



THE CONSORTIUM
ACADEMY TRUST

Shaping Positive Futures

Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy

Status:	Live
Policy Owner (position)	Trust DSL
Statutory / Recommended	Recommended
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Advisory Committee	Trust Board
Linked Documents and Policies	This policy is informed by and aligned with: Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools: DfE guidance (April 2026) Education and Inspections Act 2006 (sections 93 and 93A) Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No.2) (England) Regulations 2025 Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Equality Act 2010 Human Rights Act 1998 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies/documents: Behaviour Policy Safeguarding Report to Governors Records Policy / Data Protection (GDPR) Searching Screening and Confiscation Policy Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Complaints Policy

**NB – This document can only be considered valid when viewed on The Consortium Academy Trust website. If the copy is printed or downloaded and saved elsewhere the Policy date should be cross referenced to ensure the current document is referenced*

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POLICY STATEMENT

1. Why the Policy is needed

This policy provides a clear and consistent framework for the safe, lawful and proportionate use of restrictive physical interventions across the Trust. It ensures that practice is aligned with statutory duties, while prioritising prevention, de-escalation and safeguarding. The policy supports staff to act confidently and appropriately in high-risk situations, promotes transparency in recording and parental communication, and enables effective leadership and governance oversight.

2. What the Policy is about

This policy sets out how and when staff across the Trust may use restrictive physical intervention, including reasonable force, to keep learners and others safe. It explains the legal framework, the circumstances in which physical intervention may be used, and the expectations for prevention, de-escalation, recording, reporting and parental communication. The policy also outlines how learners and staff will be supported following an incident and how leaders and governors monitor practice to ensure safeguarding, consistency and compliance with statutory guidance.

3. What the Policy will achieve

This policy will ensure that restrictive physical intervention is used safely, lawfully and consistently across the Trust, and only when necessary to prevent harm. It will reduce the likelihood of inappropriate or unsafe practice by emphasising prevention and de-escalation, while giving staff the confidence to act decisively when safety is at risk. The policy will strengthen safeguarding by setting clear expectations for recording, reporting and parental communication, ensure staff and pupil wellbeing is prioritised following incidents, and provide leaders and governors with clear oversight and assurance that statutory duties are being met.

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out the Trust's approach to the use of restrictive physical interventions, including reasonable force, across all schools within the Trust. It is designed to ensure that any physical intervention is used lawfully, safely, proportionately and as a last resort, with the welfare, dignity and rights of learners and staff at its core. The policy applies to all Trust employees, volunteers and any other adults authorised to work with learners.

2. Principles

The Trust is committed to the following principles:

- The use of restrictive physical intervention is always a last resort.
- Prevention, early intervention and de-escalation are prioritised at all times.
- Any intervention must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary in the circumstances.
- Staff do not have to intervene.
- The least restrictive intervention is used for the shortest possible time.
- Learners' dignity, safety and wellbeing are paramount.
- Staff are supported before, during and after incidents.
- All incidents are recorded, reported and reviewed to inform learning and improvement.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Restrictive intervention refers to any action that prevents, restricts or subdues a learner's movement.

Reasonable force refers to physical intervention used to prevent injury, serious damage to property, the commission of an offence or serious disorder.

Seclusion refers to a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a learner confined to a place away from others and preventing from leaving and should only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioral dysregulation. For example, the use of a sensory room/ de-regulation room, if staff intentionally prevent the learner from leaving. In the in such circumstance, the learner is not acting with intent so seclusion should not be implemented by staff through threat of punishment

Seclusion, as defined in the guidance, is not a disciplinary response to deliberate or willful misbehaviour. There are disciplinary measures that are similar, such as removal from the classroom or sitting in an area supervised by Senior Leaders.

4. Prevention and De-escalation

The Trust expects schools to minimise the need for restrictive interventions through:

- Positive behaviour cultures and clear expectations
- Strong staff-learner relationships
- Trauma-informed and relational approaches
- Effective classroom management and environmental adjustments
- Individual risk assessments and behaviour support plans where required
- Staff training in communication, regulation and de-escalation strategies

Where a learner has SEND or other vulnerabilities, reasonable adjustments must be made and proactive strategies put in place to reduce escalation.

5. When Restrictive Physical Intervention May Be Used

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. Restrictive physical intervention may only be used to:

- Prevent a learner from causing harm to themselves or others
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent the commission of a criminal offence
- Prevent serious disorder

It must never be used as a punishment or to enforce compliance. Any intervention must stop immediately the risk has reduced to safe levels.

6. Unacceptable Practice

The following are not permitted:

- Any use of force as a disciplinary sanction
- Techniques that restrict breathing, impact the airway, neck or abdomen
- Prolonged restraint or holding a learner on the ground
- Pain-inducing techniques
- Seclusion used as punishment or without continuous supervision

7. Learners with SEND and Additional Needs

The Trust recognises that learners with SEND may be disproportionately affected by restrictive interventions.

Schools must:

- Understand individual triggers and needs
- Co-produce behaviour support plans with learners and parents where appropriate
- Ensure staff working with learners are appropriately trained
- Review plans following any significant incident

8. Risk Assessments (Appendix A)

Risk assessments are necessary for learners who regularly exhibit challenging behaviour. Responsible staff should anticipate potential risks and involve parents in developing the risk assessment. When assessing a learner's behaviour, staff and parents should consider factors such as health and safety risks, availability of information for the assessment, the need for a written plan, and additional steps to prevent dangerous behaviour from recurring.

Individual risk assessments may be required for learners who are more likely to require restrictive physical interventions due to their special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). These plans should align with the learner's EHCP and be properly documented in the school records. The risk assessment must be completed by appropriate staff, who have completed the relevant risk assessment training.

9. Recording, Reporting and Communication with Parents

All significant incidents involving the use of restrictive physical intervention or seclusion must be managed with clear, timely and transparent recording and communication procedures, in line with statutory guidance and Trust expectations.

Recording on CPOMS

- All incidents must be recorded on CPOMS as soon as practicable after the event and ideally on the same day.
- The record should be completed by the appropriate member of staff involved or overseeing the incident, in line with school procedures.
- Records must be factual, professional and include the details required by statutory guidance, including the rationale for the intervention, time, duration, staff and learners, identify SEN status if applicable, involved, any injuries, and post-incident support provided.

Informing Parents and Carers

- Parents/carers must be informed of the incident as soon as practicable, and no later than the same day wherever possible.
- This communication must be made via a phone call home.
- The phone call must be completed by a school leader or an appropriately nominated member of staff.
- Under no circumstances should the phone call be made by the member of staff who carried out the restraint or restrictive physical intervention.

Written follow-up communication will be provided either through email or through the MIS system, and parents should be offered the opportunity for a further discussion to support transparency, understanding and ongoing planning.

10. Safeguarding and Allegations

Any concerns, injuries or allegations arising from an incident must be managed in line with the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE. Where required, incidents will be referred to the appropriate external agencies.

11. Post-Incident Support and Review

Following any restrictive physical intervention:

- Learners will be supported to recover emotionally and physically
- Staff and learners will be offered a restorative conversation, facilitated where possible by an independent adult
- Incidents will be reviewed to identify learning and preventative actions

12. Staff Wellbeing and Support

The Trust recognises that involvement in restrictive physical intervention can be physically and emotionally demanding for staff. Staff wellbeing is a priority and integral to safe practice. Following an incident, staff will be offered:

- Immediate check-in and reassurance from a senior leader
- Access to a period of time to regroup, recover and regulate before returning to duties, where required and operationally possible
- A supportive, non-judgemental debrief focused on reflection and learning, not blame

Staff have ongoing access to wellbeing support, including:

- The Trust's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), accessible confidentially via the Wisdom app, offering counselling, advice and wellbeing resources
- Designated Mental Health First Aiders within each school, trained to provide initial support and signposting
- Additional occupational health or wellbeing support where appropriate

Leaders are responsible for ensuring staff are not expected to continue working when they are distressed, injured or emotionally impacted following an incident, and that a culture of openness, care and professional trust is maintained.

13. Training

The Trust will ensure that:

- Staff who may be required to use restrictive interventions receive appropriate training every two years
- Leaders understand their responsibilities in supporting staff and monitoring practice

14. Other Physical Contact with learners

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with learners which does not give rise to any question of the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions. This will depend on the circumstance, but examples of occasions when physical contact is generally appropriate include:

- To give first aid
- To guide our learners, such as holding the hand of a pupil at the front or back of the line when going to assembly, when walking together around the school or on a school trip, or when helping a pupil to space they have chosen to access to self-regulate to comfort a distressed pupil
- To congratulate or praise the pupil for example a pat on the back or a handshake
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during a PE lesson or sports coaching

In assessing whether physical contact is appropriate in a given situation, the member of staff should use their judgment and have regard to:

- The organisation's child protection policy
- The applicable circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present
- The individual learners age

Any other material factors including but not limited to whether:

- The learner has SEND or other vulnerabilities
- Any alternative strategies that do not include physical contact can be used

15. Monitoring and Review

Trust schools will monitor the use of restrictive physical interventions through regular data analysis, safeguarding oversight and reporting to their Local Governing Body. This includes scrutiny of CPOMS records and parent communication.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation or statutory guidance.

16. Complaints

Complaints from parents will follow our Complaints Policy. Complaints from staff will follow the Grievance Policy.



APPENDIX A – RISK ASSESSMENT

How to use this from:

1. Identify potential hazards and risks. For example, absconding, violence, self-harm.
2. Identify those affected – e.g. learner, other learners, staff members.
3. State the measures that have been taken to reduce the risk.

Assessment conducted by:	Job title:	Learner Name:
Date of assessment:	Review interval:	Date of next review:
Background Information on the learner:		

Hazard Identified	People Affected	Measures to Control Risk
Additional Information:		
Additional Information:		
Additional Information:		