Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy

Ludlow Junior School

Date of last review: April 2026

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Approved by: Policy Working Party

Ethos & Values

Within our school our strategies and practise are encompassed within a framework of shared and consistent principles based on person centred values within a commitment to restraint reduction.

We firmly believe that children who feel safe and happy are better equipped to learn. We understand that behaviour is a form of communication and children, whose emotional wellbeing needs are not met, may manifest themselves in behaviour that challenges and much of these stems from the need for secure attachments. As a staff team, we have participated in (and continue to access) extensive training to recognise and respond supportively through co-regulation to guide children through stressful situations.

Introduction

This policy outlines the principles and practices regarding the use of restrictive interventions at Ludlow Junior School, in accordance with the statutory guidance provided in 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools Guidance for schools in England April 2026'. The aim is to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils and staff while adhering to legal requirements and best practices.

Definition of Terms:

Restrictive Intervention
A restrictive intervention is defined as a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This guidance utilises 'restrictive interventions' as an umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed at restraining pupils in various ways.

Restraint
Restraint refers to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. It is important to note that physical restraint occurs when a staff member uses force with the intention of restricting a young person's movement against their will.

Seclusion
Seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention involving the confinement of a pupil to a designated area away from others, preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction or by instilling a belief that they will face punishment if they attempt to leave.

Reasonable Force
Reasonable force is a term used in legislation that encompasses physical restrictive interventions. All members of school staff possess the legal authority to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. The application of reasonable force must be proportionate, meaning that no more force than is necessary should be used for the least amount of time, with the specifics depending on the circumstances at hand.

The use of restrictive intervention and who can use reasonable force?

We all have a legal obligation under our 'duty of care' to keep the children and young people we support safe. Once we have exhausted all other options as a last/first resort we may have to

intervene physically. This would always be as a 'positive act' and in the best interests of the child or young person. De-escalation strategies form the greater part of our approach to harmful behaviour. Even at the most heightened states of arousal there are still non-restrictive strategies that may work.

In accordance with the statutory guidance (April 2026), Ludlow Junior School acknowledges that all members of school staff are legally empowered to use reasonable force in certain situations. This is specifically to prevent or stop 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.

Staff members who are likely to require the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions will receive SecuriCare training.

Minimising the Need for Force

Ludlow Junior School aims to minimises the risk of incidents necessitating the use of force. For pupils exhibiting persistent challenging behaviour, staff members collaborate to develop individual 'Support and Response Plans'. These plans incorporate defusing and de-escalating strategies aimed at reducing the necessity for the application of reasonable force.

Principles Guiding Restrictive Intervention

- Ludlow Junior School adopts the Securicare principles, promoting a multi-disciplinary approach to restrictive interventions. Staff members who are likely to use reasonable force, have undergone additional training in de-escalation skills and positive handling techniques as part of this approach. The key principles guiding the use of restrictive interventions include:
- Staff will continuously seek opportunities to communicate, assess the situation, listen actively, and employ diversion or de-escalation techniques.
- Physical intervention and restraint should be employed only as a last resort to support children and young people during crises. Restraint must be avoided whenever possible and should never be entered into lightly.
- Any physical intervention must be administered in a calm and rational manner, devoid of anger or frustration.
- Restraint must not be employed offensively as a threat or as a form of punishment.
- The application of restraint must not be intended to inflict pain.
- Restraint should only be applied until the immediate threat has subsided.
- The intervention should support the child or young person in maintaining self-control.
- The use of restraint should aim to de-escalate a potentially dangerous situation.
- The decision to use restraint must be based on professional judgement regarding the young person's safety, taking into account their age and abilities.
- The minimum force necessary must be employed at all times.
- Any physical intervention must be reasonable, proportionate, and necessary, serving the best interests of the pupil.

Staff members not directly involved in the intervention are expected to act as advocates for both the pupil and the staff involved. Securicare techniques are designed to prevent injury; however, it is acknowledged that bruising or scratching may occur inadvertently. A verbal check for injury will be conducted, and any injuries sustained will be treated and documented accordingly.

Seclusion

This measure should only be employed as a safety precaution to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing significant emotional or behavioural dysregulation. In such instances, it is important to recognise that the pupil is not acting with intent. The pupil must be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion, and they should be allowed to leave as soon as the immediate risk of harm has diminished.

The decision to implement seclusion or other restrictive interventions must be based on individual circumstances, and these measures should never be utilised as a form of punishment. It is crucial to distinguish seclusion from removal, which refers to the requirement for a pupil to spend a limited period outside the classroom for serious disciplinary reasons while still being provided with the opportunity to continue their education.

All seclusions will be reported to parents and carers verbally and in writing. If a seclusion is deemed to be an appropriate strategy for an individual, then this will be included within their Support and Response Plan.

Recording and Reporting

Incidents involving the use of reasonable force and/or restrictive interventions must be documented as soon as practicable following the event. The staff member(s) involved are responsible for ensuring that this record is completed no later than the same day. This documentation should be recorded on a SPIG form and saved on the designated database, CPOMS, and within a specific file dedicated to such incidents.

Parents must be informed of the incident as soon as practicable, ideally on the same day. The report to parents should encompass the following details:

- Time, date, location, and approximate duration of the intervention.
- A brief account of the rationale behind the assessment of necessity for the intervention in that instance.
- Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable.

In the majority of cases, parents or carers will be notified of the use of restrictive intervention. However, if it is deemed that informing them may result in serious harm to the pupil, the staff member may exercise discretion in withholding this information. In such cases, the incident will likely be reported to the Local Authority.

For pupils requiring regular physical intervention, an individual Positive Handling Plan will be established. This plan will outline agreed strategies (including non-verbal, verbal, and physical support) to assist the pupil in their emotional and social development. The Positive Handling Plan will be shared with parents or carers, and they will be informed of any changes throughout the academic year.

Pupil and Staff Support

Following an incident involving restrictive intervention, both pupils and staff members should receive any necessary medical treatment, and their well-being should be monitored for any additional support requirements. A debriefing process will be conducted after significant incidents to facilitate understanding of what transpired, why it occurred, and to promote reflection and learning.

It is the responsibility of all staff members to provide appropriate support during or following a physical intervention or serious incident. This support is essential for the emotional and psychological well-being of both pupils and staff, ensuring that all individuals involved can process the event and receive the necessary care.