



Restrictive Interventions and Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Policy Reference	
Committee	LGB
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Ratified by Governors	
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MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local procedures, or Academy practice relating to behaviour, restrictive interventions, or the use of reasonable force.

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PREFACE

Chiltern Hills Academy is a learning environment at the heart of its community. We encourage every person in our community to:

Create, Aspire and Excel to 'Live life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)

We achieve this through our dedication to the seven Christian values of love, hope, self-discipline, compassion, forgiveness, respect and honesty.

We are a community in which staff, students and parents work collaboratively to develop a learning environment and organisation which is spiritual, safe, innovative, creative and exciting. All members of the Academy are motivated and inspired by the vision to give their best and to play a full part in the life of the school and in their own developing lives.

The Governors at Chiltern Hills Academy are committed to achieving the vision and values. They oversee and monitor this policy to ensure that it is being achieved.

1. The DfE Guidance and Legal Framework

- 1.2.1 The guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), *Restrictive Interventions, Including the Use of Reasonable Force in Schools* (April 2026), states that having a calm, orderly and supportive school climate will minimise the likelihood that restrictive interventions will be required
- 1.2.2 The Academy will always seek to prevent situations from escalating through positive relationships, early intervention, de-escalation strategies, and appropriate support for students. Restrictive interventions must only be used as a last resort, when necessary, proportionate and lawful, and for the shortest time required to reduce the risk of harm.

The Academy recognises that appropriate physical contact with students is often a normal and necessary part of school life. However, the use of reasonable force or other restrictive interventions should only occur where it is lawful, necessary, proportionate and in the best interests of maintaining safety and preventing harm. Staff must always seek to use de-escalation and preventative strategies before considering any restrictive intervention wherever it is safe and practicable to do so.

The DfE further states that:

- Relationships between staff and students should be effective and respectful;
- Staff should help students develop the skills to manage strong feelings

- Challenging behaviours are often foreseeable, and therefore preventable. Sometimes the behaviours are totally unpredictable;
- Communication with students, especially those displaying strong emotion, should be calm and non-threatening.

Staff should take into account any known Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), medical conditions, communication needs, trauma history or behavioural support plans when assessing risk and determining an appropriate response. Reasonable adjustments should be considered wherever appropriate.

To ensure staff safety and that they remain free from accusations of improper behaviour, staff are asked to adhere to these guidelines:

- Staff, where possible, should not be alone with a student. It is recognised that there will be times when a member of staff will have to be alone with a student during an interview, a counselling session or a particular assessment, but where possible, this should be with the door open in a room with a window
- Staff should recognise the personal space of a student (as a student should always recognise the personal space of an adult) and respect it, whatever the circumstance
- Staff should avoid finger-pointing or comparing the student to brothers and/or sisters, which will exacerbate a possible difficult situation.
- Staff should avoid actions that may unnecessarily escalate a situation. However, where there is a genuine risk of harm to the student or others, staff may position themselves appropriately to help prevent access to unsafe areas, dangerous items or vulnerable individuals. Any action taken must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary.

The following behaviours, in isolation, would not normally warrant the use of restrictive intervention:

- Leaving a lesson without permission.
- Refusing to follow an instruction.
- Low-level disruptive behaviour.

However, restrictive intervention may be justified where these behaviours present a significant and immediate risk of harm to the student or others.

Staff may deem it necessary to use restrictive intervention. This should normally be used only after de-escalation and other preventive strategies have been attempted. However, where there is an immediate risk of harm, staff may need to intervene without first exhausting all other options. Any intervention must be necessary, reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.

If there is the opportunity to warn the student before intervention, that would help, for instance, 'Stop fighting or I will have to separate you'.

Examples where reasonable force or another restrictive intervention may be used include:

- Preventing a student from injuring themselves.
- Preventing a student from injuring another person.
- Preventing serious damage to property.
- Preventing serious disruption where there is a risk to safety.
- Separating students involved in a physical altercation.
- Preventing a student from leaving an area where doing so would expose them or others to a significant risk of harm.
- Preventing a student from using a dangerous object or implement in a way that could cause injury.

Restrictive interventions must never be used:

- As a punishment.
- To secure compliance with instructions where there is no risk of harm.
- To humiliate, intimidate or degrade a student.
- In a manner that is excessive, disproportionate or avoidable.
- Where a less restrictive response would adequately manage the risk.

In the event that reasonable force or another significant restrictive intervention is used:

- The incident must be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as practicable.
- A written record must be completed on the Academy's reporting system before the end of the working day wherever possible.
- The record should include the antecedents, de-escalation strategies used, reasons for intervention, nature of the intervention, duration, outcome and any injuries sustained.
- Parents/carers should be informed of any significant incident involving the use of force in line with the Academy's reporting procedures.
- Following any significant incident, consideration should be given to student welfare, staff welfare and any lessons learned.

2. Staff training

The Academy will ensure that staff receive appropriate training and guidance in behaviour support, de-escalation and the lawful use of reasonable force. Staff who may need to use restrictive interventions as part of their role should receive additional training appropriate to the needs of the students they support.

No member of staff is required to place themselves at risk of injury. Where a situation cannot be safely managed, staff should seek assistance immediately from appropriately trained colleagues or senior leaders. However, all staff retain the legal power to use reasonable force where necessary and proportionate in the circumstances.

3. Post-incident review

Following any significant restrictive intervention, the Academy will consider whether a debrief is appropriate for the student, staff involved and relevant leaders. The purpose of the review will be to identify lessons learned, consider any support required and reduce the likelihood of future incidents.

Appendix

Restrictive Interventions, Including the Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (DfE, April 2026)

[Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance](#)