



ST.MARY'S RC
PRIMARY SCHOOL

WE PRAY, PLAY & RESPECT ALL

POSITIVE HANDLING AND RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION POLICY

Overview

The school is committed to creating a safe, calm and supportive environment in which positive relationships, prevention and de-escalation minimise the need for restrictive intervention.

Appropriate physical contact can be a normal and necessary part of school life, for example to comfort a distressed child, provide first aid, support a pupil in PE or guide a child to safety. The school does not operate a 'no contact' approach.

Restrictive physical intervention and reasonable force will only be used when necessary, lawfully and proportionately, with the safety, dignity and best interests of pupils and staff at the centre of decision-making.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Behaviour, Child Protection and Safeguarding, SEND, Health and Safety, and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policies.

Legal and Guidance Framework

This policy has regard to sections 93 and 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Department for Education guidance Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools, effective from 1 April 2026, together with current safeguarding guidance.

Principles

- Restrictive intervention will be avoided wherever possible through positive relationships, appropriate support, prevention and de-escalation.
- Reasonable force will never be used as a punishment or with the intention of causing pain, injury, fear or humiliation.
- Before intervening, staff will consider whether the risk of not intervening is greater than the risk created by intervening, so far as circumstances allow.
- Any force used must be reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances, use no more force than is necessary, and last for the shortest possible time.
- Staff must not use techniques that deliberately interfere with a pupil's airway, breathing or circulation.
- Staff should seek assistance where appropriate and should not place themselves or others at unreasonable risk.

When Reasonable Force May Be Used

Members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in circumstances permitted by law. This may include preventing a pupil from committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, damaging property, or prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline.

The decision to use reasonable force is a matter of professional judgement and must take account of the individual circumstances. Where there is time to do so, staff should explain what

they need the pupil to do and use de-escalation strategies before considering restrictive intervention.

Individual Needs, SEND and Planned Intervention

When considering restrictive intervention, staff will take account of relevant factors including the pupil's age, size, SEND or disability, medical needs, communication needs, emotional state, known trauma, and any other vulnerability or relevant information.

Where it is reasonably foreseeable that a pupil may require restrictive physical intervention, the school will consider an individual risk assessment and positive handling/support plan. Parents/carers and the pupil will be involved as appropriate, alongside relevant professionals where necessary. Plans will focus on prevention, de-escalation, known triggers, preferred strategies and how any necessary intervention can be carried out as safely and respectfully as possible.

Team Teach and Staff Training

The school uses Team Teach as its positive handling and restrictive physical intervention training approach. Relevant staff receive Team Teach training appropriate to their role and the needs of pupils.

Staff who have received Team Teach training should use techniques within the scope of their training. Team Teach training does not replace the legal power of school staff to use reasonable force: in an unforeseen emergency, a member of staff may need to take reasonable and proportionate action to prevent harm even where a specific trained technique is not available to them.

Training will support staff to prioritise prevention, de-escalation and reduction of restrictive practices, as well as safe responses where physical intervention is necessary.

Seclusion

Seclusion is a restrictive intervention in which a pupil is confined away from others and prevented from leaving. It must not be used as a punishment or disciplinary sanction. Where seclusion is exceptionally used as a safety measure, the school will follow current statutory requirements for its use, recording and reporting.

Recording and Reporting

The school will record every significant incident in which force is used, in accordance with section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and current statutory guidance. The record will be completed as soon as practicable after the incident.

The school will also record and report any use of seclusion in accordance with the applicable statutory requirements.

Parents/carers will be informed of a significant incident involving the use of force, and of any use of seclusion, as soon as practicable after the incident, subject to any limited exception provided for in law or statutory guidance.

The Headteacher and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed where appropriate, particularly where an incident raises a safeguarding concern.

After an Incident

- The pupil's immediate physical and emotional wellbeing will be checked and any necessary first aid or medical support provided.
- The pupil will be given an appropriate opportunity to reflect, communicate their views and receive support, taking account of their age and needs.
- Staff involved will be offered appropriate support and an opportunity to reflect on the incident.
- The school will consider whether the incident indicates that a risk assessment, positive handling/support plan, behaviour support, SEND provision or other arrangements should be reviewed.
- Any injury, safeguarding concern, allegation or complaint will be dealt with under the relevant school procedure.
- Parents/Carers will be notified

Monitoring

School leaders will monitor the use of restrictive interventions to identify patterns, consider whether practice is proportionate and effective, and identify opportunities to reduce the need for future intervention. Information will be handled sensitively and with appropriate regard to confidentiality.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier where legislation, statutory guidance, Team Teach practice or school circumstances change. The next scheduled review is September 2029.

Revised and adopted by the Governing Body

Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2029