



Blean Primary School

Use of Restrictive Interventions Policy

(Including Reasonable Force, Restraint and Seclusion)

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Headteacher: Mr I Rowden

Chairs of Governors: Mr H Samuelson

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1. Aims and Scope

Blean Primary School is committed to providing a calm, safe, nurturing and inclusive environment where all pupils feel valued, respected and able to learn. Our approach is rooted in strong relationships, the Six Principles of Nurture, restorative practice, and our shared expectations: *Be Ready, Be Respectful and Be Safe*.

We recognise that restrictive interventions, including reasonable force, restraint and seclusion, are intrusive and potentially distressing. Their use can have a significant impact on pupils, staff and parents/carers. Such interventions are therefore only ever considered as a last resort, when there is a clear and immediate risk of harm and where preventative and de-escalation strategies have been attempted or are not suitable.

This policy aims to:

- Minimise the use of restrictive interventions through prevention, early support and de-escalation
- Help staff feel confident in using interventions safely, appropriately and lawfully when absolutely necessary
- Clearly set out expectations for decision-making, recording and reporting
- Protect the safety, dignity and wellbeing of pupils and staff

Any restrictive intervention used will employ the minimum force necessary, for the shortest possible time, and will always seek to preserve the dignity and welfare of everyone involved.

This policy applies to all staff, including teachers, support staff, supply staff and volunteers.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been developed with regard to, and is compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools* (DfE, April 2026)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Sections 93 and 93A)
- Education Act 1996 (Sections 550ZA and 550ZB)
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- DfE guidance on *Searching, Screening and Confiscation*

This policy should be read alongside the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, SEND Policy, Complaints Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

3. Definitions

The definitions below are based on Department for Education guidance.

Restrictive intervention

Any physical or non-physical action that prevents, restricts or subdues a pupil's movement or behaviour.

Examples include:

- Physical restraint
- Passive blocking to prevent harm
- Seclusion used as a safety measure

Reasonable force

Physical contact used by staff to control or restrain a pupil, using no more force than is necessary and for the shortest time necessary, to prevent harm.

Examples include:

- Guiding a pupil to safety by the arm
- Breaking up a fight
- Holding a pupil to prevent injury to themselves or others

Restraint

A non-disciplinary intervention that immobilises or restricts a pupil's movement. This may involve direct physical contact or positional restriction.

Seclusion

A non-disciplinary intervention that involves confining a pupil in a space away from others and preventing them from leaving, for the safety of the pupil and/or others.

Significant incident

Any incident where physical force goes beyond everyday appropriate physical contact, including when force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

3.1 Appropriate Physical Contact

Blean Primary School does not operate a 'no contact' policy. Appropriate physical contact may include:

- Providing first aid
- Comforting a distressed pupil
- Guiding or escorting pupils
- Congratulatory gestures
- Demonstrating skills in PE or practical lessons

Staff will use professional judgement, considering safeguarding guidance, the presence of others, pupil age, known vulnerabilities (including SEND), and whether less intrusive alternatives are available.

3.2 Seclusion at Blean Primary School

Seclusion is used only as a safety measure when a pupil is experiencing extreme emotional or behavioural dysregulation and poses an immediate risk.

During seclusion:

- The pupil will be in a calm, safe space appropriate to their needs
- The pupil will be supervised at all times by at least one member of staff
- The pupil will be allowed to leave as soon as the immediate risk has reduced

All seclusion incidents are recorded and reported in accordance with Section 12 of this policy.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Approving and reviewing this policy
- Ensuring lawful recording and reporting arrangements are in place
- Regularly scrutinising data on restrictive interventions
- Challenging and supporting school leaders where improvement is needed, including regarding equity and proportionality

4.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Overall implementation and oversight of this policy
- Ensuring appropriate staff training
- Monitoring and reviewing incidents
- Ensuring compliance with statutory duties
- Authorising searches where appropriate
- Managing complaints and allegations in line with statutory guidance

4.3 All Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Using prevention and de-escalation strategies first
- Applying restrictive interventions only when necessary and lawful
- Accurately recording incidents
- Reporting incidents to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Participating in reflection, debrief and training as required

4.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for:

- Overseeing records of restrictive interventions
- Ensuring parents/carers are informed
- Liaising with the local authority where informing parents would place a pupil at risk

4.5 SENCO

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Supporting risk assessments and behaviour support plans for pupils with SEND

- Advising on reasonable adjustments
- Supporting staff training and post-incident review for pupils with SEND

5. Acceptable Use of Reasonable Force

Reasonable force may only be used to prevent a pupil from:

- Harming themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Causing serious damage to property
- Creating serious disorder

Force is never used as punishment.

6. Unacceptable Use of Force

The following are never acceptable:

- Force used to punish, threaten or secure compliance
- Restricting breathing or circulation
- Applying pressure to the neck, head, torso or abdomen
- Prone or ground restraint

7. Searching Pupils

Only the Headteacher or authorised staff may search pupils where there are reasonable grounds to suspect possession of prohibited items. Such searches will be conducted in the presence of an additional adult. Reasonable force may only be used when searching for items that are legally prohibited, in line with statutory guidance and the Behaviour Policy.

8. Prevention and De-escalation

Blean Primary School prioritises prevention through:

- Consistent routines and expectations
- Restorative and relational approaches

- Nurture provision and safe spaces
- Zones of Regulation
- Staff training in communication and behaviour support

Individual strategies include:

- Behaviour support plans
- Reasonable adjustments
- Close communication with parents/carers
- External agency support

8.1 De-escalation in the Moment

Staff may use techniques such as:

- Calm, empathetic communication
- Managing space and audience
- Distraction and redirection
- Offering time or a calm space

9. Decision Making

Staff must consider:

- **Necessity** – are less restrictive options available?
- **Proportionality** – is this the least restrictive response?
- **Welfare** – impact on pupil dignity, trauma, medical or SEND needs

Where restrictive intervention is used, staff will clearly explain what is happening and why, wherever possible.

10. Pupils with SEND

We recognise that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to restrictive interventions.

We:

- Identify triggers early
- Make reasonable adjustments
- Develop and review behaviour support plans collaboratively

- Review all incidents involving pupils with SEND

11. Training and Risk Assessment

Staff likely to need restrictive interventions receive appropriate training in prevention and safe, lawful practice. Risk assessments are completed where an increased likelihood of intervention is identified and reviewed regularly.

12. Recording and Reporting

All significant incidents, restraint and seclusion are recorded as soon as practicable (ideally the same day) on the school safeguarding system – CPOMs and The Red Book.

Records include:

- Names of pupils and staff
- Date, time, location and duration
- Triggers and actions taken
- Type of intervention used
- Injuries or support provided

Parents/carers are informed as soon as possible unless doing so would place the pupil at risk, in which case the local authority will be informed.

13. Complaints and Allegations

Concerns are managed through the Complaints Policy. Allegations against staff are handled in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and safeguarding procedures.

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Governing Board. Data on restrictive interventions is analysed to ensure legality, effectiveness, proportionality and fairness.

15. Linked Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy and SEN Information Report
- Complaints Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

All above statutory policies can be found here: [Blean Primary School Policies](#)