



# Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable Force Policy

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# Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable Force Policy

## 1. Statutory Compliance

This policy sets out Aspire Multi-Academy Trust's approach to the use of restrictive physical intervention and reasonable force across all academies within the Trust. It ensures that practice is lawful, proportionate, necessary and rooted in safeguarding, inclusion and pupil wellbeing.

This policy is aligned with:

- Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Department for Education statutory guidance: Use of Reasonable Force in Schools
- Department for Education guidance: Restrictive Interventions, including the use of reasonable force (effective from 1 April 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998

This Trust policy provides a consistent framework across Aspire Multi-Academy Trust. Each academy will maintain a local addendum setting out academy-specific arrangements, including recording systems, communication processes, and operational detail.

## 2. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to all staff, governors, volunteers, and visitors working within Aspire Multi-Academy Trust academies. It must be read alongside Behaviour, SEND, Safeguarding, Complaints and Health and Safety policies.

## 3. Definitions

**Restrictive physical intervention** is any direct physical contact where a member of staff intentionally uses force to restrict a pupil's movement against their will in order to prevent harm.

This does not include everyday physical contact such as PE, first aid, personal care or guiding movement where there is no resistance.

### **Relocation**

Relocation is when a pupil is moved to a different space to help them calm, regulate, or reduce risk.

Key features:

- the pupil is supervised by an adult
- the door is not locked or blocked
- the pupil is not prevented from leaving
- it may be suggested or directed but is not enforced by confinement
- the purpose is regulation, safety, or reducing stimulation

Examples:

- working in another classroom with a member of staff

- spending time in a nurture or wellbeing room
- stepping into a quieter space with an adult present

Relocation is a supportive strategy. It is not seclusion and is not a restrictive practice when the pupil can leave and is supervised.

### **Seclusion**

Seclusion is when a pupil is placed alone in a room or enclosed space and is prevented from leaving.

Key features:

- the pupil is alone
- the pupil cannot leave freely
- the door is locked, blocked, or physically prevented from opening
- it is used only to prevent immediate serious harm

Seclusion is a restrictive practice and must be recorded clearly, reviewed by senior leaders, and used only in rare, exceptional circumstances. Seclusion will never be used as a disciplinary response.

Why the distinction matters

- relocation is part of normal pastoral and behaviour support
- seclusion carries higher safeguarding and inspection risk
- mislabelling relocation as seclusion can cause unnecessary concern
- failing to identify seclusion correctly is a safeguarding issue

A simple test staff can use

Ask:

Can the child leave the space if they choose?

If yes it is relocation

If no it is seclusion.

## **4. Values and Ethos**

Aspire Multi-Academy Trust is committed to protecting pupil dignity, rights, and wellbeing. Restrictive intervention is never a behaviour management strategy, punishment, or means of securing compliance. It is used only as a last resort.

## **5. Prevention and Positive Behaviour Support**

Academies prioritise prevention, de-escalation, trauma-informed practice, reasonable adjustments for SEND, and early intervention to reduce the need for physical intervention.

## **6. Legal Framework: Reasonable Force**

Staff may use reasonable force under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to prevent harm, serious damage to property, or serious disruption to good order

## **7. When Physical Intervention May Be Used**

Restrictive physical intervention may be used only where there is an immediate risk of harm and where less intrusive strategies have failed or are inappropriate. Intervention must stop as soon as the risk reduces.

## **8. What Is Not Permitted**

The following are not permitted:

- Use of force as punishment
- Techniques that restrict breathing or circulation
- Holding a pupil by the neck or head
- Prone restraint or deliberate placement on the ground
- Any intervention intended to cause pain or humiliation

## **9. Who May Use Physical Intervention**

In emergencies, reasonable force may be used by teachers and authorised staff with responsibility for pupils. Staff are not expected to place themselves at risk.

## **10. Individual Planning and Risk Assessment**

Where restrictive intervention may be anticipated, academies must have risk assessments and positive behaviour support plans in place, reviewed regularly with parents and professionals.

## **11. Training and Support for Staff**

Staff receive training in de-escalation, behaviour understanding, and legal responsibilities. Training records are maintained at Trust and academy level. Staff and governors will monitor for disproportionate impact on pupils with SEND and other protected characteristics. Outcomes from monitoring will be used to inform staff training and risk reduction.

## **12. Recording and Reporting**

From 1 April 2026, the Trust and its academies have a legal duty to ensure that every significant incident involving the use of force, and every incident of seclusion or restraint, is recorded in writing and reported to parents or carers. All academies must follow the expectations set out in the DfE statutory guidance *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools* and this Trust policy

### **12.1 What must be recorded**

In line with the statutory minimum information as set out in the DfE guidance, for each relevant incident, staff must complete a written record as soon as practicable and ideally on the same day. As a minimum, this record will include:

Names of the pupil(s) and staff directly involved, and any witnesses where known.

Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention.

A brief account of what led up to the incident, including known or suspected triggers, and any preventative or de-escalation strategies used.

The type of intervention used (for example reasonable force, restraint, seclusion), including what kind of force was applied, the degree of force and which parts of the body were involved.

Why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance, including the immediate risk of harm or serious disruption.

Any known relevant pupil needs, including SEND, disability, medical conditions or other vulnerabilities.

Details of any apparent injuries to pupils or staff and any medical checks or first aid provided, including consideration of reporting under health and safety procedures where required.

Post-incident actions, including support offered to the pupil and staff, communication with parents, and any agreed follow-up such as changes to plans or further referrals.

Each academy will identify and maintain a secure system for recording these incidents in its local addendum, ensuring records are retained and accessible for safeguarding, health and safety and regulatory purposes.

## **12.2 Reporting to parents and carers**

Parents or carers must be informed of any recorded incident involving the use of force, seclusion or restraint as soon as practicable and usually no later than the same day. Communication may be by telephone in the first instance but must always be followed by a written summary of the incident and the support provided. The method and timing of contact must be logged in the incident record.

Information may be withheld from a parent where providing it would be likely to result in significant harm to the pupil in accordance with regulations.

## **12.3 Review by senior leaders**

All incident records will be reviewed by an appropriate senior leader as soon as reasonably possible to ensure the intervention was necessary and proportionate, and to identify any immediate safeguarding or health and safety concerns. Senior leaders will ensure that individual risk assessments and behaviour support plans are updated where necessary and that staff receive any additional guidance or support required.

## **13. Post Incident Support and Review**

The Trust is committed to minimising the use of restrictive interventions and to protecting pupil dignity, rights and wellbeing when they are used. Following any incident involving the use of force, seclusion or restraint, academies must provide appropriate support and opportunities for reflection for pupils, staff and, where relevant, other pupils who witnessed the incident.

### **13.1 Support for pupils**

As soon as it is safe and appropriate, a member of staff will check on the pupil's physical and emotional welfare, arrange any medical attention required and provide an opportunity for the pupil to talk about what happened in a way that is developmentally appropriate. The pupil's views will be recorded and considered in any subsequent review of their risk assessment or behaviour support plan. Where a pupil has SEND, communication difficulties, or has experienced trauma, staff will use strategies that are sensitive to these needs.

### **13.2 Support for staff**

Staff involved in incidents will be offered debrief and support, including the opportunity to reflect on triggers, de-escalation strategies and learning for future practice. Where staff are injured or distressed, appropriate welfare, medical and health and safety processes will be followed.

### **13.3 Learning and improvement**

Senior leaders will use incident reviews to identify patterns, training needs, environmental factors and any equality concerns, with the aim of reducing the need for restrictive interventions over time. Themes, trends and any disproportionate impact on particular groups, including pupils with SEND or other protected characteristics, will be reported through Trust monitoring and governance processes.

#### **14. Monitoring and Governance**

The Trust and academies monitor incidents, equality impacts, and compliance to ensure consistent and lawful practice. Monitoring data includes the number and type of interventions, use of seclusion, pupil groups affected and any disproportionate patterns, reported at academy and Trust level

#### **15. Concerns and Allegations**

Concerns are managed in line with safeguarding and complaints procedures, including LADO processes where appropriate.

#### **16. Review**

This policy is reviewed annually by Aspire Multi-Academy Trust or sooner if guidance changes.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Primary Academy Appendix Copy

#### Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable Force

This appendix should be read alongside the Aspire Multi Academy Trust Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable Force Policy and [School Name]'s Behaviour, SEND and Safeguarding policies.

#### **1. School details**

- School name: EXAMPLE Academy
- Headteacher: Mrs Smith
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mr Jones (Deputy Headteacher)
- SENCO/Inclusion Lead: Mrs James
- Phase/context: Mainstream primary (1 form entry) with nurture room; no separate specialist provision

#### **2. Local roles and Responsibilities**

- Senior Leader with lead responsibility for restrictive interventions and seclusion: Deputy Headteacher (DSL)
- Deputy lead: Assistant Headteacher (Phase 2 lead)
- Incident review: All incident records are reviewed by the Deputy Headteacher or, in their absence, the Assistant Headteacher.
- Sign off for incidents involving injury or significant use of force: Headteacher or DSL.
- Seclusion authorisation: This school does not use seclusion (see section 5).

#### **3. Recording systems and workflow**

##### **Recording tools used**

- Aspire Restrictive Intervention Incident Form: used for all incidents that meet the Trust definition of a "significant incident" or involve seclusion or restraint.
- Behaviour/MIS: Arbor (behaviour events and linked interventions recorded).
- Safeguarding system: CPOMS (all restrictive intervention incidents are logged as safeguarding records and cross referenced to the incident form).

##### **Process**

- The staff member(s) directly involved complete the Aspire incident form, supported by the year group or phase leader where needed.
- Forms are completed as soon as practicable and ideally on the same school day as the incident.
- Completed forms are scanned and uploaded to the relevant CPOMS record and also stored on the secure SLT drive, accessible only to SLT, SENCO and DSL.
- The CPOMS entry includes a short summary, the date/time of the incident, who was involved, and the file reference for the full incident form. Behaviour points/events are added in Arbor and cross referenced to the CPOMS record.

#### **4. Parent and carer communication**

- A member of SLT (usually the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher) phones parents or carers on the same day for any recorded incident involving restrictive intervention.

- Parents receive a brief written summary of the incident and support provided within one school day, usually via secure email or printed letter sent home.
- Where a pupil has a social worker, is subject to a child protection or child in need plan, or has an EHCP, the DSL oversees communication and liaises with external professionals as appropriate.
- All communication with parents and professionals is logged on CPOMS and noted on the incident form (date, time, and method).

## **5. Use of spaces: relocation and seclusion**

### Relocation and calming spaces

For most pupils, relocation is a move to a quieter, safer space with an adult to support regulation:

- Nurture Room “The Nest”: a small, low stimulus room used for emotional regulation and small group nurture work. Pupils use this with an adult present; the door is not locked or blocked, and pupils can leave with support.
- Group Room “Acorn Room”: used for small group interventions and as a calm space at times of high arousal, always supervised by a member of staff.
- Library Quiet Area: occasionally used for brief time away from a busy classroom, supervised and with the door open.

In all cases, pupils remain supervised, doors are not locked or blocked, and pupils are not prevented from leaving, so these are relocation, not seclusion.

### Seclusion

- This school does not use seclusion. Pupils are not placed alone in a room and prevented from leaving as a planned or routine response.
- In the extremely rare event that a child’s safety requires preventing immediate exit from a space (for example to stop running into a dangerous area), staff act only for as long as necessary to remove the immediate risk and follow Trust recording and reporting procedures.

## **6. Pupil level planning and SEND**

- Individual risk assessments and positive behaviour support plans are created:
  - Where a pupil has experienced two or more recorded incidents within a half term, or
  - Earlier, if staff identify a known significant risk or pattern of escalating behaviour.
- Plans are drawn up by the class teacher and SENCO, with input from the pupil (where appropriate), parents/carers and any involved professionals (e.g., Educational Psychologist, SEMH service).
- Plans are stored on the secure SLT/SENCO drive and attached to the pupil’s CPOMS record; a summary is signposted on the Arbor pupil profile.
- Plans set out known triggers, early warning signs, de-escalation strategies, agreed scripts, and any circumstances where restrictive intervention might be required as a last resort.
- Reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with SEND, including:
  - Use of visuals, social stories and calm boxes.
  - Adjusted expectations and sensory breaks for pupils with sensory or communication needs.
  - Additional adult support or adapted timetables where needed.

## **7. Staff training and briefing**

- All SLT, the SENCO and pastoral staff receive regular de-escalation training, including understanding behaviour as communication and trauma informed approaches.
- At least two members of staff in each phase (KS1 and KS2) are trained in the approved physical intervention approach used by the Trust; training is refreshed every two to three years or sooner if needed.
- Training records are maintained by the SENCO and reported to SLT annually.
- All new staff, supply teachers and trainees receive a short induction on:
  - Behaviour expectations and the school's graduated response.
  - Who to call if a situation escalates (radio/phone procedures, named staff)
  - The expectation that they do not attempt physical holds they are not trained or authorised to use.

## **8. Monitoring, review and governance (school level)**

- The Deputy Headteacher reviews all incident forms as they are submitted, ensuring timely follow up, plan updates and support for staff and pupils.
- Half termly, SLT reviews all restrictive intervention incidents to identify patterns (e.g., pupil, class, time of day, location, type of intervention, injuries, use of specific rooms).
- The SENCO leads a termly review of data for any disproportionate impact on particular groups, including pupils with SEND, pupils with EHCPs, pupils from different ethnic groups, and looked after/previously looked after children.
- Findings inform adjustments to timetables, staffing, environment, and staff training, as well as updates to individual plans.
- An anonymised summary of incidents, patterns and actions is reported to the Local Governing Body each term as part of the behaviour and safeguarding report.

## **9. Links to other school policies**

- Behaviour policy – available on the school website and from the office on request.
- Safeguarding and child protection policy – on the school website and in the staff shared area.
- SEND Information Report and SEND Policy – on the school website.
- Health and Safety / Accident and Incident Reporting – on the staff shared area and school website.
- Complaint's policy – on the school website and from the office on request.

**Appendix B: Aspire Restrictive Intervention Record Form Copy****ASPIRE RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION RECORD FORM**

*To be completed as soon as practical and ideally on the same day following any incident involving restrictive intervention, restraint, reasonable force, or seclusion)*

*This form must be used in conjunction with the Department for Education's statutory guidance: 'Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Intervention in Schools' (effective from 1 April 2026), alongside the Behaviour and Restrictive Interventions Policy and reviewed by a member of SLT*

Section	Details
<b>Pupil name &amp; class</b>	
<b>Is the child in a vulnerable group, have an EHCP or any other needs?</b>	
<b>Date and time of incident:</b>	
<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Staff member(s) involved:</b>	
<b>Any witnesses?</b>	
<b>Summary of incident:</b> Brief factual description – what led to the situation and why intervention was proportionate and necessary	
Please state any injury or distress to child or adult:	
<b>Physical Intervention used. Please state duration of intervention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Positive force application to prevent immediate harm or serious risk [ ]</li> <li>○ Holding on the floor, held by two or more people, or firm holding by one person [ ]</li> <li>○ Locking a door for containment [ ]</li> <li>○ Unlocking a door to restrict containment e.g., in a toilet cubicle [ ]</li> <li>○ Minimum contact for leading, guiding, ushering, or blocking. [ ]</li> <li>○ Control without contact (e.g., standing in front of child). [ ]</li> </ul>	
<b>Restrictive practice without physical contact</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Time away or relocation to another room with supervision and door unlocked [ ]</li> <li>○ Directed time away from peers with staff present [ ]</li> <li>○ Environmental restriction to reduce risk (e.g., removing peers or objects) [ ]</li> <li>○ Control without physical contact (e.g., staff positioning to block access or exits) [ ]</li> </ul>	
<b>Seclusion (to be used only in exceptional circumstances)</b> pupil placed alone in a room or enclosed space and prevented from leaving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Door locked or blocked Y/N</li> <li>○ Continuous supervision Y/N</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Duration of seclusion (minutes): _____</li> <li>○ Immediate risk being prevented [    ]</li> <li>○ Senior leader informed as soon as practicable Y/N</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Reason intervention was required</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ to prevent harm to self/others [    ]</li> <li>○ prevent damage to property [    ]</li> <li>○ prevent disorder [    ]</li> <li>○ Other [    ]</li> </ul>	
<b>Support provided following the incident:</b>	(Medical attention, reassurance, follow-up conversation .)
<b>Headteacher / Senior Leader review:</b>	
<b>Log incident on CPOMS/Arbor</b>	
<p><b>Date of notification to parent/carer</b></p> <p><b>How were parents notified?</b> (Verbal, written, email)</p> <p><b>Follow-up meeting arranged:</b> Date / time if applicable</p>	
<b>Name and role of reporting staff member:</b>	
<b>Signature:</b>	