

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
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RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION POLICY Updated April 2026

We are the children of Holy Cross,
Caring and sharing is what we do,
Trying our best and working hard,
Praying and playing with God in our Hearts.

Mission Statement

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School is a Catholic school. We seek to provide a broad, balanced Christian education which aims to help each child develop their full potential.

We are a worshipping community which recognises the uniqueness of the individual and aims to promote the Gospel values of love and respect for God and one another. We open ourselves to others and respect their ways of thinking and living.

The school encourages effective communication and good relationships with home, parish and wider community.

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, there is a commitment to developing and maintaining a Christian ethos, which ensures that all pupils attain their highest level of achievement. The school will seek to serve its local community and will endeavour to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-ethnic society. The ethos reflects the Christian belief that every human being is made in God's image and their true worth and value stems from this understanding. Jesus' ministry was to all the people of his time irrespective of wealth, status, gender, age, ethnic background, family ancestry or education and he taught that all were included in the love of God.

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we are guided by our Christian mission to nurture each child as a unique individual created in the image of God. Our approach to behaviour, safety, and wellbeing is rooted in dignity, respect, compassion, and the belief that every child is worthy of love, care, and understanding. Positive Handling is only used when absolutely necessary to keep pupils and staff safe. Our aim is always to teach, guide, and support children using positive relationships, emotional regulation, and restorative practice.

Relevant Legislation

Legal Framework

This policy aligns with:

- DfE *Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools* (April 2026)
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Education & Inspections Act 2006
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)

The principal legislation to which this guidance relates are:

- the Education and Inspections Act 2006, especially sections 93 and 93A
- the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025
- the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated regulations
- the Human Rights Act 1998
- the Equality Act 2010

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Key Principle:

Restrictive intervention should be used only when absolutely necessary, as a last resort, and in proportion to the risk of harm.

Staff may use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

- 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.

Determining when use of restrictive interventions is appropriate

To make an assessment for the use of restrictive intervention, staff should consider:

Is it necessary?

- Staff should consider whether there are other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage a situation.
- Staff should assess whether a restrictive intervention is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself.
- Where possible, staff should communicate with other staff members to understand any broader risks in the environment.

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.
- If the intervention itself is escalating the situation, staff should reconsider their approach and attempt an alternative strategy.
- Staff should consider the personal circumstances of the pupil such as medical conditions, special educational needs or other vulnerabilities, their characteristics such as age and size, and must consider relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.¹⁴

Have you considered the pupil's welfare?

- Staff should consider the impact on the pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. For example, pupils who have experienced an adverse life event, with diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, past trauma or neglect, communication difficulties, or other needs, may find the use of restrictive interventions particularly distressing.
- Staff should seek to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity. This may include, where possible, considering the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers.
- Where possible, staff should clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why, and explain what the pupil needs to do.
- For pupils with difficulties with speech, language and communication, or with English as an additional language, verbal and/or non-verbal strategies should be used to ensure the pupil understands what is happening and has adequate time to process information and respond.

Unacceptable uses of restrictive intervention

It is illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment.

Recording & reporting duties

Recording the use of force

1. Recorded clearly and promptly (see template attached)

2. Reported to parents, in writing, and including the following information:
 - Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
 - Brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instances
 - Brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
 - Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable.
 - Report to parent applies even if the use of restrictive interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan.
3. Reviewed by senior leaders to ensure safety, proportionality and learning

Staff may need to act immediately and without a plan in unforeseen circumstances.

- Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.

General Aims

Holy Cross aims to:

- Protect every member of the school community from harm
- Use restrictive intervention only when necessary and never as a behaviour management tool
- Prioritise de-escalation techniques and trauma-informed approaches
- Ensure staff are trained and confident in safe practice
- Ensure interventions are respectful, safe and proportionate
- Maintain accurate records and communicate with parents openly
- Review incidents so learning informs future practice

Restrictive intervention forms part of our wider approach to behaviour, wellbeing and pastoral care.

Risk Assessment

Environmental Risk

The school completes regular risk analyses of the site to identify and minimise environmental triggers (e.g., narrow corridors, bottlenecks, high-stimulation areas).

Individual Risk Assessments

Where a pupil is identified as being at risk of needing restrictive intervention, an Individual Positive Handling Plan will be considered, including:

- Known triggers
- Early warning signs
- Preferred de-escalation strategies
- Safe holds (if applicable)
- Medical or SEND considerations
- Parent/carers involvement
- Staff training implications

This is reviewed regularly and forms part of the child's My Plan/EHCP where relevant.

Recording and Reporting

Every incident of restrictive intervention must be recorded on the same day where possible in the bound and numbered book, as well as CPOMS.

Records must include:

- Date, time and location
- Names of staff and pupils involved
- Antecedents and triggers
- De-escalation strategies attempted
- Type of hold used
- Duration
- Outcome and any injuries
- Pupil voice (how they felt, what they recall)

Parents must always be notified and this communication must be logged.
Senior Leaders will review all incidents and support staff with reflective practice.

Complaints

The school recognises that restraint incidents can be distressing for pupils, staff and families.

Open communication, transparent processes and detailed records help prevent misunderstandings.

All complaints will be taken seriously and may be investigated under:

- School Concerns & Complaints Procedure
- Staff Discipline Procedures
- Local safeguarding procedures
-

Staff have the right to report assaults against them to the police.

Looked After Children and Vulnerable Pupils

The school recognises that Looked After Children, children with SEND, and pupils with trauma histories may have additional vulnerabilities.

Staff will use trauma-informed approaches and ensure that:

- Individual needs are understood
- Interventions are adapted
- Behaviour Support Plans consider attachment and emotional regulation

Confidentiality, dignity and respect are paramount.

Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

The school recognises that some children and young people with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to

themselves and others. Triggers may include pain, sensory overload, unfamiliar situations or environments or feelings of fear and anxiety. In particular, pupils who are non-verbal or find verbal communication challenging may express their needs, discomfort or confusion through actions. This can lead to pupils with SEND being disproportionately subject to the use of restrictive interventions.

The school will seek to understand the underlying triggers of challenging behaviour so that they can provide proactive support, create an inclusive environment and consider the impact of school policies on pupils with SEND.

Whenever possible, the school will utilise staff who know individual pupils well to help identify and manage risk such as trigger points when challenging behaviour is more likely to occur, and develop proactive strategies to reduce the likelihood of restrictive interventions being used – see examples of strategies at Appendix III.

Safe Practice — Do and Don't List

(Updated to reflect modern Team-Teach principles)

DO:

- Stay calm and use low arousal strategies
- Keep verbal communication going
- Use gradual, least-restrictive interventions
- Be aware of medical or SEND needs
- Seek help early
- Ensure the environment is safe

DON'T:

- Use techniques that cause pain
- Hold around the neck, joints or face
- Restrict breathing
- Use force as punishment
- Intervene alone in high-risk situations
- Escalate through raised voice or confrontation

APPENDIX I

Types of Acceptable Restrictive Intervention

Restrictive interventions may include:

- Blocking a pupil from a dangerous action
- Interposing between pupils
- Guiding or escorting
- Shepherding with an open hand
- Restrictive holds (only if trained and only when necessary)

All must be consistent with training and risk assessments, if applicable.

APPENDIX II

Terminology

For clarity, this guidance will use the following 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.

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. For example, holding a pupil's arms to their sides or removing a pupil's crutches would both be considered forms of restraint.

Seclusion

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 others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. In such circumstances, the pupil is not acting with intent. Seclusion should not be implemented by staff through threat of punishment.

APPENDIX III

Procedures

Action Steps During an Incident

If safe to do so, move pupil to the SARI Room (Sensory And Restrictive Intervention Room)

Staff will:

1. Use de-escalation strategies first
2. Clearly instruct the pupil to stop unsafe behaviour
3. Inform the pupil of the consequences if the behaviour continues
4. Call for additional adult support where required
5. Use restrictive intervention only if essential to prevent immediate risk of harm
6. Use least restrictive intervention
7. Communicate calmly and reassure the pupil throughout
8. Release the hold as soon as it is safe to do so

Follow-up actions may include first aid, emotional regulation support, reflection or restorative conversations.

APPENDIX IV

Examples of strategies may include:

- removing stimuli that may be causing distress
- changing body language, facial expression, and/or tone of voice
- supporting the pupil to express their emotions before getting overwhelmed
- engaging the pupil in an activity which can help them manage their feelings of anxiety
- distracting the pupil in something that interests them or by introducing familiar objects and activities to redirect their attention

APPENDIX V

How to record a restrictive intervention – staff guide

Use this guide to support you with recording and writing a report if you've used a restrictive intervention on a pupil such as force, seclusion or restraint.

What you need to do

- Complete the **restrictive intervention report form** on CPOMS as soon as possible, **no later than the same day**
- Share it with the Safeguarding Team
- Make sure this report is shared with the pupil's parents, **no later than the same day** with the Safeguarding Team
- Make sure a copy of the completed report is saved and logged in the appropriate place (CPOMS and the Bound & Numbered book) as set out in our policy

We're here to help

Ask for support if you need it from the DSL, SENDCo or Phase Lead

How many reports?

- You should complete **1 report per pupil, per incident**
 - If restrictive interventions were used on more than 1 pupil, you should complete a separate report form for each pupil
 - If more than 1 intervention was used during the same incident (e.g. force and seclusion) you don't need to complete separate reports for each intervention: you should cover everything in 1 report
 - If more than 1 member of staff was involved, each member of staff should complete a report
-

What to include

If you complete all the necessary boxes in the restrictive intervention form, you've covered everything you need to include

If there's anything you're not sure about or don't know how to complete, talk to the Safeguarding Team.

How to write an account of the incident

This should be a **brief account** of:

What happened

Why you assessed that it was necessary to use the intervention you used

Your account should be:

Honest: write what you remember, exactly as you remember it

Factual: describe what happened, in plain language

Neutral: try to avoid blame, judgement or emotive language

Clear and specific: use clear actions (e.g. *punched, pushed, held, guided*)

You should include:

What led up to the incident (e.g. anything relevant that happened beforehand)

Any potential or identified triggers (if known)

Any preventative or de-escalation strategies you, or any other members of staff used (e.g. what you said/did to de-escalate the situation or prevent harm)

You should also include **why you assessed that the intervention was necessary**. In most cases this might include:

The immediate risk of harm to the pupil themselves and/or others (e.g. the pupil was dysregulated and had already hurt another pupil)

What you tried first, to de-escalate the situation (e.g. verbal instructions, sanctions or giving space)

Why you judged that the intervention you used was:

- **Necessary** (e.g. the situation was escalating or not resolving)
- **Proportionate** (e.g. it was the least restrictive option available to you, used for the shortest time required, and you stopped once the risk of harm reduced)

You can find **an example** of an incident account, including an explanation of why it was assessed as necessary, in the **restrictive intervention report form**.

Further support and sources

We understand that incidents involving restrictive interventions can often be distressing and have an impact on all involved. We aim to always have a follow-up conversation with all staff involved in these incidents, to reflect on what happened and see how you're doing

We're here to support you. If you're feeling upset, worried or unsure about anything, please come and talk to the Safeguarding Team.

This guide is based on recording and reporting requirements set out in the DfE's guidance for the [Use of reasonable force in schools](#) (effective from 1 April 2026)

Restrictive intervention report

A copy of this form will be available for completion on CPOMS. Use this form as a guide to record the details of restrictive intervention incidents and make sure you're meeting the statutory requirements.

This form should be filled in by a member of staff who used a restrictive intervention on a pupil (force, seclusion, restraint, or a combination of any of these).

You should record the incident by filling out this form as soon as possible after the event, **no later than the same day**.

Staff: please read the accompanying staff guide to support you with completing this form. Don't hesitate to ask for support if you need it, from the Safeguarding Team.

Staff, pupil and incident details

STAFF DETAILS	
Name of the member of staff who used a restrictive intervention, and who is writing this report	
Role of the member of staff who used a restrictive intervention, and who is writing this report	E.g. teacher
Names and roles of any other staff involved	E.g. Sarah Matthews (assistant headteacher) was present

PUPIL DETAILS	
Name of pupil who a restrictive intervention was used on	
Names of any other pupils directly involved	
Any needs or circumstances of the pupil, e.g. if the pupil has SEND	E.g. pupil has moderate learning difficulties
The pupil's SEN code, if they have SEN (ask your SENCO if you're not sure)	E.g. E – EHCP

INCIDENT DETAILS	
Date of incident	
Time of incident	

INCIDENT DETAILS	
Location of incident	E.g. secluded in headteacher's office, force used in classroom
Approximate duration of the intervention	E.g. 5 minutes
Restrictive intervention(s) used	E.g. reasonable force, seclusion or restraint
If reasonable force was used: • What type of reasonable force was applied • The degree of force	E.g. lifted the pupil in a 'cradle hold', holding them firmly so they wouldn't kick or hit themselves or myself
Were there any physical injuries to pupil and/or staff member(s)?	YES/NO (If yes, make sure any injuries are also recorded as set out in your school's health and safety policy and reported to the Health and Safety Executive where required)
Details of any physical injuries (if applicable)	E.g. red mark on wrist, scratch on left cheek
Any support provided after the incident, including any medical treatment for injuries to pupil and/or staff member(s)?	E.g. pupil seen by first aider, ice pack applied

Incident account

This should be a **brief account** of:

- **What** happened
- **Why** you assessed that it was necessary to use the intervention you used

You should include:

- What led up to the incident
- Any potential or identified triggers
- Any preventative or de-escalation strategies you used

You can find more support on how to write an incident report on page 2 of the accompanying staff guide.

WHAT HAPPENED

Example report:

At lunchtime, I was on duty in the canteen. At one point, I started to hear some loud shouting. I then saw Nathaniel punch Jake in the stomach quite hard. Nathaniel's friends, Jeremiah Santos and Nancy Jacobs, then started to hold him back to stop him, but he pushed them away. Jake then tried to retaliate and punch Nathaniel, but he missed and Nathaniel pushed him to the floor.

At this point, Mr Lewis had already shouted 3 times for Nathaniel and Jake to stop, but they were ignoring him and kept fighting. Mr Lewis then approached Nathaniel and held him forcefully by the shoulders and pulled him off Jake. Mr Lewis then guided Nathaniel away by the arm and took him out into the corridor.

Mr Lewis used reasonable force for around 4 minutes when he held Nathaniel to take him away from Jake and when he guided him away from the incident. I helped Jake up from the floor by the hand and guided him by the arm into the playground, using reasonable force for around 3 minutes. I gave Jake a few minutes to calm down and then we went to the school office to find a first aider. Jake was given an ice pack for his back.

WHY I ASSESSED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO USE THE INTERVENTION I USED (IF NOT COVERED ABOVE)

Example:

I assessed that it was necessary to use the intervention because there was a risk of physical harm to pupils. Both pupils were highly dysregulated and were ignoring repeated verbal instructions to stop. I also felt the situation could quickly escalate and increase the risk of physical harm.

There was a clear risk of injury to Jake, Nathaniel, and other pupils nearby, and the situation was not resolving without restrictive intervention. The reasonable force used was necessary to separate the pupils, stop the fighting, and move them to a safer location so the incident could be brought under control.

I also feel that the force used was proportionate to the situation: it was only used while the pupils were dysregulated and there was an immediate risk of harm. Once the pupil had calmed down, I immediately stopped the use of force.

I confirm that the information above is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX VI

To be provided on letterheaded paper or sent via email.

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to inform you of an incident involving your child that occurred at school, and in line with our safeguarding, restrictive intervention and behaviour policies, we are providing a written account of the event.

Date	
Time	
Location	
Approximate duration	
Reason for Intervention	
Type and degree of force used (delete those not applicable) See over for explanatory notes)	1. Reasonable Force 2. Restraint 3. Seclusion
Injuries (if any)	

The use of restrictive intervention is always the best option available at the time to prevent harm, and staff aim to use de-escalation strategies wherever possible.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this incident with you and to work together to support your child. This follow-up conversation could include:

- Any behavioural triggers or warning signs observed
- Whether agreed behaviour support plans were followed
- De-escalation strategies used and their effectiveness
- Steps that may help prevent similar incidents in the future

If you would like to arrange a meeting or phone call, please contact the school office or reply to this email with your availability.

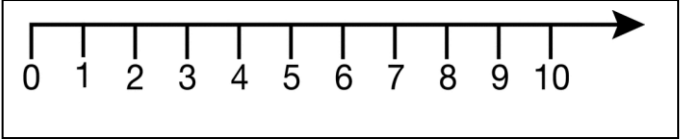
Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Xxxxxxx

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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. ⁴ Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.
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. For example, holding a pupil's arms to their sides or removing a pupil's crutches would both be considered forms of restraint.
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 to leave.

Restrictive Intervention Debrief



Name of child / children:

D.O.B

Date completed:

Experience

Action

Reflection

Analysis

