

Reepham Church of England Primary School

Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions Policy



1. Purpose

This policy sets out how Reepham Church of England Primary School ensures the **safe, lawful, and proportionate use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions**, in line with [Department for Education guidance](#) effective from April 2026.

The policy prioritises:

- Safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils and staff
 - Prevention and de-escalation
 - Transparency and accountability
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2. Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- DfE guidance: *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools* (2026)

All school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force where necessary.

3. Definitions

3.1 Reasonable Force

“Reasonable force” means using **no more force than is necessary** for the shortest time to achieve a legitimate aim.

It includes a wide range of actions involving physical contact, from guiding a pupil to safety to restraining a pupil in more serious situations.

3.2 Restrictive Interventions

Restrictive interventions are actions that **limit a pupil’s movement or liberty**, including:

- Physical restraint
- Blocking or guiding movement

- Seclusion (where applicable)
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4. Principles

At Reepham Church of England Primary School, we will:

- Use **force only as a last resort**
- Use the **minimum force necessary** and for the shortest time
- Prioritise **de-escalation and prevention strategies**
- Act in the **best interests of the child**
- Avoid any practice that could cause harm, distress, or trauma

The use of force must always be **reasonable, proportionate, and necessary**.

5. When Reasonable Force May Be Used

Staff may use reasonable force to:

- Prevent injury to a pupil or others
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent a criminal offence
- Maintain good order and discipline

Examples include:

- Separating pupils fighting
 - Preventing a pupil from leaving a safe area
 - Removing a disruptive pupil where necessary
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6. Unacceptable Use of Force

Staff must **not**:

- Use force as punishment
- Use excessive or disproportionate force
- Restrict breathing or circulation
- Apply pressure to the neck, head, abdomen, or chest
- Hold a pupil face-down on the ground

Any such actions are strictly prohibited.

7. Prevention and De-escalation

The school prioritises reducing the need for physical intervention through:

- Positive behaviour strategies
- Individual behaviour support plans
- Early intervention and risk assessment
- Staff training in de-escalation techniques

Prevention and de-escalation must always be attempted where safe to do so.

8. Use of Restrictive Interventions

Where force is unavoidable:

- Only trained staff should use restrictive physical interventions wherever possible
- Interventions must be **proportionate and time-limited**
- The dignity and safety of the pupil must be maintained

Special consideration must be given to:

- Pupils with SEND
 - Medical conditions
 - Trauma or safeguarding vulnerabilities
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9. Recording and Reporting

The school will:

- Record all **significant incidents** involving reasonable force (See Appendix A)
 - Include details such as:
 - Date, time, location
 - Staff involved
 - Reason for intervention
 - Type and duration of force
 - Outcome and any injuries
 - Inform parents/carers of significant incidents
 - Complete a post-incident reflection form
 - Upload recorded incident to the school's CPOMs system
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10. Staff Training and Support

The school will:

- Provide appropriate training on:
 - Behaviour management
 - De-escalation
 - Use of Reasonable Force training
 - Safe physical intervention via Team Teach (where required)
 - Ensure staff understand their legal powers and responsibilities
 - Provide support following incidents
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11. Safeguarding and Wellbeing

Following any use of force:

- The pupil will be supported and reassured
- Staff involved will be supported
- Any safeguarding concerns will be addressed immediately

The school recognises that inappropriate use of force can cause harm and will act accordingly.

12. Complaints and Allegations

All complaints or allegations relating to the use of force will be:

- Taken seriously
 - Investigated promptly
 - Managed in line with safeguarding and disciplinary procedures
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13. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher and governing body will:

- Monitor incidents and patterns
 - Use data to improve practice
 - Review this policy annually or in line with updated guidance
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14. Equality and Inclusion

The school will ensure that:

- No pupil is treated less favourably due to protected characteristics
 - Interventions are adapted to individual needs
 - Reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with SEND
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15. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Behaviour Policy
 - Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
 - SEND Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
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Appendix A - **Record of use of reasonable force and reflection notes.**

Approved FGM: May 2026

Review Date: May 2027

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RECORD OF USE OF REASONABLE FORCE (Appendix A)

1. Pupil Details

Name:

Date of Birth:

Year Group / Class:

SEN / EHCP (if applicable):

Relevant Medical Needs:

2. Incident Details

Date of Incident:

Time:

Location:

Type of Activity (e.g. lesson, breaktime, transition):

3. Staff Involved

Name(s) of staff using reasonable force:


Role(s):

Other staff present (witnesses):

4. Description of Incident

(Provide a factual, objective account of what happened leading up to the incident.)

- What was happening immediately before the incident?
- What behaviour was observed?
- What risks were identified (to pupil, others, staff, property)?



5. De-escalation Attempts

(Detail strategies used prior to physical intervention.)

- Verbal instructions
- Distraction / redirection
- Withdrawal of audience
- Other (please specify):



6. Reason for Use of Reasonable Force

(Tick all that apply)

- Prevent injury to pupil
- Prevent injury to others
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent serious disruption to learning
- Prevent pupil leaving a safe environment
- Other (please specify):

7. Description of Physical Intervention

Type of intervention used:

Duration:

Level of force used (minimum necessary?):

Was the intervention in line with training received? Yes No

Was the pupil informed during the intervention? Yes No

8. Outcome of Incident

How did the incident end?

Pupil's response after intervention:

Any follow-up actions taken (restorative conversation, sanctions, support):

9. Injuries / Damage

- **Injuries to pupil:** None Yes (details below)
- **Injuries to staff:** None Yes (details below)
- **Damage to property:** None Yes (details below)

(Provide details and note if medical attention was required.)

10. Safeguarding Considerations

- **Any safeguarding concerns arising from this incident?** Yes No
- If yes, details and actions taken:

11. Communication

Parents/carers informed? Yes No

- Date/time:
- Method (phone/email/meeting):

Senior Leadership Team informed? Yes No

Recorded in behaviour/safeguarding system? Yes No

12. Reflection and Review

(To be completed by staff and/or SLT)

- Was the use of force reasonable, proportionate, and necessary?
- Could anything have been done differently?
- Are changes needed to pupil's behaviour/support plan?
- Are additional staff training needs identified?

- **Senior Leader Review:**

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

14. Headteacher / DSL Oversight (if required)

- **Reviewed by:**

 - **Outcome / further action:**
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15. Parent / Carer Informed:

- **Parent/Carer Name:**
- **Parent/Carer Signature:**

- **Date:**

- **Parent / Carer Comments:**