies were assessed as insufficient:	

## SECTION 6: RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION USED

(Highlight all relevant) Team Teach/ Seclusion/ Reasonable Force/ Non-Force restraint <i>Details</i>	
Description of what was done, including degree of force:	
Duration of each restrictive intervention	
Why this intervention was assessed as necessary:	
Was this the least restrictive option available?	

## SECTION 7: WELFARE AND MEDICAL INFORMATION (CHILD)

Were there any injuries or physical effects	YES	NO
<i>Details</i>		
Was first aid or medical support provided	YES	NO
<i>Details</i>		
Any emotional distress observed:	YES	NO
<i>Details</i>		
Views of child if expressed at the time, or prior to de-brief		

## SECTION 8: SECLUSION (complete if applicable)

Was seclusion used?	YES	NO
Was the pupil continuously supervised?	YES	NO
Location of seclusion:	YES	NO
Duration		
How was the pupil supported to exit seclusion?		

## SECTION 9: POST-INCIDENT ACTIONS

Immediate actions taken:	
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Follow-up support planned:	
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**SECTION 10: PARENT/CARER REPORTING**

Has the incident been reported to parents/carers?	YES	NO
Method:		
Views of parent if expressed:		
Date and time reported:		
Name of person who reported:		
If not reported, state statutory reason:		

**SECTION 11: REVIEW AND LEARNING**

What worked well?
What, if anything, could have worked better?
Does this incident indicate the need to review behaviour support, risk assessment, SEND, reasonable adjustments, training or environment?

**SECTION 12: SIGNATURES**

Completed by (name and role)	
Signature	
Date	

Reviewed by (senior leader)	
Signature	
Date	

This form should be uploaded to ARBOR/CPOMs and categorised as RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION. Subcategories of TEAM TEACH, SECLUSION, NON-FORCE RESTRICTION and/or REASONABLE FORCE should also be used to indicate the type of intervention(s) used.

## Appendix 4

### Positive Engagement and Behaviour for Learning Support Plan

(Phase specific – please replace with school specific template)

Should include:

- Name/DOB
- SEN status and health/learning needs if applicable
- Likes and enjoys/"I am my best self when..."
- Barriers to engagement (health needs, particular lessons, sensory needs)
- Triggers (demands, having a preferred item taken away, not sitting with my friend, not having my communication needs met, pain etc)
- Strategies to help de-escalate
- Positive Handling Plan including risk assessment (if Team Teach agreed). Consider if seclusion is indicated.
- Signatures of parents, author, SLT, child (where appropriate)
- Review date

## Appendix 5

Team Teach interventions table (only where indicated in Appendix 1 risk assessment) **Delete and state “not applicable” if not relevant to your setting**

**All Team Teach trained staff my use the Caring “C” Supportive guide with “c shaped hands” to guide pupils’ direction, moving with the child’s own momentum. This is non-restrictive and therefore does not fall under mandatory recording and reporting, however as good practice it will be included in a behaviour /engagement plan if in use.**

Named Team Teach Hold/Response
Turn, gather guide
Help hug
Conductor
Crossover
Windmill
Snake
Elbow guide out of headlock
Guide to head support
Jaw manipulation
Bar and gate
Entwined fingers
Single person-double elbow
Half shield
X Support
Moving in hold
Sitting on chairs/bean bag
Small person double elbow
Small person escort
Two-person friendly
Two-person single elbow
Two-person figure of four
Two-person double elbow
Two-person seated hold
Advanced modules only: Response to blunt objects
Response to chairs
Response to pool cues
Response to short objects

Staff trained in Team Teach Level One or Two should refer to their training manuals for more information.

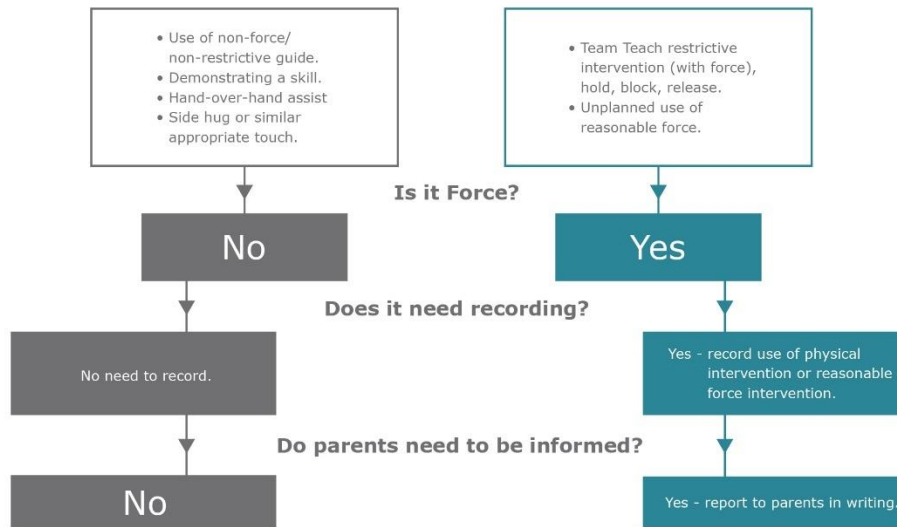
We aim to work openly and transparently with parents and carers. Parents and carers are therefore encouraged to book appointments to meet with Team Teach instructors or senior leaders to discuss the types of restrictive interventions which may be agreed on their child’s behaviour/engagement plan. Instructors will be able to demonstrate any such techniques to enable parents to have clarity about any planned interventions.

**Appendix 6**

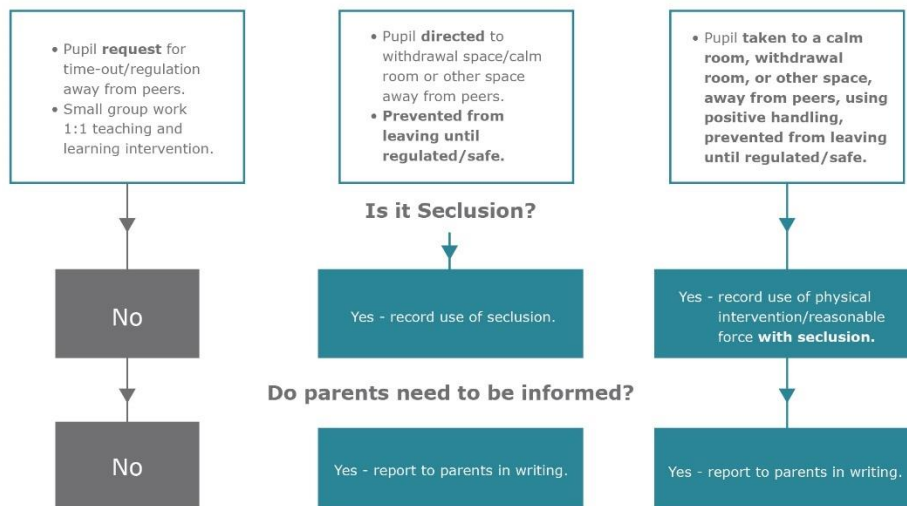


# Recording & Reporting Pathway

## Reasonable Force / Physical Intervention



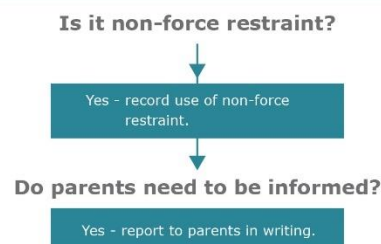
## Seclusion



## Non-force restraint

Non force restraints restrict freedom of movement or ability to act independently without use of physical force.

**Examples include:**  
 Pupil is dysregulated and driving their electric chair at other pupils. Pupil controls turned off.  
 Or Pupil is dysregulated and using walking aid to hit staff. Walking aid removed.



**Appendix 7**

**Recording on MS Forms and Arbor (see separate document)**