

# Oldfield Primary School

## Restrictive Interventions, Including the Use of Reasonable Force Policy

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### 1. Introduction

Oldfield Primary School is committed to creating a safe, caring and orderly environment where all pupils and staff are protected and where pupils can learn effectively.

We recognise that the vast majority of pupil behaviour will be managed through positive relationships, effective curriculum design, preventative strategies and de-escalation. However, in rare circumstances, staff may need to use **restrictive interventions**, including **reasonable force**, to keep individuals safe.

This policy sets out:

- when restrictive interventions may be used,
- how they must be used safely, proportionately and lawfully,
- the school's approach to prevention and de-escalation, and
- statutory duties for recording and reporting incidents.

This policy reflects:

- the **Education and Inspections Act 2006 (sections 93 and 93A)**,
  - the **Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025**, and
  - **DfE guidance: *Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools* (April 2026)**.
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### 2. Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- safeguard pupils and staff,
  - minimise the need for restrictive interventions through proactive and preventative practice,
  - ensure any use of force is lawful, reasonable and proportionate,
  - support staff to make confident and defensible decisions,
  - ensure clear procedures for recording, reporting and reviewing incidents, and
  - promote transparency and partnership with parents and carers.
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### 3. Key Definitions

#### **Restrictive intervention**

An action that prevents, restricts or subdues a pupil's movement or behaviour. This includes both physical and non-physical actions.

#### **Reasonable force**

Physical contact used to control or restrain a pupil, applied using **no more force than necessary** and **for the shortest time possible** to manage a specific risk.

#### **Significant incident**

Any incident where physical force goes beyond everyday appropriate physical contact (e.g. guiding or comforting).

#### **Seclusion**

Keeping a pupil away from others and preventing them from leaving a space, used only as a **non-disciplinary safety measure** during extreme dysregulation.

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### 4. Who Can Use Reasonable Force

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force, including:

- teachers,
- teaching assistants,
- support staff,
- supply staff, and
- authorised volunteers.

Staff are supported to use professional judgement and will never be expected to place themselves at risk.

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### 5. Circumstances Where Reasonable Force May Be Used

Reasonable force may be used **only when necessary** to prevent a pupil from:

- harming themselves or others,
- committing a criminal offence,
- damaging property, or
- causing serious disruption or disorder.

**Force must never be used as a punishment.**

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## 6. Unacceptable and Prohibited Practices

The following are **not permitted** under any circumstances:

- force used for punishment or compliance,
  - techniques that restrict breathing or airflow,
  - pressure to the neck, head, chest or abdomen,
  - holding a pupil on the ground unless unavoidable and for the shortest possible time,
  - seclusion used as a disciplinary sanction,
  - threatening a pupil with restraint or seclusion as punishment.
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## 7. Other Appropriate Physical Contact

Oldfield Primary School does **not** operate a “no contact” policy. Appropriate physical contact may include:

- first aid,
- guiding or escorting pupils,
- comforting a distressed pupil,
- congratulatory gestures,
- practical instruction in PE or music.

All physical contact must:

- be respectful,
  - consider the pupil’s age, need and context,
  - comply with safeguarding guidance.
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## 8. Prevention and De-escalation

The school prioritises:

- positive relationships and trust,
- clear behaviour expectations,
- emotionally supportive classrooms,
- calm communication and body language,
- time and space to regulate emotions,
- reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND.

Restrictive interventions are always a **last resort**.

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## 9. Pupils with SEND

The school recognises that pupils with SEND may experience distress differently and may be disproportionately affected by restrictive interventions.

We commit to:

- understanding triggers and unmet needs,
- working in partnership with parents and professionals,
- co-producing behaviour support plans where appropriate,
- making reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010,
- reviewing plans following any significant incident.

The use of force is **never automatic** just because it is referenced in a plan.

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## 10. Seclusion

Seclusion may only be used:

- as a safety measure,
- when a pupil is at high risk of harming others,
- when the pupil is not acting with deliberate intent,
- for the shortest possible time.

During seclusion:

- the pupil must be supervised at all times,
- the space must be safe and non-threatening,
- the pupil must be allowed to leave as soon as risk reduces.

All incidents of seclusion **must be recorded and reported**.

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## 11. Recording Incidents (Statutory Duty)

All **significant incidents involving the use of force**, and all incidents involving **seclusion or restraint**, must be recorded **as soon as practicable**, ideally on the same day.

Records will include:

- pupil and staff names,

- date, time, location and duration,
- identified triggers and risks,
- de-escalation strategies attempted,
- type and degree of force used (if applicable),
- injuries or medical support provided,
- justification for the intervention,
- post-incident support.

At Oldfield Primary School, records are:

- completed by the staff involved,
  - logged on CPOMS,
  - reviewed by senior leaders and safeguarding leads.
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## 12. Reporting to Parents (Statutory Duty)

Parents/carers must be informed **as soon as practicable**, ideally the same day, following:

- any significant use of force,
- any seclusion or restraint incident.

Written communication will include:

- when and where the incident occurred,
- why intervention was necessary,
- what intervention was used,
- any injuries sustained.

### **Exceptions:**

If informing parents is likely to cause significant harm to the pupil, the incident will be reported to the local authority instead.

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## 13. Post-Incident Support and Review

Following any incident:

- pupils and staff will be supported emotionally and practically,
- medical care will be provided if needed,
- a restorative conversation will take place,
- patterns and triggers will be reviewed,
- behaviour support plans may be updated.

Witnessing pupils will also be supported where appropriate.

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## 14. Complaints and Allegations

Complaints regarding restrictive interventions follow the school's Complaints Policy.

Allegations against staff are managed in line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education**, including referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where required.

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## 15. Monitoring and Governance

The governing body:

- ensures statutory duties are met,
  - reviews data on restrictive interventions,
  - identifies patterns, training needs and disproportionate impact,
  - supports continuous improvement.
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## 16. Training

Staff likely to need physical intervention are prioritised for training.

Oldfield Primary School aims to train at least **two staff members annually**, with refreshers as appropriate.

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## 17. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
  - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
  - SEND Policy
  - Health and Safety Policy
  - Complaints Policy
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