



St Mary Redcliffe
and Temple School

Safe Touch and Use of Restrictive Interventions Policy

Approved by	FGB	Date July 2026
Last reviewed on	New Policy	
Next review due by	July 2027	

1. Aims and Objectives

We want every student to know that they operate within Safe Boundaries, and we have Good Relationships between staff and students.

We expect our staff to build calm, predictable environments where students can learn and thrive.

Sometimes staff will need to make physical contact with students. To keep them safe, offer reassurance, or support learning. In rare cases staff may need to use reasonable force or other restrictive interventions to prevent harm.

This policy explains how we use safe, appropriate and considered physical contact. It also sets out our approach to restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion, in line with Department for Education guidance.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff (including agency/supply), volunteers and contractors working with students.

3. Legal Framework

This policy reflects the following guidance and duties:

- [Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools](#) (DfE). Effective from 1 April 2026.
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#) (DfE). In force until 31 March 2026.
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- [Behaviour in Schools](#) (DfE)

Note: The April 2026 guidance introduces statutory duties to record and report each significant incident involving the use of force.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships.

4. Definitions

We use the following terms:

- **Restrictive interventions:** actions that limit a pupil's movement, liberty or independence. This includes physical restraint and seclusion.
- **Reasonable force:** no more force than necessary, for the shortest time necessary, to prevent injury, serious damage to property, a criminal offence, or significant disruption.
- **Seclusion:** keeping a dysregulated pupil in a safe space away from others as a safety measure, with continuous supervision and preventing them from leaving. It is not a disciplinary sanction and must end as soon as the immediate risk reduces.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone has a part to play:

- The **Governing Body** oversee implementation; review data; support and challenge Leaders.
- **Headteachers** make sure staff understand the policy; ensure training; oversee incident recording and parent communication; lead reviews and actions.
- **Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)** provide safeguarding oversight; liaise with parents/carers and external partners; make sure KCSIE procedures are followed.
- **SENDCOs/Pastoral Leads** plan preventative support; make reasonable adjustments in line with SEND needs; create and review Behaviour Support/Positive Handling Plans.
- **All staff** use prevention and de-escalation first; exercise professional judgement; record and report incidents as required.

6. What we mean by Safe Touch

Safe touch supports a student's safety, comfort, or learning. It is age-appropriate, non-intrusive and sensitive to the student's wishes and feelings.

Safe and appropriate examples include:

- Offering comfort to a distressed student (for example a gentle hand on the shoulder).
- Guiding or steadying a student to keep them safe.
- Demonstrating techniques in PE, dance, or music when needed.
- Providing first aid.

Staff use professional judgement, seek verbal consent where possible, and avoid contact that could be misinterpreted, humiliating, or sexualised. We do not operate a 'no-contact' policy. Appropriate contact is sometimes necessary to safeguard students.

7. Use of Restrictive Interventions, including Reasonable Force

Most situations are resolved through de-escalation, clear communication, and strong relationships. Restrictive interventions are rare and are used only when necessary to prevent harm.

Reasonable force may be used to:

- Prevent a student from injuring themselves or others.
- Prevent serious damage to property.
- Prevent a criminal offence.
- Prevent significant disruption to the school environment.

Any use of force must be proportionate to the situation and applied for the shortest time possible. Staff must never use force as a punishment.

8. Unacceptable Physical Contact

The following are not allowed:

- Any hold or technique that restricts breathing or circulation (including pressure on the neck, mouth, nose or abdomen).
- Prone (face-down) restraint.
- Pain-based techniques.
- Physical contact used as punishment or intimidation.

- Searching with force.

Headteachers and authorised staff may use reasonable force when it is necessary and proportionate to conduct a lawful search for prohibited items, where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion. Reasonable force must not be used to search for items that are banned only under school rules. For further detail, see the [Behaviour and Good Relationships Policy](#).

Any staff involved with these procedures must be Team Teach trained and follow lawful practice, and internal recording and monitoring procedures.

9. Seclusion

Seclusion may be used only as a safety measure to protect the student or others when the pupil is extremely dysregulated and at immediate risk of harm. It is never a disciplinary measure.

Seclusion must be supervised at all times, take place in a safe and appropriate space, and end as soon as the risk has reduced. All seclusion incidents must be recorded and shared with parents/carers as soon as practicable.

10. Prevention, Planning, and SEND

We focus on prevention and promote positive behaviour support, early help, and de-escalation by making reasonable adjustments for students with SEND and SEMH needs.

Where a student is at foreseeable risk of restrictive interventions, we will agree an Individual Behaviour Support/Positive Handling Plan with parents/carers and relevant professionals, and with the student where appropriate. Staff complete a dynamic risk assessment before and during any intervention.

11. Statutory Recording and Reporting

We follow DfE requirements for recording and reporting. For each significant incident involving the use of force, and for every seclusion incident, the academy will:

- Complete the Restrictive Intervention Record (the Red Book) as soon as practicable (normally the same day).
- Ensure the Headteacher/DSL completes a post-incident review and that support is offered to the student and staff (normally the same day).
- A copy should then be scanned and saved on CPOMS and the incident recorded.
- Inform parents/carers as soon as practicable (normally the same day) and record how and when contact was made.
- Where a student is looked-after or has a social worker, inform the social worker and the Virtual School (Hope).
- Record any injuries and the first aid provided; consider health and safety reporting where relevant; follow KCSIE if any safeguarding concerns arise.
- Update behaviour plans and make any reasonable adjustments in light of lessons learned.

12. Post-Incident Support and Review

Students and staff involved in restrictive interventions or seclusion will be offered support and a calm debrief. We will consider restorative approaches where appropriate and review triggers, plans, and reasonable adjustments.

13. Staff Training

Staff who may need to use restrictive interventions receive training in safe, lawful practice and in prevention and de-escalation through Team Teach. Training is refreshed regularly and meets the requirements of the training provider.

14. Oversight and Monitoring

Governors will be informed of any trends and patterns that emerge that may require further prevention planning and risk mitigation so that the need for restrictive interventions is minimised through good relationships and safe boundaries.

15. Complaints and Allegations

The school has separate complaints and allegations procedures, which should be referred to and followed as the need arises. Any allegations against staff will be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

If another member of staff suspects or witnesses inappropriate physical contact, whereby the member of staff is willingly involved, they will report this to the DSL or Safeguarding Team immediately. The DSL will keep a written record of all instances of reported inappropriate touch.

16. Monitoring and Review

We review this policy at least annually and sooner if guidance changes.

17. Links with Other Policies

This Policy is linked to the following, which can be found on the [school website](#):

- Safeguarding (and Child Protection) Policy
- Behaviour and Good Relationships Policy
- Complaints Policy

Also:

- Staff Code of Conduct

18. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been assessed for its impact on equality and does not unlawfully discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined by the [Equality Act 2010](#).

In developing and implementing this policy, the school has given due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all members of the school community, taking account of individual needs and circumstances where appropriate.

The Governing Board and Headteacher will monitor the implementation and impact of this policy to ensure it remains compliant with equality legislation and supports the school's commitment to inclusion, diversity, and equal opportunity.

Appendix A Parent/Carer Notification Template (Summary)

Today [date] at [time] there was a significant incident at school in which staff used [reasonable force / seclusion] to keep [student name] and others safe.

This was necessary because [brief reason]. The intervention lasted [duration]. [Student name] received [first aid / no first aid required].

We have recorded the incident and will review the behaviour plan and any reasonable adjustments made.

Please contact [name/role/contact details] so we can discuss next steps.

Yours sincerely,
[Name/Role]

Appendix B Seclusion Record Example

- Trigger/context; reason for seclusion as a safety measure.
- Space used; confirmation of continuous supervision; start and end times.
- De-escalation attempted before/during; reason for continuation; criteria for ending.
- Student welfare checks (hydration, comfort, medical needs); Student voice captured after.
- Parent/carer notification details; DSL oversight; review actions.