Restrictive Intervention Policy

Reviewed: April 2026

Next review: April 2028

Policy history:

January 2022	Updated	Steph Watson (Vice Principal)
July 2019	Updated	Steph Watson (Vice Principal)
	Statement regarding Team Teach added	James Bancroft (Principal)
February 2018	Policy written	Sharon Valente (Inclusion Manager)

Wistaston Church Lane Academy is part of The Learning Partnership

1. Introduction

Wistaston Church Lane Academy encourages pupils to make positive behaviour choices and supports them to manage their behaviour successfully. However, there are rare occasions when pupils may behave in a way that presents a risk to themselves, others or property.

In exceptional circumstances, staff may need to use reasonable force as part of a wider approach to behaviour management. This policy sets out the school's approach to restrictive intervention / positive handling, ensuring that any use of physical contact is lawful, proportionate, safe and respectful of pupils' dignity.

This policy reflects the school's commitment to children's rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and to ensuring that all pupils are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

2. Statement of Principles

- Restrictive intervention is used only as a last resort when other strategies have failed or are not appropriate.
- Any physical contact is the minimum necessary to prevent harm.
- Restrictive intervention is used to maintain safety and not as a punishment. The safety, dignity and wellbeing of pupils and staff are always prioritised.
- Incidents are recorded, reported and reviewed, and parents/carers are informed.

3. Legal Framework

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 permits school staff to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from causing harm to themselves or others, committing a criminal offence, causing damage to property, or prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline.

This policy aligns with the latest Department for Education guidance effective from April 2026 and references:

- DfE – Restrictive Interventions, Including Use of Reasonable Force, in Schools (April 2026)
- DfE – Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (current)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

4. Use of Reasonable Force / Restrictive intervention Procedures

Reasonable force may only be used to prevent serious harm, serious damage to property, or severe disruption where other strategies have been ineffective.

Staff will:

- Use de-escalation strategies wherever possible
- Apply the minimum force necessary for the shortest time
- Use Safer Handling approved techniques where trained
- Seek assistance when safe and appropriate
- Continue to communicate calmly with the pupil throughout

Restrictive intervention will never be used as a punishment, to enforce compliance, or as a disciplinary sanction.

5. Recording and Reporting
In line with current Department for Education guidance, all incidents involving the use of reasonable force or other restrictive intervention will be recorded promptly and accurately, normally as soon as practicable after the incident.

Records will provide a clear account of the decision-making, actions taken and outcomes, and will be completed and logged on CPOMs.

Records will include:

- the antecedents to the incident and any de-escalation strategies attempted
- the justification for the use of restrictive intervention
- the type and duration of the intervention used
- the names of staff involved and any witnesses
- details of any injury, pain or distress to pupils or staff
- follow-up actions, support provided and any required review of behaviour support plans or risk assessments

Records will be regularly reviewed by senior leaders, and used to support safeguarding oversight, identify patterns or concerns, and inform any necessary changes to practice, training or provision.

6. Informing Parents and Carers
Parents or carers will be informed as soon as practicable, normally on the same day, following any significant incident involving the use of reasonable force. They will be offered the opportunity to discuss the incident and next steps.

7. Risk Assessments and Planning
Where pupils are known to present a foreseeable risk, risk assessments and behaviour support plans will be developed. These may include:

- Known triggers and early warning signs
- De-escalation strategies
- Agreed staff responses
- Training needs
- Involvement of parents/carers and external agencies as appropriate

8. Complaints and Allegations
Complaints regarding the use of reasonable force will be handled in line with the school's Complaints Policy. Allegations that raise safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education and safeguarding procedures.