



## Restrictive Intervention Policy

Author	E Cruse	Source	Existing Policy
Approved By	ELT	Status	Non-Statutory
Last Review	April 2026	Next Review	April 2027

Details of Policy Updates:

Date	Details
23.02.26	Reviewed in line with new government guidance "Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools" April 2026
26.6.25	Reviewed in line with current guidance

## Rationale

This policy sets out North Star Academy Trust's approach to the prevention, use and oversight of restrictive interventions — including reasonable force and seclusion — to safeguard pupils, staff and the wider school community while minimising reliance on restrictive practices through prevention and de-escalation.

It applies to all staff and adults working on behalf of the school on or off site, including on trips and in alternative provision, and covers all pupils on roll.

This policy has regard to restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (DfE, effective 1 April 2026). The section on recording and reporting significant incidents of force constitutes statutory guidance under s.93A Education and Inspections Act 2006, which we follow. We also comply with the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (England) Regulations 2025 (in force 1 April 2026)

## Aims

Behaviour is a means of communication and has a cause and a purpose. Behaviour that challenges may signal a need for support and it is essential to understand its underlying causes. This policy and our practise seek to recognise this and support children and young people to develop alternative ways of expressing themselves that achieve the same purpose but are more appropriate and proportionate.

## Definitions

**Restrictive intervention:** a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This guidance uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

**Reasonable force:** a term used in legislation which includes physical restrictive interventions. All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.

**Significant incident:** any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff as described in NSAT Touch Policy. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

**Seclusion:** is a non-disciplinary safety measure used only to prevent harm during acute dysregulation; it must not be threatened or used as punishment. Any space must be safe and supervised, used for the shortest possible time, and subject to dynamic risk assessment and senior oversight. Every incident of seclusion (and any non-force restraint) is recorded and reported to parents the same day.

**Restraint:** a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact.

## **Core Values**

It should always be remembered that when working with challenging behaviour, interventions of any nature should be in the best interests of the child, reasonable, proportionate and necessary.

North Star Academy uses the Team Teach system of positive behaviour management. The Trust follows the approach, guidance and ethos of Team Teach in all matters relating to the use of restraint and the use of reasonable force.

All members of staff have the legal power to use reasonable force to prevent injury, crime, serious damage to property or serious disorder, and may use reasonable force when conducting a lawful search. Force must be reasonable, necessary, proportionate and time limited and must never be used as a punishment or to secure compliance with rules. Any restrictive physical intervention should be carried out with minimum amount of force for the minimum amount of time. The following are prohibited: techniques that compromise breathing/circulation; neck holds; pressure on the abdomen; pain compliance techniques; securing a pupil to a fixed object; and routine or blanket use of restraint or seclusion. We do not operate a “no contact” policy; appropriate non restrictive physical contact is permitted where reasonable in the circumstances.

A restrictive intervention may be used if a child is:

- causing injury to themselves or others
- committing a criminal offence
- damaging property
- causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Using reasonable force and / or restraining a child who is out of control can offer a sense of security and can help the child feel you are able to control with care and concern, but this is only when the intervention is of a non-aggressive nature, however firm it must be.

Physical intervention, reasonable force and seclusion should not be used as such a regular feature of practice that it comes to be seen by children as an everyday method of control and one which they will come to demand/expect before accepting adult authority.

Children and young people who have suffered serious physical and/or sexual abuse can react powerfully to well-intentioned efforts of reasonable force or restrictive intervention, misperceiving such actions as the prelude to further assault of either type. This is not to say that control by reasonable force or restrictive intervention should be avoided entirely, rather it indicates that this must be kept in mind by the adult who must be prepared to reassure a child of intention. It also confirms that children should be involved in discussing and identifying behaviours that might require adult intervention and reasonable force or restraint. This should occur at calm times, both prior to the need for any such intervention and as part of talking through occasions of reasonable force and / or restraint.

Staff using restrictive intervention must remember:

- Any restrictive intervention Reasonable, Proportionate and Necessary
- To ensure that one person takes the lead in talking to the child during the interventions. This can avoid creating further confusion.
- After any physical intervention a visual check of the child needs to be completed to check for injuries and ensure any medical treatment that is required is actioned and this is recorded on the report.
- To ensure that any appropriate amendments are made to the child's Risk Assessment /Supporting Behaviour Plan.
- Reasonable force / restraint can only be used by a member of staff who is trained in the use of Team Teach or if physical intervention is required in an unforeseeable event.
- Restrictive intervention can only be used if a child is in danger of hurting her/himself, yourself or another person either physically or mentally, causing serious damage to property or, only in school, seriously disrupting other children.
- Restrictive intervention can only be used if other forms of intervention have been tried and preventative steps are unsuccessful. These may include talking, comforting, calming, withdrawing yourself from the situation.
- Remember reasonable force / restraint/ seclusion are defensive protective techniques. They should never be used offensively.
- Restrictive intervention should only be used until the child is calming down, no longer than necessary.
- To remain with a child following a physical intervention to avoid the child looping back into crisis.
- The event must be recorded afterwards. Any use of restrictive intervention must be recorded the same day on CPOMS.

All staff are trained to identify positional asphyxia and should ensure that practitioners monitor risk both during the restraint and afterwards. Pupils should not be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example, by covering the mouth and/or nose, or applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen. The use of force can be dangerous, particularly where it occurs on the ground. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should release their holds or re-position into a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible.

Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the child, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent “side-effect” of ensuring that the child remains safe. All incidents of injuries to a child are reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for further investigation.

### **Monitoring of Incidents**

All incidents of use of restraint, significant incidents and seclusion are logged on CPOMS, monitored by a Team Teach Trainer (who was not involved in the incident), and transferred weekly onto a whole school tracking sheet.

Records should:

- Be completed on the same day
- Be factual and objective
- Include the names of pupil and staff directly involved
- Provide any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code
- specify the time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- provide a brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and (where relevant) what type of restrictive intervention was applied, the degree of force, seclusion and details of any physical injuries sustained.
- give a brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance
- any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts
- Inform risk assessment and supporting behaviour plans.

After any physical intervention a visual check of the child needs to be completed to check for injuries and ensure any medical treatment that is required is actioned and this check, with any outcome, needs recording on the report.

If there is any concern about a child’s wellbeing, or if they express concern about their own wellbeing the child will be seen by a member of the safeguarding team. Where appropriate they will document marks, injuries etc. using a body map.

Debriefs will be used if requested by any staff member following a physical intervention, or if a member of the Leadership Team considers it likely to be supportive or lead to more effective support of the child. Unusual or particularly challenging incidents should be considered for debrief.

In all incidents of restrictive intervention, the child should be given the opportunity to go through the incident with a staff member. This needs to take place within 5 days of the incident. A key part of going through the incident with the child is about listening to and

capturing the child's experience of being held and involving them in thinking about strategies that may help them in the future.

Parents/Carers and Social Workers (if involved) will be informed of any restrictive intervention in writing as soon as practicable after the incident and endeavour to do this no later than the same day. Exceptions to the requirement to report are where: it appears to the staff member that doing so would be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil. In this instance, the staff member must report the incident to any parent(s) who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm or, if there are none, to the local authority within whose area the pupil is ordinarily resident. The report to parents should include the following details:

- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance
- brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
- details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable

Restrictive interventions are monitored weekly by the Engagement Team within the respective school and added to a tracker. This tracker is monitored fortnightly by a member of the Central Team and a report submitted to the Executive Leadership Team. Any incident of restrictive intervention is reported termly to the Local Governing Board.

Where there is an increase in the number of physical interventions for a child, a risk reduction plan will be developed and implemented.

The LADO is consulted where the use of restrictive intervention becomes a concern.

All records are archived along with current policy and guidance.

## **Training**

All staff working directly with pupils will be trained to Team Teach Level Two in positive behaviour management.

Short Team Teach refresher training will be undertaken termly, the content to be determined by review of practice.

The Engagement Team Lead in each school is an Intermediate Team Teach Trainer. There are additional Intermediate and Advanced Trainers throughout the Trust to provide training and support as required.

## **Relevant Documents**

Department for Education: Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools April 2026

Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention, June 2019

Ofsted: Positive environments where children can flourish, October 2021

Searching and Screening in Schools July 2023

### **Other relevant policies**

School Behaviour policy

North Star Academy Trust safeguarding policy

North Star Academy Trust whistleblowing policy

North Star Academy Trust staff code of conduct

North Star Academy Trust Touch Policy

### **The role of Staff**

To be familiar with this policy. To ensure that behaviour management in the school is an active process that anticipates the children's needs and meets these where possible before acting out behaviour becomes extreme.

To ensure that any measure of discipline or control is used with thought and care in the best interest of the child(ren).

To reflect on their own practice and to be a critical friend to colleagues.

To contribute to developing best practice, including being open to changing and improving their own practice on an ongoing basis.

### **The role of the Senior Leadership Team within each School**

The leadership team needs to know and understand what is happening in the school, including the way individual children are supported, how groups are contained and what interventions, sanctions, approaches and relationships are in place to support positive behaviour. This involves ensuring sufficient oversight, monitoring and accountability.

The Engagement Team Lead has delegated responsibility to monitor and lead the development of best practice in behaviour management including restrictive interventions. This is not their responsibility alone; their role is to provide internal consultation and observation alongside close-in support and guidance.

The Engagement Team Lead and the Assistant Headteacher hold oversight of the risk assessments and supporting behaviour plans for each child and directly monitor the recording of incidents.

The Engagement Team Lead monitors recording systems and maintain the systems used to ensure practice and recording is of the highest standard.

### **The role of the Executive Leadership Team**

All physical intervention trackers will be monitored fortnightly by the Team Teach Lead within the Executive Leadership Team. He/she will provide a fortnightly report to the Executive Team, this information will include the number of physical interventions in each school, any injuries that have occurred and any other causes for concern.

### **Role of the governing body**

The governing body will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the school's procedures for recording and reporting the use of restrictive interventions are complied with. Governing bodies and proprietors should regularly review and interrogate data on restrictive interventions to ensure school leaders:

- identify and implement improvements to policies and practices, particularly where approaches have been used for some time but have not been effective.
- identify areas of learning and development for school staff, supporting specific departments and teachers to improve understanding and practice.
- understand pupils' repeat patterns and triggers to interrogate the effectiveness of pupil support measures, share this information with teachers who work with those pupils to better support them and, where appropriate, their parents, to establish a behaviour support plan or revise an existing plan.
- identify any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics, have SEN, or other types of vulnerability. However, analysis should be proportionate and avoid over-interpreting small subgroups of people.