Rushwick CE Primary School

'Ask, Seek, Knock'

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Matthew 7 Verse 7.

Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions Policy

(previously Positive Handling)

Reviewed by	Approved by	Date of Approval	Version Approved	Next Review Date
VL	LAB	June 2026	V2	June 2027

Our Vision

'Ask and it will be given to you;
Seek and you will find;
Knock and the door will be opened to you'
Matthew 7:7

We are an inclusive Church School dedicated to offering quality education that meets the needs of all.

We aim to create successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens through our Christian approach of love and cooperation.

Inspired by the teachings of Jesus and recognising each person as a unique child of God, we work for the common good of everyone, ensuring our door is always open for all to flourish.

We encourage all to thoughtfully ask, graciously seek and courageously knock, so that together we can make a difference to our Rushwick school family and the wider world.

Our values underpin all we do, including all our interactions with each other, our children, parents and community.

RESPECT
COMPASSION
COURAGE
TRUST
KINDNESS
GRATITUDE

Mission Statement

In partnership with parents and the local community, we will provide a challenging, creative curriculum which develops the whole child. By providing a safe, caring and stimulating environment where all individuals are valued and respected, we will meet the needs of each school member, allowing them to fulfil their potential and prepare them for their future.

Introduction

This policy reflects current DfE guidance, including *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools, 2026 (*which came into effect on 1 April 2026) Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance and incorporates best practice inclusive of supporting pupils with SEND. The principal legislation to which this guidance relates are:

- 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

Additionally, it follows the policies and guidance of Worcestershire Children's First.

This policy supports teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils and for volunteers working within the school to explain the school's arrangements for care and control. Its contents are available to parents and pupils. A statement about the school's Behaviour policy will be made to parents on request. This statement will include information on the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions to control or restrain pupils, including the fact that parental consent is not required for the use of such physical interventions.
Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance.

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in our school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. This ensures the wellbeing and safety of all pupils and staff in the school. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions may be required.

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force and restrictive interventions in certain circumstances. The school acknowledges that physical techniques are only part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management. There are times when the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions will be lawful and necessary; for example, to keep individuals and the wider school community safe.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff:

1. Clearly understand their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where reasonable force and other restrictive interventions are necessary, and
2. are provided with appropriate training to support children and staff with these difficult situations

It should be emphasised that reasonable force and other restrictive interventions (previously called positive handling) should only be used as a last resort and within a wider context of care, safety and safeguarding. The school places a strong emphasis on prevention, early intervention and de-escalation strategies, and these approaches will always be attempted first. Any use of restrictive intervention must be necessary, proportionate, and applied for the shortest time possible to prevent harm to the pupil or others.

Restrictive Interventions (including the use of reasonable force)
The school recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to use restrictive interventions, including reasonable force, to prevent harm. This is in line with Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act (2006), which enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances.

Restrictive interventions may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- causing harm to themselves or others
- committing a criminal offence
- causing serious damage to property
- seriously disrupting the good order and discipline of the school
- The school emphasises that any use of restrictive intervention must be:
- a last resort, used only when other strategies have been attempted or are not appropriate
- necessary, proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances
- applied for the shortest time possible to reduce risk

The school is committed to a proactive approach that prioritises prevention, early intervention and de-escalation, recognising that behaviour is a form of communication. Staff will work to minimise the need for restrictive interventions, particularly for pupils with SEND or additional needs, through appropriate support and planning.

Recording and reporting
Rushwick CE Primary School has a legal duty to record all significant incidents and report to parents/ carers (usually the same day). All incidents involving the use of restrictive intervention will be recorded and reported to parents/carers (usually the same day) in line with current statutory guidance.

Behaviour vs Safeguarding
This policy is framed around strong safeguarding practice more than behaviour management. Staff are looking at pupils through a child protection lens as opposed to controlling a pupil's behaviour. Reasonable force and other restrictive interventions must be necessary, proportionate, lawful and for the shortest time possible. There are explicit links to human rights and equality (including SEND).

SEND and vulnerability
New guidance recognises the disproportionate use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions on pupils with SEND. Rushwick CE Primary School has strong policies and procedures in place to support children with SEND. There is a clear expectation that the school understands individual needs, triggers and patterns of behaviour.
Rushwick's' inclusive and trauma-informed practice ensures that individual provision maps, as well as behaviour, pastoral, safety and positive handling plans, are **in place, regularly reviewed and tailored to meet the specific needs of each pupil**. These plans are developed in collaboration with staff, parents/carers and, where appropriate, external professionals.

This personalised approach enables staff to implement **proactive strategies, reasonable adjustments and effective de-escalation techniques**, with the aim of reducing the likelihood of incidents and minimising the need for restrictive interventions. Where restrictive interventions are required, they are used in line with statutory guidance, ensuring they are **necessary, proportionate and for the shortest time possible**, with the pupil's safety, dignity and wellbeing at the centre of all decision-making.

Prevention and de-escalation
All staff are PACE trained which ensures they are equipped to use early support and de-escalation techniques to minimise the need and use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions. Restraint is explicitly a last resort once all other avenues have been explored.

Non-physical Restrictive Interventions
Non-physical restrictive interventions may be used where appropriate to prevent harm. These may include:

- blocking a pupil's path
- directing a pupil away from a situation
- removing objects or environmental triggers
- restricting access to certain areas where there is a risk of harm

These approaches should:

- be used proportionately and only when necessary
- form part of a wider de-escalation strategy
- not be used as a form of punishment

Seclusion
Seclusion is defined as the supervised isolation of a pupil, where they are prevented from leaving an area, and is a form of restrictive intervention.
Rushwick does not use seclusion as a punishment. It will only be used in exceptional circumstances where:

- it is necessary to prevent immediate harm to the pupil or others
- no less restrictive alternatives are available

Where seclusion is used:

- the pupil will be continuously supervised
- it will be for the shortest time possible
- the pupil's safety, dignity and wellbeing will be maintained at all times

All incidents of seclusion will be:

- recorded in detail
- reported to parents/carers
- reviewed to inform future planning and reduce the likelihood of recurrence

This policy enables staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- Placing themselves at risk
- Placing other pupils or staff at risk
- Behaviour leading to serious damage to property or committing a criminal offence

Examples of situations where reasonable force may be used: -

- Action is necessary in self-defence or because of imminent risk of injury. Examples: Pupil attacks a member of staff, another pupil, attempts self-injury, pupils are fighting. Pupil running in classroom or corridor in a way that is likely to cause injury to self or others. Pupil absconds from a class or tries to leave school and who would be judged to be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school.
- There is a serious and developing risk of damage to property, including the pupil's own property. Examples: Pupil is causing or about to cause deliberate damage or vandalism. Pupil is causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, rough play, misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
- Where pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline. Examples: Pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave the classroom. Pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

Engaging in behaviour that is prejudicial to maintaining the good order and discipline at Rushwick or among any of its pupils, whether the behaviour occurs in the classroom, during a teaching session or elsewhere within school (including authorised out of school activities.)

NB *Wherever possible early support from colleagues will be sought. Single handed intervention increases the risk of injury to both parties and does not provide the person intervening with the support of a colleague acting as a critical friend.*

Individual members of staff cannot be required or directed to use physical restraint. However, as teaching and non-teaching staff work in 'loco parentis' and should always operate with an appropriate 'Duty of Care', should the school's policy not be adhered to by individuals, it is not unforeseeable that claims of negligence could be levied against them.

The application of any form of physical control places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a responsibility to follow this policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention.

Schools CANNOT use force as a punishment: it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment. Schools cannot use chastisement as a punishment, in line with ensuring safeguarding for our children.

Definitions of Physical Contact and Restrictive Interventions
This policy outlines how the school uses physical contact and, where necessary, restrictive interventions to support, care for and, in exceptional circumstances, protect pupils.
The school adopts a graduated approach, moving from the least intrusive strategies to more restrictive interventions only where absolutely necessary.

Physical Contact
Physical contact is a normal part of school life and may be appropriate in the following contexts:

- to provide care and comfort to pupils who are distressed
- to support pupils with SEND, including those with complex or profound needs
- to enable participation in activities such as physical education, therapies, and practical learning
- to provide physical guidance or prompts to support learning
- during intimate care, first aid, and moving and handling

All physical contact will:

- be appropriate, respectful and in the pupil's best interests
- take account of age, gender, dignity and individual needs
- be delivered in line with individual care or support plans

Where appropriate, staff may use supportive touch (e.g. reassurance), in line with training, while maintaining professional boundaries.

Restrictive Interventions (including reasonable force)
Restrictive interventions are defined as **deliberate acts by staff that restrict a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom of action**, and may include physical or non-physical approaches.

These may be used only in exceptional circumstances to prevent a pupil from:

- causing harm to themselves or others
- committing a criminal offence
- causing serious damage to property
- seriously disrupting the good order of the school

Any use of restrictive intervention must be:

- **a last resort**
- **necessary, reasonable and proportionate**
- used for the **shortest time possible**
- applied in a way that maintains the pupil's **dignity and safety**

Restrictive interventions may include:

- **non-physical interventions** (e.g. blocking, guiding, directing)
- **physical interventions** (reasonable force to control or restrain)

The school does not use restrictive interventions as a form of punishment.
Staff will follow **agreed training approaches (e.g. Team Teach)**, but specific techniques are not detailed within this policy.

Training

The school is committed to ensuring that all staff receive appropriate training in behaviour support, de-escalation and the safe use of restrictive interventions.

Rushwick CE Primary School adopts the Team Teach approach, which provides an accredited framework for promoting positive behaviour, reducing risk and supporting pupils safely. This approach emphasises prevention, de-escalation and understanding behaviour as communication, alongside the safe use of physical intervention where absolutely necessary.
Appropriate staff are trained and refreshed at regular intervals in line with school policy and best practice. Only staff who have received appropriate training will use restrictive interventions.

Training includes:

- proactive behaviour support strategies
- de-escalation techniques
- understanding individual needs, including SEND
- the safe and proportionate use of restrictive interventions
- recording, reporting and post-incident procedures

The school ensures that training is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current statutory guidance and good practice.

Action Following an Incident

Following any incident involving a restrictive intervention, the school will ensure that appropriate support, reflection and review take place for both pupils and staff. The aim is to restore relationships, support wellbeing and maintain a positive learning environment.

Immediately after the incident:

- The pupil will be supported to regulate, feel safe and return to a calm state
- Any injuries or safeguarding concerns will be addressed
- A senior leader will be informed as soon as possible

A structured debrief process will then take place, appropriate to the age and needs of the pupil, to support reflection and learning. This will include:

- Reflection: What happened? What were we feeling?
- Repair: How can relationships be restored? Is there anything we need to say or do?
- Rebuild: What can we do differently next time? What support is needed moving forward?

Staff involved will also be offered the opportunity to debrief and reflect, with consideration given to their wellbeing and any further support or training required.

All incidents will be:

- recorded promptly and accurately
- shared with parents/carers in line with statutory guidance
- reviewed by senior leaders to identify triggers, patterns and next steps

Where appropriate, outcomes from the review will inform updates to:

- behaviour or support plans

- risk assessments
- provision and strategies to reduce the likelihood of recurrence

The Head / SLT will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Review of the pupil's Behaviour Support Plan (including Positive Handling Plan)
- Risk Assessment
- Schools Behaviour Policy/Care and Control Policy
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedure
- Health and Safety
- Suspensions Procedure

The member of staff will be kept informed of any action taken. In the case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

Recording and Reporting

- All staff will follow the school's recording and reporting procedures in relation to restrictive interventions, and will receive appropriate training and guidance in the completion of all documentation.
- Any incident involving restrictive intervention will be recorded promptly, accurately and in sufficient detail, in line with statutory safeguarding expectations and school procedures.
- Where an injury occurs as a result of any incident, immediate first aid will be provided and, where necessary, further medical attention will be sought. Any injury will be recorded and reported in accordance with relevant local authority and safeguarding procedures.
- All incidents involving restrictive interventions will be recorded on the school's management information system (CPOMS/Arbor) and/or the designated incident recording system. Paper-based records (e.g. bound logs) will only be used where required as part of transitional or supplementary recording processes.
- The member of staff involved will report the incident to the Headteacher or a senior leader as soon as possible on the same day.
- Parents/carers will be informed of any significant incident involving restrictive intervention as soon as practicable, and normally on the same day, in line with statutory guidance.

Where contact cannot be made by telephone, written communication will be provided. This communication will include time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention as well as:

- ➢ Brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance
- ➢ Brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
- ➢ Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable
- Records will include:
    - what happened before, during and after the incident
    - the reason for the intervention
    - the type of intervention used and duration
    - staff and pupils involved

    - any injuries or follow-up actions
- Where a behaviour support plan, positive handling plan or risk assessment is in place, it will be reviewed following any incident, and updated where necessary.
- Incident records will be monitored regularly by senior leaders and the DSL, and reviewed to identify:
    - patterns or triggers
    - training needs
    - opportunities to reduce future incidents
- Where appropriate, findings from incident reviews will inform updates to individual plans, staff training, and whole-school practice.

The LAB need to have a clear understanding of the procedures for recording and reporting.

Debriefing Following an Incident Involving Restrictive Intervention

- Pupils and staff involved in any incident will be checked for signs of injury, and first aid will be administered where required.
- The pupil will be supported to return to a calm state in a safe environment, with appropriate supervision maintained at all times.
- Once the pupil is regulated and ready, a trained member of staff will engage in a supportive conversation to help understand the incident, identify any triggers, and consider ways to reduce the likelihood of recurrence. This will be approached in a calm and restorative manner.
- All staff involved will be given the opportunity to take part in a structured debrief, which will focus on reflection, wellbeing and identifying any learning to inform future practice. Appropriate senior leadership support will be provided, and external support accessed where necessary.
- The school will ensure that all incidents are recorded in line with statutory guidance and that parents/carers are informed as required.

Complaints

Any complaint or concern regarding staff conduct will be managed in line with the school's safeguarding procedures and the Trust's **Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy**.

Where appropriate, concerns will be referred to the relevant safeguarding leads and external agencies in accordance with statutory guidance.

If required, disciplinary procedures may be followed in response to findings of misconduct.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's Behaviour Policy and in accordance with statutory guidance and Trust requirements.

Next review date: June 2027