

Elizabeth Woodville School	
Policy Name:	Model Trust Policy for Restrictive Intervention
Owner:	Headteacher
Date Ratified:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2028

Restrictive Interventions (Including Use of Reasonable Force)

1. Policy statement

Elizabeth Woodville School is committed to ensuring that all pupils learn in a safe, supportive and respectful environment.

This policy sets out the school's approach to the use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force, in line with the [Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools, guidance for schools \(April 2026\)](#).

The school emphasises prevention, early support and de-escalation to minimise the need for restrictive interventions.

Restrictive interventions will only be used:

- where necessary to prevent harm, serious disruption or damage
- as a last resort
- using the minimum force for the shortest time necessary
- in ways that respect pupils' dignity, rights and safety

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all schools within the Trust
- all staff working in Trust schools
- pupils in all Trust settings, including alternative provision

This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy

This policy should also be read alongside the following guidance:

- [Behaviour in Schools guidance \(Feb 2024\)](#)
- [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England \(Aug 2024\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(Sept 2025\)](#)

3. Definitions

3.1 Restrictive interventions

A restrictive intervention is:

any planned or reactive action that limits a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom to act independently.

Examples include:

- physical restraint
- holding a pupil to prevent injury
- blocking a pupil's movement
- seclusion
- removing a pupil from a space for safety reasons

3.2 Reasonable force

Reasonable force is:

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.

3.3 Seclusion

Seclusion is:

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.

3.4 Restraint

Restraint is:

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. Legal framework

This policy is based on:

- 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

Restrictive interventions must never be used as punishment or to enforce compliance, except in some circumstances, that may include:

- where a pupil is causing a danger to themselves or others (eg going to fight another pupil)
- where a pupil is refusing to stay in a room to dysregulate

Head teachers and staff they authorise 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.

5. Appropriate physical contact with pupils

Our school does not have a 'no contact' policy. We do not grant any requests by parents/carers or staff members not to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions.

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 or other restrictive interventions.

Examples, depending on age and circumstances of pupils, include:

- providing intimate care (eg toileting, changing nappies, etc)
- providing first aid to a pupil
- guiding or escorting a pupil through the school building or on a school trip by holding their hand
- comforting a pupil who is upset
- holding the hand of a primary aged pupil
- offering congratulations or praise, such as with a pat on the back or handshake
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- when demonstrating exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

In assessing whether physical contact is appropriate in any given situation, staff should use their professional judgement, and have regard to:

- our school's child protection and safeguarding policy and TLT Code of Conduct for adults
- the specific circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present
- factors including, but not limited to:
 - the pupil's age
 - any known vulnerabilities, including whether the pupil has special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
 - whether any alternative strategies that don't involve physical contact can be used

6. Principles

Elizabeth Woodville School will:

- prioritise prevention and de-escalation
- use restrictive interventions only when necessary
- ensure actions are proportionate and time-limited
- ensure staff are appropriately trained
- support pupils after incidents through restorative approaches and pastoral care
- work transparently with parents and carers

7. Prevention and de-escalation

At Elizabeth Woodville School we will prioritise strategies to reduce the likelihood of restrictive interventions. Further details can be found in Appendix A, but briefly these include:

- positive behaviour systems
- behaviour support plans
- trauma-informed approaches
- SEND-informed planning
- staff training in de-escalation
- environmental adjustments

We will ensure pupils with SEND or known behavioural triggers have individualised support plans where appropriate.

8. When restrictive interventions may be used

Restrictive interventions may be used where it is reasonable, necessary and proportionate.

Staff may use reasonable force to:

- prevent injury to pupils, self or others

- prevent serious damage to property
- prevent a criminal offence
- prevent serious disruption to the school environment.

They should not be used routinely or where alternative strategies are available. All incidents of restrictive intervention should be recorded in accordance with the recording and reporting incidents in Sections 9 and 10.

Staff must consider:

- if it is necessary (are other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage a situation)
- the seriousness of the situation
- the level of risk to the pupil and themselves
- the age, SEND needs and any other vulnerabilities of the pupil

9. Seclusion

Seclusion is non-disciplinary and involves placing a pupil in a room or area where they are prevented from leaving. It 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.

If a pupil is placed in isolation, in place of an external suspension, this is not seclusion and should be dealt with under the school's behaviour policy.

The place to which the pupil is confined should be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil.

Where used, schools must ensure:

- it is only used to manage serious risk
- it is supervised at all times
- it lasts only as long as necessary
- safeguarding considerations are prioritised.

An incident involving the use of seclusion must be recorded in accordance with the recording and reporting incidents in Sections 10 and 11.

10. Recording incidents

At Elizabeth Woodville School we record all significant incidents involving force or seclusion (*see appendix B*).

We record incidents on Bromcom/ CPOMS:

- date, time and location

- pupil involved
- Any relevant pupil information (including; identified special educational need; disability; is in care or medical need)
- staff involved
- what (if appropriate) other de-escalation strategies were used prior to the incident
- reason for why the intervention was necessary
- type of intervention used
- Duration of the incident
- outcome and follow-up actions, support offered (including first aid if required)

Incidents must be recorded as soon as practicably possible after an incident. It must be recorded by the staff member(s) involved and they should use best endeavours to do this no later than the same day.

11. Reporting incidents

Parents must be informed as soon as reasonably practicable if their child has been subject to any significant incidents involving force or seclusion - ideally by the end of the school day. This also includes carers, and if the pupil is in the care of the local authority, then the relevant social worker.

A report of the incident made to parents must include the following details as a minimum:

- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance (including all the deescalation that took place prior to the restrictive intervention)
- brief account of what type of restrictive intervention was applied
- details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable, and any appropriate treatment the pupil was given/offered

We will communicate this in writing to the parent or carer via email and or via MCAS This report will be made as soon as is practically possible following an incident, and we will use our best endeavours to do this no later than the same day.

We will also follow this up with a discussion about the incident, discussing any behaviour triggers, agree/review behaviour plans in light of an incident, review any de-escalation strategies and what might be done differently in the future.

12. Risk Assessment and Individual Plans

For pupils with known risks, we will create:

- individual Behaviour Plan
- positive Handling Plan

13. Consideration for pupils with SEND

Our school is committed to understanding what might trigger challenging behaviour in pupils with SEND, and to providing the right support and an inclusive environment.

For pupils with SEND we will consider and mitigate the following:

- pupils with SEND may not always respond 'typically' to situations. Any additional needs they may have that could be triggering or contributing to them being in a state that may ordinarily require use of restrictive measures, must be taken into account and removed prior to any consideration of restrictive interventions being used
- pupils with SEND may respond to distress, confusion, pain, sensory overload, unfamiliar environments, or anxiety with behaviours that could place themselves or others at risk. This must be taken into any decision making regarding the type of restrictive interventions being considered.
- pupils who are non-verbal or have communication difficulties may express discomfort, unmet needs, or confusion through actions rather than words, increasing the likelihood of restrictive interventions being used. Staff must have this in the forefront of their minds if they are carrying out any restrictive interventions on pupils with SEND.

14. Monitoring and oversight

We will ensure that:

- relevant leaders monitor individual incidents of restrictive intervention
- leaders review data to identify patterns and spot any training needs on a termly basis
- governing bodies review data and policy implementation regularly
- trustees will have oversight of data at least annually

15. Staff training

We will ensure that:

- all staff receive training on de-escalation and behaviour management
- staff likely to use restrictive interventions receive appropriate training
- training reflects the principles of the DfE guidance
- training will only be from providers on the trust approved list (see appendix C)

16. Safeguarding, well-being and support

After any incident involving restrictive intervention:

- the pupil must be checked for injury or distress
- staff involved must also be supported

- the incident should be reviewed for learning
- evaluate each incident to understand why it was used and how it might be avoided in the future

Schools should consider:

- restorative conversations
- behaviour support plan implementation or updates
- write or review positive handling plan for the child
- SEND review where appropriate.

17. Complaints

Concerns about the use of restrictive interventions should be raised through the Trust's complaints procedure.

18. Roles and responsibilities

Trust Board

- Approves and reviews the policy.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of this policy through looking at data

Trust leaders

- Ensure consistent implementation across schools.

Local Governing Body

- Support leaders in the school in personalising this policy to fit the context of their school
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of this policy through looking at data

Headteachers

- Implement the policy in their school
- Ensure staff training and monitoring
- Report to LGB termly on the number and types of incidents that occur under this policy

Staff

- Follow this policy
- Take part in training as required by leaders
- Use de-escalation techniques and positive behaviour management strategies to try to minimise and prevent the use of restrictive interventions
- Use interventions only where necessary
- Contribute to accurately recording every incident that involves restrictive intervention

Appendix A – School measures to prevent and de-escalate

Whole-school measures can include:

- consideration of how the school and classroom environment can support all pupils to achieve and thrive
- sharing best practice for whole-class behaviour management, and for managing communal spaces such as corridors and playgrounds
- training staff in effective communication strategies, such as using appropriate tone of voice and empathy to aid de-escalation
- development of working staff-pupil relationships and trust
- recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform improvement planning

Individual approaches can include:

- working closely with parents and carers to support individual pupils
- strategies to support individual pupils based on their identified needs, including the development of behaviour support plans. Where a pupil has a disability, schools have a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to support pupils with reasonable adjustments, making sure they can benefit from what the school offers

Appendix B – recording template for restrictive intervention

This form must be completed for every ‘significant incident’ involving restrictive intervention, as defined by DfE statutory guidance.

Child’s name		Child’s year group	
Person completing this record		Staff role	
Date and time		Location of restrictive intervention	
Any vulnerabilities the pupil may have (Eg SEN)		Duration of restrictive intervention	

Reason for restrictive intervention (<i>tick all that may apply</i>)			
Prevent injury to self or others	☐	Prevent serious damage to property	☐
Prevent a criminal offence	☐	Prevent disorder among pupils	☐

Description of incident, including type of restrictive intervention used (reasonable force, restraint and/or seclusion)<i>Include in your description any known triggers leading up to the incident, details of any harm/damage caused by pupil, a description of the specific restrictive actions/techniques applied and for how long, and any additional/contributing factors</i>

De-escalation techniques used			
Verbal advice and support	☐	Offering services of other staff	☐
Calm talking	☐	Informing of consequences	☐
Distraction	☐	Non-threatening body position	☐
Reassurance	☐	Step away	☐
Humour	☐	Clear instruction / warning	☐
Negotiation	☐	Use of physical location and presence	☐

Offering choices and options		Diversion	
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Names of staff witnesses	Names of pupil witnesses

Post incident support and review – indicate those that apply and give brief description	
Immediate welfare and medical checks (injuries sustained and First Aid required)	
Emotional wellbeing and safeguarding (additional wellbeing support offered/provided)	
Reflective debrief and learning (date, time, participants and summary of discussion)	
Review of support and risk management (implementation/review of behaviour support plan)	
Repairing relationships and reintegration (date, time, participants and summary of discussion)	
Monitoring and escalation (further support required to manage risk)	

Senior Leader review of incident			
Name of SLT		Date of review	
Comments: (including lessons learnt, reviews recommended, training needs identified, etc)			

Upon completion in full, this form needs to be uploaded to CPOMS alongside any other relevant documents and records (including any written witness statements).

In line with statutory guidance, **parents must be informed in writing of the use of restrictive intervention**, unless a statutory exception applies (see policy for detail). A copy of the written report to parents also needs to be uploaded to CPOMS confirming the date and time that it was provided to parents.

Appendix C – approved list of training providers

Tove Learning Trust academies will only use providers on this approved list, where their training and accreditation have been checked and verified. No other providers can be used without first referring them to the trust safeguarding lead.

Training provider	Contact details/weblink
Safer Hands	https://www.safer-handling.co.uk/education-children-s-services
Intelligensa	https://www.intelligensa.co.uk/
Team Teach	https://www.teamteach.com/behaviour-support-training-team-teach/
School staff safety training	https://schoolstafftraining.co.uk/