



# **Wednesbury Oak Academy**

## **Safety Intervention (Restraint) Policy**

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This Policy was approved by the Headteacher – 23/09/2026

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## Background to the Policy

(The use of restraint in schools – the legal position)

The Restrictive Interventions, Including Use of Reasonable Force In Schools document published by the DFE in April 2026 defines the following terms

- **Restrictive intervention:** a means to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of the body or part of the body, of a pupil. It is an ‘umbrella term’ used to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils.
- **Reasonable Force:** a term used in legislation which includes physical restrictive interventions. All members of staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. Reasonable means using no more force that 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 contact between pupils and staff. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.
- **Seclusion:** a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others, and preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction, blocking, or making them believe they will be punished if they try and leave.
- **Restraint:** a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement.

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. To prevent or stop a pupil from:

1. Causing injury to themselves or others
2. Committing a criminal offence
3. Damaging property
4. Causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances. The law covers staff whether at school or when he/she has lawful control elsewhere, e.g., on a field trip or visit. Action in self-defence: everyone has the right to defend himself or herself against an attack provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so. **It is illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment.**

Types of situations cited in the DCSF Guidance fitting the above:

- A pupil attacking another member of staff or another pupil;
- Pupils fighting;
- A pupil engaged or on the verge of committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property;
- A pupil causing or at risk of causing injury, to themselves or others, or damage by accident, by rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- A pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school (this only applies if a pupil could be at higher risk by not being in the classroom or school);
- A pupil persistently refusing to obey an order to leave a classroom;
- A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson or school trip/visit.
- To apply a safety intervention, hold to restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

### What is reasonable force?

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

The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force (e.g. trivial misdemeanour). The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

To determine when the use of restrictive intervention/safety holds are needed, staff will need to consider the following:

- **Is it necessary?**
  - Are there other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage the situation.
  - Consider and assess whether the restrictive intervention is likely to be successful and reduce the relevant risks, or whether it would escalate a situation further. Could it cause more harm than the behaviour itself?
- **Is it proportionate?**
  - Staff should use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce the relevant risks.
  - Staff to consider the personal circumstances of the child, such as medical conditions, SEND needs, their size and age and any other characteristics.

### Seclusion

Seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving – should only be used as a safety measure to protect the pupil themselves, or others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation.

The place a child is confined to must be safe and feel non-threatening to the child, e.g. a classroom, intervention or office space in school. The pupil will be supervised at all times during seclusion and as soon as the immediate risk of harm has been reduced, the pupil will be allowed to leave. All incidents of seclusion will be reported

### Wednesbury Oak Academy's approach prior to initiating a restrictive intervention/safety hold

Before intervening physically, a teacher should, wherever practical:

- 1) Try to use de-escalation techniques to decrease the need for applying a safety hold, making reasonable adjustments, where possible, for disabled pupils or pupils with SEND.
- 2) Tell the pupil misbehaving to stop and explain what will happen if he or she does not stop.
- 3) The teacher should continue to talk during the incident and make it clear to the pupil that the safety hold will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
- 4) A calm measured approach must be used, following where possible the principles set out in Sandwell's CPI-Safety Intervention training. Teachers should never give the

impression that they are angry or have lost their temper or are using a safety hold to punish the pupil.

Sometimes a teacher should not intervene in an incident without help, e.g. if you are at risk from injury yourself. In these circumstances the teacher may remove the other children who may be at risk and summon assistance. The teacher should inform the child that she/he has sent for help and until assistance arrives the teacher should continue to try and defuse the situation by talking to the child, trying to prevent the incident from further escalating.

#### The application of force – what might it be?

- Leading a pupil by their hand or arm;
- Physically interposing between pupils;
- Blocking a pupil's path;
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the small of their back;
- In extreme circumstances using more restrictive holds set out in CPI-Safety Intervention training. This training is updated annually for designated staff in school. Any staff member who has been received CPI-SI training will be identifiable through wearing an orange lanyard to hold their ID badge.

#### What a safety intervention should not be?

- Holding a pupil around the neck or collar;
- Slapping, punching or kicking a pupil;
- Tripping up a pupil;
- Holding or pulling a pupil by their hair or ear;
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground.

#### Specific Guidelines for Staff:

- Always try to use other strategies for de-escalation before using physical intervention.
- Where possible and practical, remove items that can pose a risk and remove other pupils before assessing if a safety hold is needed to keep the child safe.
- Follow the guidance on appropriate safety interventions taught during the Crisis Prevention Institutes -Safety Intervention training sessions (which is renewed annually to key staff. All staff on the course are observed by specialist trainers who ensure that all staff are confident to apply all holds safely).
- Always use the minimum force necessary for the circumstances – use your professional judgement.
- Call for assistance as soon as possible.
- Apply a safety hold for the minimum time necessary.
- Try to have another adult who can act as a witness to the incident.
- Do not put yourself at risk by being alone with one or two children in a situation where physical intervention may be necessary.
- Pupils should not be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation. The use of force can be dangerous, particularly where it occurs on the ground. Therefore, no holds will be used in school while pupils are on the ground. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff will release their holds or re-position into a safer alternative or standing/sitting position as soon as possible.

#### What happens after seclusion or a restrictive intervention has been used?

- The school will ensure a follow-up conversation is held to facilitate reflection, learning and support pupil and staff wellbeing.
- If appropriate pupils and staff will be assessed to identify if any medical assistance or treatment is needed (particularly for any injury sustained prior to the hold being used)
- Report the incident to the Head Teacher (or Deputy Head Teacher in the Head Teacher's absence) and complete an incident log report with the Head Teacher (see Appendix 1).
- Ensure the incident is also logged on the school safeguarding log using CPOMS. This must be reported as soon as practicable, but must be reported on the same day.
- Parents will be informed of any significant incidents that have occurred in school that have required the use of a safety intervention. They will also need to complete their section of the incident log report. The signed copy of the form will need to be uploaded onto CPOMS. Parents will receive a copy of the incident log (which they have also signed)
- During the meeting with parents to discuss the incident, the school and parents will discuss any behavioural triggers or warning signs of an impending incident, if a behaviour plan is needed or needs updating, the de-escalation strategies used and what could be done differently in future.

#### The power to search pupils without consent:

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, the Head Teacher and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable to conduct a search for prohibited items, such as knives, fireworks, stolen items, drugs, alcohol or any article that is likely to be used to commit an offence or cause personal injury or damage to property. Force cannot be used to search for items banned under school rules.

## Appendix 1:

### Record of incident requiring a safety intervention which involves a restrictive physical intervention.



|                                                                |                                                     |                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Pupil Name:</b>                                             | <b>Date of Birth:</b>                               | <b>School Year:</b> |
| <b>SEND status/medical needs:</b>                              | <b>Date of incident:</b><br><b>Time of incident</b> |                     |
| <b>Person recording incident:</b>                              |                                                     |                     |
| <b>Witnesses:</b>                                              |                                                     |                     |
| <b>Location of incident:</b>                                   |                                                     |                     |
| <b>Staff involved:</b>                                         |                                                     |                     |
| <b>Potential triggers/What was happening before the event?</b> |                                                     |                     |

#### De-escalation technique used:

|                   |                          |                   |                          |              |                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Setting limits:   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Give space:       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reassurance: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Redirection:      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Distraction:      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Time Out:    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Planned Ignoring: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Emotion coaching: | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other:       | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other:

**Reason for intervention:**

**Immediate/potential danger to child:**

☐

**Immediate/potential danger to others:**

☐

**Serious damage to property:**

☐

**Other:**



**Brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in the instance:**

**Seclusion Used?**

**Yes:**

☐

**No:**

☐

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervised by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Restrictive Intervention Techniques used:**

**CPI Children's control position**

☐

**CPI Low Level seated hold**

☐

**CPI Medium level seated hold**

☐

**CPI Low level standing hold**

☐

**CPI medium level standing hold**

☐

**Post-incident support**

**Duration of intervention:**

**Yes:**

☐

**No:**

☐

**Injuries to pupil:**

**If yes give details:**

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**Injuries to staff:**

**Yes:**

☐

**No:**

☐

**If yes give details:**



**Accident form completed:**

**Yes:**

☐

**No:**

☐

**IBP/Interventions Reviewed:**

**Yes:**

☐

**No:**

☐

**If yes give details:**

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**Staff debrief completed:**

**Yes:**

☐

**No:**

☐

**Completed with:**

---

**Pupil debrief completed:**

**Yes:**

☐

**No:**

☐

**Completed with:**

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**School staff signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent debrief completed:**

**Yes:**

☐

**No:**

☐

**Completed with:**

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**Parent signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Next steps:**

**Headteacher Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

