

St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Bognor Regis



Restrictive Intervention and Positive Handling Policy

Date Reviewed: June 2026
Date for next review: June 2027

1. Statement of Intent

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils. We aim to create a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which all children can learn effectively. We believe that each child is a precious and unique child of God.

Restrictive intervention and positive handling will only be used as a **last resort** and within a framework of care, control and safety. The purpose of any intervention is to prevent harm and to support pupils to regain self-regulation at the earliest opportunity.

We will always prioritise prevention, de-escalation and relational approaches before considering any form of restrictive intervention.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 93)
- DfE Restrictive Intervention Guidance (effective April 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Equality Act 2010

Staff may use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

- Causing injury to themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Causing serious damage to property
- Seriously disrupting good order in the school

3. Definitions

Positive Handling: The positive, reasonable and proportionate use of force with the intention of protecting a child or others from harm.

Restrictive Intervention: Any act which restricts a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom.

Reasonable Force: The minimum force necessary, used for the shortest possible time.

Restraint: Physical contact intended to control or restrict movement.

Seclusion: Preventing a pupil from leaving a space. This must never be used as punishment and must always be supervised and recorded.

4. Core Principles

All interventions must be:

- **Necessary** – there is an immediate risk of harm
- **Proportionate** – appropriate to the level of risk
- **Reasonable** – legally defensible

- **Time-limited** – for the shortest possible duration
- **Dignified** – preserving the pupil's safety and respect

Restrictive interventions must **never** be used for:

- Punishment
- Compliance
- Convenience

5. Prevention and De-escalation

The school places a strong emphasis on preventing incidents through:

Universal Approaches

- Positive relationships and clear expectations
- Consistent routines and behaviour systems
- Early identification of needs
- Calm and predictable adult responses

Primary Practice Emphasis

- Understanding behaviour as communication
- Emotional regulation support
- Nurture and trauma-informed practice
- Sensory and communication strategies

Individual Planning

- Behaviour support plans
- Risk assessments
- SEND-informed strategies
- Close work with parents and external agencies
- De-escalation Strategies

Staff should always consider alternatives, including:

- Clear, calm instructions
- Distraction and redirection
- Withdrawal of audience
- Use of humour or empathy where appropriate
- Avoidance of confrontation

6. Authorisation and Training

- All staff have a legal power to use reasonable force
- The school ensures identified staff are trained in accredited approaches (e.g. Team Teach/Safer Handling)
- Training is regularly refreshed and recorded
- Staff are supported to make safe, professional judgements

7. When Restrictive Intervention May Be Used

Restrictive intervention should only be used where necessary to:

- Prevent injury or harm
- Prevent serious damage
- Prevent a criminal offence
- Prevent serious disruption

Examples include:

- Preventing a child from running into danger
- Intervening in a fight
- Preventing a pupil leaving site where there is risk

8. Safe Practice and Expectations

When restrictive intervention is necessary, staff must:

- Use the **minimum force necessary**
- Clearly communicate actions to the pupil
- Seek support from another adult where possible
- Continuously assess risk and stop when safe
- Use only trained and approved techniques

Staff must **not**:

- Restrict breathing or apply pressure to the neck or torso
- Use prone restraint
- Act in anger
- Use force as punishment

9. Use of Seclusion

Seclusion must:

- Only be used where absolutely necessary for safety
- Be continuously supervised
- Be recorded as a restrictive intervention

- Never be used as a sanction

10. Risk Assessment and Planning

Where a pupil is known to present risk, the school will:

- Complete a risk assessment
- Develop a behaviour support plan
- Identify triggers and de-escalation strategies
- Agree responses with parents/carers
- Brief relevant staff

11. Post-Incident Procedures

Immediate Actions

- Check for injury and provide first aid if required
- Ensure the pupil is calm and safe
- Inform a senior leader

Follow-Up

- Pupil debrief (appropriate to age and understanding)
- Staff debrief
- Review triggers and effectiveness of strategies
- Update plans and risk assessments

12. Recording

All incidents involving restrictive intervention must be:

- Recorded **on the same day**
- Factual, clear and proportionate
- Logged in the school's recording system

Records should include:

- Context and triggers
- De-escalation attempts
- Type and duration of intervention
- Outcome and any injuries

13. Reporting to Parents

Parents/carers will be:

- Informed **on the same day** (where practicable)

- Provided with a clear explanation of:
 - What happened
 - Why intervention was necessary
 - The outcome

14. Monitoring and Oversight

- Senior leaders review all incidents
- Patterns are analysed to identify trends
- Adjustments are made to support pupils and staff

Monitoring includes:

- Frequency of incidents
- Repeat occurrences
- Vulnerable groups (e.g. SEND pupils)

15. Safeguarding

All incidents are considered within safeguarding procedures. Concerns are referred in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

16. Staff Support and Wellbeing

The school will:

- Support staff following incidents
- Provide supervision and guidance
- Promote reflective and restorative practice

17. Links to Other Policies

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

18. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Appendix A: Restrictive Intervention Recording Form (2026 Statutory Requirements)

All restrictive interventions, including use of force, restraint and seclusion, must be recorded **as soon as practicable (on the same day)**.

A. Pupil Details

- Name:
- Date of Birth:
- Year Group:
- SEND Status / EHCP:
- Additional Needs / Vulnerabilities:

B. Incident Details

- Date:
- Time:
- Location:
- Duration of Incident:

C. Staff Involved

- Staff directly involved:
- Supporting staff:
- Witnesses (staff/pupils):

D. Context and Triggers (Antecedents)

- What happened immediately before the incident?
- Known triggers or patterns:
- Early warning signs observed:

E. Risk Presented

(✓ all that apply)

- Risk of harm to self
- Risk of harm to others
- Serious damage to property
- Risk of criminal behaviour
- Serious disruption to good order

F. De-escalation Attempts (MANDATORY)

- Strategies used prior to intervention:
- Duration of attempts:
- Why de-escalation was unsuccessful:

G. Type of Intervention Used

(✓ all that apply)

- Physical restraint
- Guided / escorting movement
- Blocking / interposition
- Seclusion

Details of Intervention:

- Technique used:
- Level of force (minimum necessary):
- Start time and end time:
- Names of staff applying intervention:

H. Legal Justification

(✓ all that apply)

- Prevent injury to self or others
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent a criminal offence
- Prevent serious disorder

I. Outcome of Incident

- How the incident ended:
- Pupil presentation following the incident:
- Any property damage:

J. Injuries / Medical Attention

- Pupil injuries (if any):
- Staff injuries (if any):
- First aid given (details):
- Medical follow-up required:

K. Safeguarding Considerations

- Were there any safeguarding concerns? (Y/N)
- DSL informed? (Y/N)
- Details of safeguarding action taken:

L. Post-Incident Actions

- Pupil debrief completed (Y/N) – by whom:
- Staff debrief completed (Y/N):
- Parent/carer informed (time/method/by whom):
- External agencies informed (if applicable):

M. Follow-Up Actions

- Behaviour Support Plan updated (Y/N):
- Risk Assessment updated (Y/N):

- SENCO / pastoral review arranged:
- Additional support identified:

N. Pupil Voice (Good Practice Expectation)

- Pupil's view of what happened:
- What helped / did not help:

O. Monitoring and Review

- Is this part of a pattern? (Y/N)
- Previous similar incidents:
- SLT review required (Y/N):

P. Sign-Off

- Staff completing record (name & signature):
- Date completed:
- Senior Leader review (name & signature):
- Date reviewed:

Appendix B: Good Practice Expectations

- To ensure high-quality and compliant recording, the school will:
- Use objective, factual language (no opinion or blame)
- Record incidents promptly and in full
- Include pupil voice where appropriate
- Maintain a body map for any injuries
- Analyse data termly to identify trends and reduce future need
- Ensure alignment with safeguarding recording systems (e.g. CPOMS)