



DEAN CLOSE
SCHOOL
CHELTENHAM

**Independent, Co-educational, Day and Boarding
Senior School**

**Restrictive Interventions Policy
(S116)**

Registered Charity No: 1086829

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states:

Power of members of staff to use force

1. *A person to whom this section applies may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of preventing a pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following, namely—*
 - a. *committing any offence,*
 - b. *causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself), or*
 - c. *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.*

2. *This section applies to a person who is, in relation to a pupil, a member of the staff of any school at which education is provided for the pupil.*

3. *The power conferred by subsection (1) may be exercised only where—*
 - a. *the member of the staff and the pupil are on the premises of the school in question,*
or
 - b. *they are elsewhere and the member of the staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned.*

4. *Subsection (1) does not authorise anything to be done in relation to a pupil which constitutes the giving of corporal punishment within the meaning of section 548 of EA 1996.*

5. *The powers conferred by subsection (1) are in addition to any powers exercisable apart from this section and are not to be construed as restricting what may lawfully be done apart from this section.*

6. *In this section, "offence" includes anything that would be an offence but for the operation of any presumption that a person under a particular age is incapable of committing an offence.*

Section 95 of the same act states:

"Member of the staff", in relation to a school, means—

- a. *any teacher who works at the school, and*
- b. *any other person who, with the authority of the head teacher, has lawful control or charge of pupils for whom education is being provided at the school.*

"Possessions", in relation to a pupil, includes any goods over which he appears to have control

Section 550A of the Education Act 1996: The Use of force to Control or Restrain Pupils has also been used to inform this document.

DEAN CLOSE SCHOOL

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS POLICY

Introduction

1. The use of reasonable force should always be a last resort for teachers and support staff. This policy aims to offer clear and precise advice to all staff on pupil restrictive interventions to avoid confusion.
2. A range of documents, circulars and guidance for good practice govern these arrangements for controlling or restraining pupils. Key documents which inform this policy include:
 - a. *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools (DfE 2026)*
 - b. *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2025 or later)*
 - c. *Section 550A of the Education Act 1996: The Use of force to Control or Restrain Pupils*
 - d. *Education and Inspections Act Chapter 40, part 7, paragraphs 93 & 93a (2006)*
 - e. *Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards, standards 8 & 15 (2022)*
 - f. *Equality Act 2010*
 - g. *The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974*
 - h. *The Human Rights Act 1998.*

Terminology

3. **Restrictive intervention:** a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This policy uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.
4. **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.
5. **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' (Appendix A) within this policy. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.
6. **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.
7. **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.

The use of reasonable force

8. All members of the school staff, including volunteers appointed by the school, have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances such as:
 - a. Stopping a pupil from causing injury to themselves or others.
 - b. Preventing a pupil from committing a criminal offence.
 - c. Preventing the damage to property.
 - d. Preventing disorder within the pupil body in formal and informal settings.
9. Factors influencing the decision whether to use reasonable force include:
 - a. The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder that is likely to result if force is not used.
 - b. The chances of achieving the desired result by other means.
 - c. The relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies.
10. The School can give staff permission to use reasonable force to conduct a search for the following prohibited items in law:
 - a. Knives and weapons.
 - b. Alcohol.
 - c. Illegal drugs.
 - d. Stolen items.
 - e. Tobacco and associated products.
 - f. Fireworks.
 - g. Pornographic images.
 - h. Any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.
11. A member of staff cannot use reasonable force to search for an item banned under school rules only.
12. The government strongly advises schools not to search pupils when resistance is expected, but rather to call the police.
13. Educational staff are not allowed to use corporal punishment under any circumstances. It is **illegal** to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment.
14. There is a legal duty for staff when using reasonable force to adjust for SEND pupils as detailed in the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.
15. Factors to consider when considering using reasonable force:
 - a. Are there are other less restrictive ways to manage a situation?
 - b. Will a restrictive intervention reduce the relevant risks, or may it escalate the situation further?
 - c. The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder that is likely to result if force is not used?

16. Staff should use force only when necessary to resolve the incident:

- a. The voice should be used first: verbal instructions should be given before and during any physical intervention.
- b. The least amount of force required should be used, lasting for the shortest practicable time.
- c. The purpose of force should be restraint and the reduction of risk.
- d. Blows must not be struck or force used to retaliate against pupils: to do so would exceed staff authorisation to intervene and create a significant risk of an allegation of assault being made.
- e. If the intervention is escalating staff should consider their approach and attempt an alternative strategy.
- f. Staff must consider the pupil's overall welfare and look to maintain the pupil's dignity.
- g. Staff where possible should look to calmly and clearly explain to the pupil what is happening, why and what the pupil needs to do.
- h. Staff must consider the personal circumstances of the pupil such as medical conditions, special education needs, their age, and size and any implications in relation to the Equality Act 2010.

17. Force should not be used:

- a. As a punishment in any circumstances.
- b. In a way that affects the airway, breathing or circulation.
- c. To apply pressure to the neck region or abdomen.

18. The use of force can be dangerous, particularly on the ground. If a pupil is held on the ground, staff should release their hold or reposition into a safer alternative as soon as possible.

19. Where appropriate, the pupil, and staff member if needed, should receive a medical assessment and treatment as soon as practicably possible.

The use of seclusion

20. A member of staff who wishes to use seclusion should consider the following:

- a. Seclusion 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 that the pupil is not acting with intent.
- b. Seclusion should not be used as or threatened as a form of punishment.
- c. The place where the pupil is confined should be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil.
- d. The pupil should be supervised at all times during seclusion.
- e. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil should be allowed to leave.

Pupil and Staff Support after an incident of restrictive intervention

21. The school will evaluate all incidents involving the use of restrictive intervention as soon as is practicable after the event, this will include:
- a. Why a restrictive intervention used was used.
 - b. The impact on the pupil restrained; any pupils that may have witnessed the incident; staff and the whole school community and what support they may need.
 - c. Any patterns or trends that the incident may be part of.
 - d. How to avoid future incidents by amending or introducing a behaviour support plan.
 - e. Consider updating staff training.
 - f. Consider the personal circumstances of the pupil such as medical conditions, special education needs, and consider any implications in relation to the Equality Act 2010.

Recording of an incident of restrictive intervention

22. The school has implemented a procedure for recording each significant incident of restrictive intervention in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil:
- a. All incidents will be recorded as soon as practicable usually within 24 hours.
 - b. Separate accounts need to be recorded by any staff member that was involved (see appendix B for a link to the form).
 - c. The names of pupil and staff directly involved must be recorded on the form.
 - d. Any relevant needs or circumstances of pupil involved, including whether the pupil has an identified SEND must be recorded.
 - e. The time, date, location, and approximate duration of the intervention must be noted.
 - f. Include a brief account of the incident: including what led up to the event, any triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, what type of reasonable force was used, the degree of force and any physical injuries sustained.
 - g. Any post-incident support e.g. medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts should be added to the form once known.
 - h. The pupil and/or witnesses' accounts should be recorded as well.
 - i. The incident must be added to CPOMS and assigned to the DSL for further investigation as necessary.
 - j. The Head will regularly review the CPOMS record and report to the Trustees termly.

Reporting of an incident of restrictive intervention

23. The Trustees must ensure that a procedure is in place for reporting each significant use of force to parents/guardians/carers as soon as practicable possible after the incident usually within 24 hours:
- a. All incidents must be reported to parent of the pupil, this includes carers or persons with parental responsibilities and to the local authority if it is providing accommodation

for the child under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 as soon as practicable; this must be within 24 hours.

- b. Exceptions to the need to report are if the pupil is aged 20 or over or if it appears to the staff member that doing so would likely cause serious harm to the pupil. In this instance it must be reported to any parent who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm or, if there are none, to the local authority within whose area the pupil is normally resident.
- c. The report will contain time, date, location, and approximate duration of the intervention. A brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary, what type of force was used and the degree of force and details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable.
- d. The report will be in writing usually via email.
- e. After an incident parents will be invited in for a meeting to discuss any behavioural triggers, warning signs, whether a Pupil Pathway Plan or risk assessment needs to be written or adapted and how the school can support the pupil and parents.

Complaints

- 24. A parent or other responsible adult can raise a complaint about restrictive intervention, including the use of force, by implementing the Parent Complaint Policy and Procedure (W077) available on the Foundation website or on request.
- 25. If the parent or other responsible adult thinks a criminal offence has been committed, it should be reported to the police.

Staff training

- 26. Staff should regularly attend in-person training on the use of reasonable force or complete an online module to help their understanding of restrictive intervention.

Appendix A – Other physical contact with pupils

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:

- The school's child protection (or any other relevant) policy.
- The applicable circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present.
- The individual pupil's age.
- 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.

Appendix B – Use of Restrictive Intervention form

The link below should be used to report any use of Restrictive Intervention as soon as possible after the significant incident and usually within 24 hours.

[Use of Restrictive Intervention Form – Fill in form](#)

The incident should also be recorded on CPOMS with a copy of the Use of Restrictive Intervention Form attached to the incident.

CPOMS category: U. Use of Restrictive Intervention:

Subcategories: Use of reasonable force
 Use of restraint – physical
 Use of restraint – non-physical
 Use of seclusion
 Pupil injury
 Staff injury