

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School



Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable Force Policy

April 2026

Reviewed and agreed by:	Louise Woolfall Governors
Date of last review:	April 2026
Date of next review:	April 2027

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1. Mission and Ethos

As a Catholic primary school, we uphold the dignity, safety and wellbeing of every child, created in the image and likeness of God. Our approach to behaviour, support and safety is rooted in Gospel values of compassion, reconciliation, justice and peace. Restrictive interventions are used only when absolutely necessary to prevent significant harm, and always in a way that protects the child's dignity and emotional wellbeing.

2. Purpose of this Policy

This policy sets out how the school will:

- Minimise the need for restrictive interventions
- Use reasonable force safely, lawfully and proportionately
- Record and report all significant uses of force, seclusion and restraint
- Support pupils and staff following incidents
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties from April 2026

This policy aligns with the DfE guidance *Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools* (April 2026) [assets.publishing.service.gov.uk](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101111/restrictive-interventions-in-schools.pdf).

3. Legal Framework

This policy reflects the school's duties under:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (sections 93 & 93A)
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) Regulations 2025
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

4. Definitions (as per DfE guidance)

- Restrictive intervention: Any action that prevents, restricts or subdues a pupil's movement.
- Reasonable force: Using no more force than necessary, for the shortest time, to prevent harm.
- Significant incident: Any use of force beyond everyday appropriate physical contact.
- Seclusion: Confining a pupil alone and preventing them from leaving.
- Restraint: Immobilising or limiting movement, with or without physical contact.

5. When Restrictive Interventions May Be Used

Staff may use reasonable force only to prevent a pupil from:

1. Causing injury to themselves or others
2. Committing a criminal offence
3. Damaging property
4. Causing serious disorder

Force must always be:

- Necessary

- Proportionate
- Used for the shortest time
- Focused on safety

6. Unacceptable Uses of Force

The following are never permitted:

- Using force as punishment
- Any hold affecting breathing, airway or circulation
- Prone or floor-based restraint
- Seclusion used as a disciplinary measure

7. Prevention and De-escalation

The school prioritises:

- Trauma-informed practice
- Early identification of distress
- Environmental adjustments
- Positive relationships
- Calm, consistent communication
- Restorative approaches

Staff are trained to use de-escalation strategies before considering restrictive interventions.

8. SEND Considerations

Pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to distress and restrictive interventions. The school will:

- Understand individual triggers
- Make reasonable adjustments
- Co-produce behaviour support plans with parents
- Review plans after any significant incident
- Complete risk assessments where needed

9. Seclusion

Seclusion may only be used:

- As a safety measure
- When a pupil is highly dysregulated and at risk of harm
- Never as punishment
- In a safe, supervised space
- For the shortest time possible

All seclusion incidents must be recorded and reported. In school these incidents will be recorded on Bromcom.

10. Recording Duties (Statutory)

The school must record **every**:

- Significant use of force
- Seclusion incident
- Restraint incident (including non-physical restraint such as removing mobility aids)

Records must include:

- Names of pupil and staff involved
- Time, date, location, duration
- What led to the incident

- De-escalation strategies used
- Why force/seclusion was necessary
- Injuries and medical treatment
- Post-incident support

Records must be completed as soon as practicable, ideally the same day.

11. Reporting Duties (Statutory)

Parents must be informed as soon as practicable, ideally the same day, unless doing so would cause serious harm to the pupil.

Reports must include:

- Time, date, location, duration
- Why the intervention was necessary
- Type and degree of force
- Any injuries

12. Post-Incident Support

The school will ensure:

- Medical checks where needed
- Emotional support for pupils
- Debriefs for staff and pupils
- Restorative conversations
- Review of behaviour support plans
- Monitoring of wellbeing

13. Staff Training

Staff will receive training in:

- De-escalation
- Safe and lawful use of force
- Trauma-informed practice
- SEND-specific strategies
- Recording and reporting requirements

Training will be refreshed regularly.

14. Data Monitoring and Governance

The governing body will receive termly anonymised data on:

- Number and type of incidents
- Patterns and trends
- SEND breakdown
- Injuries
- Parental notifications
- Actions taken

Governors will monitor:

- Compliance
- Disproportionality
- Effectiveness of preventative strategies

15. Complaints and Allegations

- Complaints follow the school's Complaints Policy
- Allegations follow KCSIE procedures
- Safeguarding concerns are reported to the DSL

16. Communication of this Policy

This policy will be shared with:

- All staff
- Parents
- Pupils (in an age-appropriate format)
- Governors

It will be published on the school website.

17. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- DfE guidance is updated
- Monitoring identifies a need