



*Kirkstall St Stephen's  
C of E (VA) Primary  
School*

*Restrictive interventions and  
use of reasonable force policy*

*April 2026*

This policy includes key information from the Department for Education's 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools' April 2026.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6943dad6501cdd438f4cf5aa/Restrictive\\_interventions\\_including\\_use\\_of\\_reasonable\\_force\\_in\\_schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6943dad6501cdd438f4cf5aa/Restrictive_interventions_including_use_of_reasonable_force_in_schools.pdf)

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

## **Our School Vision:**

**We are cherished-** we aim to create a caring environment where all children and staff feel welcome, supported, valued and respected.

**We are challenged-** we aim to provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment, where achievements are recognised and it's also safe to fail.

**We are children of God-** we recognise the value of each and every individual, and aim to encourage everyone's unique spiritual development and potential.

Our school values are **Perseverance, Justice, Thankfulness, Forgiveness, Trust and Respect.**

## **Overview**

The use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion, can have a significant impact on the pupils, staff members and parents involved, as well as the wider classroom. However, there are times when the use of restrictive interventions will be lawful and necessary; for example, to keep individuals and the wider school community safe.

This policy aims to help staff at KSS proactively minimise the need to use restrictive interventions through early support, prevention and de-escalation strategies, and when necessary, but to help KSS staff feel more confident in knowing how to use these interventions safely, appropriately and lawfully.

## **Relevant legislation**

The principal legislation to which this guidance relates are:

- the Education and Inspections Act 2006, especially sections 93 and 93A
- the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025
- the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated regulations
- the Human Rights Act 1998
- the Equality Act 2010

## **Terminology**

For clarity, this policy may use the following definitions:

**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. 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.

### **Who can use reasonable force?**

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain 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

This is outlined in the Education and Inspections Act 2006, especially sections 93 and 93A

KSS staff who are likely to need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions should be adequately trained in its safe and lawful use and in preventative strategies using 'Team Teach' strategies. KSS staff are trained every two years in 'Team Teach'.

### **Use of reasonable force to search pupils**

The Head teacher and KSS staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item. A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for legally prohibited items, but not to search for items banned under the school rules only.

### **Unacceptable uses of force**

**It is illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment.**

Pupils should not be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example, by covering the mouth and/or nose, or applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen. The use of force can be dangerous, particularly where it occurs on the ground. If a

pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should release their holds or re-position into a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible.

Where appropriate, the pupil should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. For any form of restraint, including seated and standing, there is a risk of physical and psychological harm, and it should be avoided where possible.

### **Other physical contact with pupils**

**KSS does not have a 'no contact' policy and cannot 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.

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for KSS 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 KSS 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
- whether the pupil has SEND or other vulnerabilities
- any alternative strategies that do not include physical contact that could be used

## **Seclusion**

Seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving.

**This should only be used as a safety measure to protect others, or the pupil themselves, 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 KSS staff through threat of punishment.**

The place to which the pupil is confined should be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil. The pupil should be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil should be allowed to leave.

An incident involving the use of seclusion must be recorded and reported in accordance with the reporting procedures.

## **Determining when use of restrictive interventions is appropriate**

There will be times when KSS 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 KSS 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.

### **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, 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.

This list of factors is not exhaustive, and staff should also take into account other relevant considerations.

**If an assessment has been made to use restrictive interventions, this may need to be an immediate dynamic decision by the member of KSS staff, such as responding to the immediate high risk of danger and harm to the child or those around him.**

### **Consideration for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)**

Some children and young people with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to themselves and others. Triggers may include pain, sensory overload, unfamiliar situations or environments or feelings of fear and anxiety. In particular, pupils who are non-verbal or find verbal communication challenging may express their needs, discomfort or confusion through actions. This can lead to pupils with SEND being disproportionately subject to the use of restrictive interventions.

KSS staff should seek to understand the underlying triggers of challenging behaviour so that they can provide proactive support, create an inclusive environment and consider the impact of school policies on pupils with SEND.

Where appropriate, KSS staff should work with pupils with SEND and their parents in the co-production of any necessary Behaviour Individual Pupil Risk Assessments (BIPRAs) and Regulation plans. These should outline any adjustments, such as to address aspects of the school environment which the pupil finds challenging and ways for pupils to communicate their needs effectively.

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

The KSS Governing Body and Senior Leadership must ensure that a procedure is in place for recording each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil, seclusion or restraints (either with physical contact or without) as part of the school's duty under section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Incidents must be recorded 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 procedure must require that a record of any such incident is made in writing as soon as practicable after the incident. The requirement to record applies even if the use of restrictive interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's BIPRA and Regulation Plan.

Please see Annex 1 for the document to be used by KSS staff for recording use of force, restraint or seclusion. This will be uploaded to the school's CPOMS system and also verbally shared with the parent of the child concerned. The report will be available for the parent to receive a copy if they wish so.

Parents must be informed as soon as practicable after the incident and KSS staff should endeavour to do this no later than the same day. This could involve a discussion about:

- any behavioural triggers or warning signs of an impending incident
- whether any agreed behaviour support plans were followed
- what de-escalation strategies were used and how effective they were
- what might be done differently in the future

Exceptions to the requirement to report are where it appears to the KSS staff member that doing so would be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil. In this instance, the staff member must report the incident to any parent(s) 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 ordinarily resident.

The requirement to inform parents applies even if the use of restrictive interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's BIPRA or Regulation plan.

The school may use this information to amend any existing BIPRAs and Regulation Plans as needed.

### **Complaints and allegations**

Any complaints regarding the use of restrictive interventions should be dealt with in accordance with the KSS complaints policy- please see the relevant section on the school's website.



**KSS recording form for staff using Force/ Restraint (physical and non-physical)/ Seclusion**

**1. Name of child and Class / Year group**

**2. Name of staff member completing this form and position in school**

**3. SEN status of child** *Including whether the pupil involved has an identified special education need or disability and their SEN status code*                      N - No SEN      K - SEN support      E - EHCP

**4. Date and time of incident**

**5. Location of incident**

**6. Full name(s) of staff who performed the physical intervention and their position in school**

**7. Full name(s) of staff who were present during the incident** *This includes witnesses, staff who provided verbal reassurance*

**8. Why** was the intervention assessed as necessary?

To prevent or stop the continuation of:

- A criminal offence
- Injury to themselves
- Injury to others
- Damage to property
- Serious disruption to good order and discipline

**9. Details of the incident**

*This section should include a chronological narrative of the incident, including build-up / antecedents, identified or potential triggers, key de-escalation strategies used, names of physical interventions used, the degree of force used, any injuries sustained (if applicable), and post-incident / recovery details.*

**10. Was physical force or restraint used? If so, please detail below**

<b>Name of technique</b> <i>Please delete any techniques for which you/your staff have not been trained</i>	<b>Was this technique used?</b> <i>Tick if yes</i>	<b>Duration of RPI</b> <i>If used multiple times, record individual durations</i>	<b>Name of technique</b> <i>Please delete any techniques for which you/your staff have not been trained</i>	<b>Was this technique used?</b> <i>Tick if yes</i>	<b>Duration of this technique</b> <i>If used multiple times, record individual duration.</i>
Help hug	<input type="checkbox"/>		Arm disengagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Single person double elbow	<input type="checkbox"/>		Bite response	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Small child escort (single person)	<input type="checkbox"/>		Body disengagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Small child escort (two person)	<input type="checkbox"/>		Clothing disengagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Beanbag hold	<input type="checkbox"/>		Hair response	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Friendly escort (two person only)	<input type="checkbox"/>		Neck response	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Single elbow (two person only)	<input type="checkbox"/>		Shepherd	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Figure of four (two person only)	<input type="checkbox"/>		Caring C guide	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Two-person double elbow	<input type="checkbox"/>		Help hug (non-restrictive)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Seated hold	<input type="checkbox"/>		Friendly escort (non-restrictive)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Half shield / arm waltz	<input type="checkbox"/>		Item used as weapon response	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Total duration</b>					

**11. Was non-physical restraint used? If so, please explain.**

<b>12. Was seclusion used?</b> <i>Tick if yes</i>	<b>Was a staff member in the room/ Safespace with the child?</b> <i>Tick if yes</i>	<b>How was the child prevented from leaving the space?</b> <i>This may include locking the door, blocking the exit, or through fear of punishment</i>	<b>Duration of seclusion</b> <i>If used multiple times, record total duration.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**13. Were any physical injuries sustained by the pupil or staff? If so, please detail these and explain the next steps of support, such as medical treatment.**

**14. Was the child's voice captured regarding the incident?**

**15. Who has notified parents? How was the information been passed onto them?**



