



Restrictive Intervention and use of Reasonable Force Policy

This policy sets out the framework for the use of Restrictive Intervention and Acceptable forms of Intervention including Reasonable Force at The Mount School York and should be read in conjunction with our school Behaviour Policies.

At The Mount School York we fully recognise the contribution we make to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.

We believe that pupils need to be safe, know how to behave, and know that the adults around them can manage them safely and confidently. Restrictive Intervention should only be used in exceptional circumstances, and, on such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention are used.

All staff need to feel able to manage inappropriate behaviour, and to have an understanding of what challenging behaviours might be communicating. They need to know what the options open to them are, and they need to be free of undue worries about the risks of legal action against them if they use appropriate physical intervention.

Parents need to know that their children are safe with us, and they need to be properly informed if their child is the subject of a Restrictive Intervention, including the nature of the intervention, and the rationale for its use.

Definition Of Restrictive Intervention and use of Reasonable Force

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances.

- Injuring themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Causing damage to property
- Causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

The term 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 uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

The term Reasonable force is defined as 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.

Use of reasonable force to search pupils

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 only.

Date of last review: April 2026
Date of next review: April 2028
Reviewed by: Deputy Head of School/Head of the Junior School

Minimising use of Restrictive interventions

The Mount school uses whole school methods to minimise the need to use restrictive intervention. These include:

Whole school

- Having clear school values about respect that are communicated widely and are the basis of pupil and staff communication and interactions in school.
- Induction and staff training in behaviour management and effective communication strategies.
- Duty rotas to ensure communal spaces are managed well.
- Reporting concerns clear and easy for both staff and pupils so the Executive or Pastoral leadership team can respond quickly to concerns to minimise escalation.
- Recording and analysing behaviour data and data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform planning.

Individual approaches

- working closely with parents 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
- giving pupils time, space and strategies to calm down before their behaviour escalates

When The Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention May Be Appropriate

Restrictive Physical Intervention will be used when all other strategies have failed, and therefore only as a last resort. However, there are other situations when physical handling may be necessary, for example in a situation of clear danger or extreme urgency. Certain pupils may become distressed, agitated, and out of control, and need calming with a brief Restrictive Physical Intervention that is un-resisted after a few seconds.

The safety and well-being of all staff and pupils are important considerations. Under certain conditions this duty must be an over-riding factor.

- Necessity
- Proportional
- Welfare of pupils
- SEND pupils

Appendix one sets out considerations for staff.

Planning For The Use Of Restrictive Intervention and use of Reasonable Force

Staff will use the minimum force needed to restore safety and appropriate behaviour.

The principles relating to the intervention are as follows:

- Restrictive Intervention is an act of care and control, not punishment. It is never used to force compliance with staff instructions.
- Staff will only use it when there are good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary, and it is in the pupil's and/or other pupils' best interests.
- Staff will take steps in advance to avoid the need for Restrictive Intervention through dialogue and diversion, and the pupil will be warned, at their level of understanding, that Restrictive Intervention will be used unless they cease the unacceptable behaviour.
- Only the minimum force necessary will be used to prevent severe distress, injury, or damage.
- Staff will be able to show that the intervention used was in keeping with the incident.
- Every effort will be made to secure the presence of other staff, and these staff may act as assistants and/or witnesses.

- As soon as it is safe, the Restrictive Intervention will be relaxed to allow the pupil to regain self-control.
- A distinction will be maintained between the use of a one-off intervention which is appropriate to a particular circumstance, and the using of it repeatedly as a regular feature of the setting.
- Escalation will be avoided at all costs, especially if it would make the overall situation more destructive and unmanageable.
- The age, understanding, and competence of the individual pupil will always be taken into account.
- In developing Individual Education/Behaviour Plans, consideration will be given to approaches appropriate to each pupil's circumstance.
- Procedures are in place, through the pastoral system of the setting, for supporting and debriefing pupils and staff after every incident of Restrictive Intervention, as it is essential to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved at these times.
- Detailed written reports of incidents requiring physical restraint should be made. There is a requirement for parents to be informed on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Staff must follow the guidelines below in the event of using Restrictive Physical Intervention.

1. Warn the pupil what will happen if they do not comply. Keep calm and continue to communicate with the pupil. Make it clear that the physical restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to become necessary.
2. Seek assistance from another adult. Explain to the pupil that you have sent for help and continue to try and de-fuse the situation.

Physical Interventions might include:

- Physically interpose between pupils.
 - Blocking a pupil's path.
 - Holding.
 - Leading pupil by hand or arm.
 - Shepherding pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back.
 - In extreme circumstance more restrictive holds may need to be used.
 - If a pupil refuses to leave the room when a teacher feels it necessary; where possible, two adults will together escort a pupil from the room.
3. Staff must not act in a way which might cause injury, for example:
 - Holding around the neck.
 - Slapping, punching, kicking.
 - Twisting limbs.
 - Tripping.
 - Holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear.
 - Holding a pupil onto the ground.

4. Staff should avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way which might be considered indecent.

Acceptable Forms of Intervention

There are occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with pupils for a variety of reasons, for example:

- Reassurance for a younger child following an injury or an upset.
- Support during a PE activity.
- Responding to requests for help with clothing and shoes.
- Handling a medical emergency and giving first aid.

- Holding hands with the teacher in the case of younger children giving praise or approval through a hand placed on the head, shoulder or back (in a public situation).
- Changing a child who has soiled themselves.
- To comfort a pupil in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age).
- To gently direct a pupil.
- In an emergency to avert danger to the pupil or pupils.
- to congratulate or praise a pupil, for example a pat on the back or a handshake
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching
- In rare circumstances, when Restrictive Physical Intervention is warranted.

In all situations where physical contact between staff and pupils takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the school's child protection (or any other relevant) policy
- the applicable circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present
- the individual pupil's age
- any other material factors, including but not limited to whether:
 - o the pupil has SEND or other vulnerabilities
 - o any alternative strategies that do not include physical contact can be used

Seclusion

Seclusion defined as a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving. This will be used only as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation, not as a threat of punishment.

The place to which the pupil is confined will be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil, the pupil will be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil will be allowed to leave.

Incidents of seclusion will be recorded on wellbeing manager.

RECORDING AND REPORTING

Incidents must be recorded as soon as practicable after the event. This is set out in appendix 2

It should be recorded by the staff member(s) involved this should be done no later than the same day and recoded on well being manager.

This will be communicated to parents in writing on the day of the incident.

These incidents will be evaluated via the data analysis of wellbeing manager with the pastoral leadership team and as part of governor reports. Trends and actions based on trends will be recorded.

COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS

1. Parents of pupils have the right to complain about actions taken by school staff. If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff the school should follow the guidance set out in the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
2. Other complaints should be dealt with under the school's usual Complaints Procedures.

RELATED POLICIES

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Behaviour Policies

This policy complies with the relevant requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Appendix I

Guidance to staff on determining when use of restrictive intervention is appropriate

There will be times when you may need to use restrictive interventions. The decision on whether it is reasonable to use a restrictive intervention depends on the individual circumstances of each situation. To make this assessment, you should consider the following:

Is it necessary?

- You should consider whether there are other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage a situation.
- You should assess whether a restrictive intervention is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself.
- Where possible, you should communicate with other staff members to understand any broader risks in the environment.

Is it proportionate?

- You should use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time required to reduce the relevant risks.
- If the intervention itself is escalating the situation, you should reconsider your approach and attempt an alternative strategy.
- You should consider the personal circumstances of the pupil such as medical conditions, special educational needs or other vulnerabilities, their characteristics such as age and size, and must consider relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.¹⁴

Have you considered the pupil's welfare?

- You should consider the impact on the pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. For example, pupils who have experienced an adverse life event, with diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, ¹⁴ Equality Act 2010 ¹¹ past trauma or neglect, communication difficulties, or other needs, may find the use of restrictive interventions particularly distressing.
- You should seek to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity. This may include, where possible, considering the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers.
- Where possible, you should clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why, and explain what the pupil needs to do.
- For pupils with difficulties with speech, language and communication, or with English as an additional language, verbal and/or non-verbal strategies should be used to ensure the pupil understands what is happening and has adequate time to process information and respond.
- You should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.

This list of factors is not exhaustive, and you should also take into account other relevant considerations.

Appendix 2

Recording and reporting the use of force and restrictive intervention:

As soon as possible following the incident and on the day itself a report must be put onto wellbeing manager by the member of staff involved

The report must include:

- names of pupil and staff directly involved
- any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code
- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and (where relevant) what type of reasonable force was applied, the degree of force, and details of any physical injuries sustained
- brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance
- any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts

PLT or Deputy Head of School may also record:

- the pupil's and/or witnesses' accounts of what happened,
- when and how parents were notified (this must be on the day)
- and what follow-up has taken place

Head of Year or Deputy Head of school will report the incident to parents. This must include:

- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- 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

This can be done on the phone but **must be followed up by providing this information in writing via email.**

Where appropriate a follow up discussion about the incident will take place to consider the incident and agree to review or produce support plans where appropriate.