



Newburgh
Primary School

Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable Force Policy

1. Introduction

This policy outlines Newburgh Primary School's approach to restrictive interventions and the use of reasonable force. It is designed to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils and staff while maintaining a positive and supportive learning environment.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our “Good Relationships and Behaviour policy” that outlines our approach to whole school behavior which ensures all pupils can achieve and thrive. Our ethos is based around inclusive and compassionate principles where clear boundaries, predictable routines, expectations and regulated responses to behavior support a calm learning environment and happy children.

This policy is written in accordance with relevant UK legislation, including the Education Act 1996, section 93A Education and Inspections act 2006, the Children Act 1989, and guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) April 2026, Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, Health and Safety at Work 1074.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide clear guidance to staff on the use of restrictive interventions and reasonable force.
- To proactively minimise the need to use restrictive interventions through early support, preventions and de-escalation strategies.
- Ensure that any intervention is proportionate, necessary, and the least intrusive option available.
- Protect the safety and well-being of pupils and staff.
- Promote a consistent and ethical approach to behaviour management.
- Outline procedures for recording, reporting, and reviewing incidents involving restrictive interventions or reasonable force.
- Comply with all relevant legal and statutory requirements.

3. Definitions (DFE guidance April 2026)

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 ‘Other physical contact with pupils’ within this

policy. 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, or blocking.

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.

4. Who can use reasonable force?

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances.

To prevent or stop a pupil from:

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

5. Principles

Newburgh Primary School is committed to the following principles:

- **Prioritising Prevention:** Proactive strategies, positive behaviour management techniques, and early intervention are the primary approaches to managing challenging behaviour.
- **Necessary:** 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 behavior itself.
- **Proportionality:** The level of intervention must be proportionate to the risk presented by the pupil's behaviour. Any intervention must be the least restrictive option necessary to address the immediate risk and for the least amount of time.
- **Safety and welfare:** The safety and well-being of the pupil and staff are paramount. Staff will consider the impact on each individual pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. For example, pupils who have experienced adverse life events, 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 will, if possible, clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why and explain what the pupil needs to do.
- **Dignity and Respect:** Pupils must be treated with dignity and respect at all times. This might include considering the location and environment where any intervention is used.
- **Transparency:** Incidents involving restrictive interventions or reasonable force must be recorded and reported accurately and transparently.
- **Accountability:** The school is accountable for the use of restrictive interventions and reasonable force.

6. Other Physical contact with pupils

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with pupils which does not give rise to any question over 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 or escort pupils, such as holding the hand of a pupil at the front/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 a space they have chosen to access to self-regulate
- to comfort a distressed pupil
- to congratulate or praise a 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 PE lessons or sports coaching

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Headteacher:**
 - Overall responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy.
 - Ensuring that staff receive appropriate training.
 - Monitoring incidents involving restrictive interventions and reasonable force.
 - Reporting serious incidents to relevant authorities, as required.
- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):**
 - Supporting the Headteacher in the implementation of this policy.
 - Providing guidance and support to staff.
 - Ensuring that incidents are investigated thoroughly.
- **All Staff:**
 - Understanding and adhering to this policy.
 - Using proactive strategies to manage behaviour.
 - Using restrictive interventions and reasonable force only when necessary and in accordance with this policy.
 - Recording and reporting incidents accurately and promptly.
- **SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator):**
 - Providing advice and support to staff on managing the behaviour of pupils with SEND and meeting the legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to support pupils with reasonable adjustments.
 - Ensuring that individual support plans (ISPs) and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are followed.
 - Developing and reviewing Behaviour support plans in conjunction with families. This may outline any adjustments, such as aspects of the school environment or different ways for the pupil to communicate their need. Where it is identified on the behavior plan that it is appropriate for staff to have increased physical contact with a pupil, this will be discussed with relevant other professionals and a risk assessment will be in place. This behavior plan will be reviewed periodically and

following any significant incident to develop and evolve in light of what has and has not worked.

- **Parents/Carers:**
 - Working in partnership with the school to support their child's behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff should co-produce necessary behavior support plans with families.
 - Being informed of incidents involving restrictive interventions or reasonable force.
- **Governing Body:**
 - Monitoring the implementation of this policy.
 - Ensuring that the school complies with all relevant legal and statutory requirements.

8. Implementation

8.1. Training:

- All staff who are likely to use reasonable will receive training on:
 - Positive behaviour management strategies.
 - De-escalation techniques.
 - This Restrictive Intervention and Reasonable Force Policy.
 - The legal framework surrounding the use of force in schools.
 - Specific needs of pupils with SEND.
- Refresher training will be provided regularly.
- Training records will be maintained.

8.2. Prevention and De-escalation:

- At Newburgh we implement a whole-school approach to promoting positive behaviour which is set out in our Good Relationships and Behaviour policy.
- Staff will use a range of proactive strategies to prevent challenging behaviour, including:
 - Establishing clear expectations and routines.
 - Providing positive reinforcement and praise.
 - Building positive relationships with pupils.
 - Differentiating instruction to meet individual needs.
 - Creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment.
- When faced with challenging behaviour, staff will use de-escalation techniques, such as:
 - Remaining calm and speaking in a clear, non-threatening tone.
 - Giving the pupil space.
 - Offering choices and compromises.
 - Distracting the pupil.
 - Seeking assistance from colleagues.

8.3. Use of reasonable force to search pupils.

Head teachers and staff with authority have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item.

A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for legally prohibited items, but not to search for items banned under the school rules only.

Staff should refer to the [Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools](#) guidance document for detailed advice on searching a pupil.

8.4 Use of Restrictive Interventions and Reasonable Force:

- Restrictive interventions and reasonable force will only be used as a last resort, when all other strategies have failed.
- The minimum force necessary will be used to address the immediate risk.
- The intervention will be discontinued as soon as the risk has subsided.
- Staff will avoid using techniques that could cause pain or injury.
- The following factors will be considered before using restrictive interventions or reasonable force:
 - The pupil's age, size, and physical and emotional state.
 - The pupil's history of behaviour.
 - The potential impact of the intervention on the pupil's physical and psychological well-being.
 - The presence of any medical conditions or disabilities.

8.5. Seclusion

Seclusion is 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.

The place to which the pupil is confined should be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil. The pupil should be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion. We use our blue calming room and Den area to support pupils during a seclusion.

As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil would be allowed to leave.

An incident involving the use of seclusion must be recorded and reported on CPOMS in accordance with the procedures outlined in the section on 'Recording and reporting duties'.

8.6 Pupils and staff support

Following the use of a restrictive intervention, we would evaluate the use of this intervention, to understand why it was used, the impact on the pupils and staff, looking for trends and patterns to see how the restrictive intervention may be avoided being used in the future by amending behavior plans.

If appropriate, the pupil and staff member involved would receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible and recorded on the accident and near miss to be reported to the Health and Safety executive.

After a significant incident, we conduct a debrief process, to understand what happened during the incident and why, based on separate reflections from both the staff and pupils involved, as well as to repair and rebuild relationships through dialogue. This process would ideally be facilitated by a staff member (our SENDCo) who was not involved in the incident and may also benefit from the presence of an additional person to ensure impartiality and support. By engaging in this process, we can foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Additionally, any pupil who witnesses an incident of restrictive intervention where a peer may have been injured or become distressed would be provided with appropriate support from our Pastoral Lead.

8.6. Specific Considerations for Pupils with SEND:

- Individual Support Plans (ISPs) and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) will be followed.
- Staff will be aware of any specific triggers or sensitivities that may lead to challenging behaviour.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to support pupils with SEND.
- The SENDCo will be consulted for advice and support.
- The school's approach to anti-bullying is effective, particularly in relation to pupils with SEND.
- The school's safeguarding policies and procedures take account of the increased vulnerability of learners with ALN and ensure that arrangements for these learners are appropriate.

8.7. Prohibited Interventions:

- The following interventions are strictly prohibited at Newburgh Primary School:
 - Corporal punishment.
 - The use of mechanical restraints.
 - Any intervention that is intended to cause pain or humiliation.
 - Any intervention that is used as a form of punishment.

7. Recording and Reporting

- All incidents involving restrictive interventions or reasonable force must be recorded on the school's incident reporting form in CPOMS as soon as possible after the event.
- The report must include:
 - The date, time, and location of the incident.
 - The names of the pupil(s) and staff involved.
 - A description of the events leading up to the intervention.

- A description of the intervention used.
- The duration of the intervention.
- Any injuries sustained by the pupil or staff.
- The outcome of the intervention.
- The names of any witnesses.
- The incident report must be signed by the staff member(s) involved and submitted to the Headteacher or a designated member of the SLT.
- Parents/carers will be informed in writing of any incident involving restrictive interventions or reasonable force as soon as possible, unless there are safeguarding concerns that prevent this.
- Serious incidents, such as those resulting in significant injury, will be reported to the relevant authorities, including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Ofsted, as required.
- The school has appropriate systems to record incidents, including reporting to relevant bodies.

8. Monitoring and Review

- The Headteacher will monitor incidents involving restrictive interventions and reasonable force to identify any patterns or trends.
- The SLT will review all incident reports to ensure that interventions were appropriate and in accordance with this policy.
- This policy will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if necessary, to ensure that it remains effective and compliant with relevant legislation and guidance.
- The review will involve consultation with staff, parents/carers, and pupils, where appropriate.
- The school will use the findings of the monitoring and review process to improve its approach to behaviour management and reduce the need for restrictive interventions and reasonable force.
- Leaders accurately assess and track the progress of children with SEND, with a focus on Reading, Writing and Maths to make a sustained difference to their learning.

9. Complaints

- Any complaints regarding the use of restrictive interventions or reasonable force will be dealt with in accordance with the school's complaints policy.

10. Related Policies

- Good relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Medical Needs Policy

11. Policy Availability



This policy is available on the school website and is available in hard copy from the school office upon request.

Appendix 1

- CPOMs entry: The report must include:
 - The date, time, and location of the incident.
 - The names of the pupil(s) and staff involved.
 - A description of the events leading up to the intervention.
 - A description of the intervention used.
 - The duration of the intervention.
 - Any injuries sustained by the pupil or staff.
 - The outcome of the intervention.
 - The names of any witnesses.
- The incident report must be signed by the staff member(s) involved and submitted to the Headteacher or a designated member of the SLT.
- Parents/carers will be informed in writing of any incident involving restrictive interventions or reasonable force as soon as possible, unless there are safeguarding concerns that prevent this.

Student

Incident

Categories

Attendance
 Behaviour Related Log
 Child Protection
 Contact with External Agency
 Medical Issues
 Parental Communication
 Restrictive interventions
 Safeguarding
 SEND

Restrictive interventions Subcategories

Guiding
 Restraint
 Restrictive Intervention
 Seclusion

Linked student(s)

Type a student's name to link them to this incident.

Maps



Date/Time

Status

Monitoring will end if you select 'No Further Action'

Assign to

Files

Alert Staff Members

Type a colleague's name or select an alert group to alert them to this incident. Colleagues highlighted in red would not normally be able to view this incident.

Agency Involved

Add to planner