

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY

The Paragon School

<p>Policy Owner</p> <p>Deputy Head Pastoral and DSL</p>	<p>Applies to</p> <p>The Paragon School</p>	<p>Superseded documents</p> <p>Positive Handling inc Restrain v3</p>
<p>Associated documents</p> <p>Safeguarding Policy Health and Safety Policy SEND Policy Positive Behaviour Policy Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy Conducting a Student Search Policy</p>	<p>Review frequency</p> <p>Every year (unless the legislation/regulations update before this time)</p> <p>Implementation date</p> <p>26 January 2026</p>	<p>Legal Framework</p> <p>Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools: Guidance for schools in England (DfE, April 2026) Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest edition) Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention (DfE, 2019) Working Together to Safeguard Children Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff Searching, Screening and Confiscation (latest guidance) Equality Act 2010 Human Rights Act 1998</p>

This policy is reviewed annually, or more regularly as required, prior to approval by Trustees, where applicable.

Last reviewed by:	Deputy Head Pastoral and DSL (Mrs S James) and Head of Compliance (Miss E Wickham)
Date last reviewed:	January 2026
Approved by Trustees:	Approved by the SLT
Date last approved:	23 January 2026
Date for next approval:	January 2027

1. Introduction

Prior Park Schools (PPS) is a family of Christian schools based in Bath and Gibraltar. Prior Park College (PPC) and The Paragon School (TP) are incorporated in England as Prior Park Educational Trust Ltd. Prior Park School Gibraltar (PPSG), is incorporated in Gibraltar as Prior Park School Ltd. Both are companies limited by guarantee and registered charities.

The Prior Park Schools mission, underpinned by shared values, is to steward a thriving family of communities with love for the young people they serve at their heart. These vibrant communities cultivate creativity, foster integrity, and transform lives.

Prior Park Schools Values:

Curiosity – Generosity – Courage

2. Policy Statement

The Paragon School is committed to creating a safe, calm and inclusive environment where pupils are supported to manage their behaviour positively. The school expects that **restrictive interventions will be used rarely and only as a last resort.**

Restrictive interventions include **any action that limits a pupil's movement, liberty or independence.** The use of reasonable force is one form of restrictive intervention.

In line with statutory guidance (April 2026), restrictive interventions may only be used where they are:

- **Lawful**
- **Necessary**
- **Proportionate**
- **The least restrictive option** available

They must **never** be used as a punishment, to enforce compliance, or as a routine behaviour management strategy.

- Staff should always exercise professional caution and ensure any use of intervention is proportionate and recorded formally, using CPOMS, immediately after the event.

- The staff member must also inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (if they are not available, they must inform the Head).
- Staff are reminded that it is better to control any situation by voice and presence, employing de-escalation techniques, seeking to deal with the problem through their natural authority.
- They should use a calm, measured tone to manage the situation. A hand, held up, as a stop sign might be an effective signal to establish control.
- If a member of staff is involved in a difficult situation with a child, they should first use de-escalation techniques. If de-escalation techniques are not enough, then positive handling techniques should be used, for example gentle guidance by holding an elbow or a hand placed lightly on a shoulder. They must also seek to alert the participants to what they are doing.
- If a child is behaving recklessly or fighting, staff may need to call assistance to establish control and their actions must remain proportionate.
- Staff must weigh their duty to protect the welfare of the child with the professional risks of using restraint, striving to defuse and control the situation

3. Prevention and De-escalation

The Paragon School places strong emphasis on prevention, early intervention and de-escalation. Staff are expected to:

- Use positive behaviour support strategies
- Employ calm communication and non-threatening body language
- Use presence, positioning and verbal direction
- Allow time and space for pupils to regulate
- Seek support early where concerns escalate

Restrictive interventions must only be considered after de-escalation strategies have been attempted, unless there is an immediate risk of serious harm.

4. Use of Restrictive Interventions (Including Reasonable Force)

Restrictive interventions, including reasonable force, may be used only where there is a clear and immediate risk of:

- Significant injury to the pupil or others
- Serious damage to property
- A criminal offence
- Serious disruption that presents a risk to safety

Any intervention must:

- Be immediately necessary
- Be used for the shortest possible time
- Involve the minimum force required to reduce risk

As soon as the risk has passed, the intervention must stop.

5. Safeguarding, Recording and Reporting

In accordance with statutory guidance (April 2026):

- All significant restrictive interventions must be recorded on CPOMS without delay
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed the same day

- Parents/carers must be informed promptly following the incident, unless a safeguarding reason prevents this

Records must include:

- The context and trigger for the incident
- De-escalation strategies attempted
- The nature and duration of the restrictive intervention used
- Any injuries or distress
- Follow-up actions and support provided

These records contribute to a clear chronology and inform future planning.

6. Children with SEND, Mental Health or Medical Needs

The school recognises that children with SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions may be more vulnerable to the use of restrictive interventions.

Where a pupil is identified as being at increased risk:

- A bespoke risk assessment and behaviour support plan will be developed
- Parents/carers will be involved in planning and review
- Staff working with the pupil will receive appropriate training
- Incidents will be closely monitored and reviewed
- Planning proactively in this way aims to reduce the need for restrictive interventions.

7. Risk Assessments

Risk assessments should be completed:

- When a pupil is identified as likely to require restrictive intervention
- Following any incident involving physical intervention

Risk assessments must consider:

- Known triggers and early warning signs
- Effective de-escalation strategies
- Medical or physical vulnerabilities
- Adjustments required to minimise risk

The absence of a risk assessment does not prevent staff from acting in an emergency where immediate action is required to prevent harm.

8. Who May Use Restrictive Interventions

At present the completed risk assessments have deemed that there are no pupils identified as requiring restrictive interventions, however, if this risk were to change staff will be appropriately trained to use restrictive interventions with the named child.

Restrictive interventions will, wherever possible, only be carried out by these members of staff who have received the appropriate level of training.

Only in emergency situations can untrained staff use minimum necessary force to prevent harm.

Any intervention must never:

- Restrict breathing
- Cause pain intentionally
- Involve pressure on the neck, chest or joints
- Place the pupil in a dangerous position
- Be sexual in nature

9. Seclusion

Seclusion (restricting a pupil to a space where they are prevented from leaving) is considered a restrictive intervention under statutory guidance and is subject to the same recording, reporting and safeguarding requirements.

The Paragon School does not routinely use seclusion. Any incident that could be considered seclusion must be reported immediately to the DSL.

10. Training

The school will ensure that staff who may need to use restrictive interventions receive appropriate training in:

- Positive behaviour support
- De-escalation techniques
- Safe and lawful use of restrictive interventions
- Safeguarding and recording requirements

11. Monitoring and Review

All incidents involving restrictive interventions will be monitored by the DSL and SLT to:

- Identify patterns or concerns
- Ensure proportionality and consistency
- Inform training and policy review