



Stoke Park School

Restrictive Intervention Policy

Effective from: 1 April 2026

Applies to: All staff, governors, volunteers, and external providers

Reviewed: Annually, or sooner if legislation changes.

Next Review Date: 1 April 2027

Reviewed By: S Elliott – Safeguarding Lead

1. Purpose

- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, and visitors.
- To set out the school's approach to restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in line with statutory DfE guidance effective April 2026.
- To promote prevention, de-escalation, and positive behaviour strategies as the primary means of managing challenging behaviour.
- To clarify staff responsibilities, recording and reporting duties, and expectations for communication with parents and carers.

2. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by:

- *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools* (DfE, 2026)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- SEND Code of Practice

3. Definitions

Restrictive Intervention

Any deliberate act that restricts a pupil's movement, liberty, or freedom to act. This includes:

- Physical restraint
- Reasonable force
- Seclusion (only where lawful and appropriate)
- Mechanical or chemical restraint (not used in this school)

Reasonable Force

Force that is proportionate, necessary, and used to prevent harm, damage, or serious disruption. The new guidance emphasises that force must be time-limited, lawful, and the least restrictive option.

Seclusion

Supervised isolation where a pupil is prevented from leaving. This is only permissible under strict safeguarding conditions and must be recorded and reported as a restrictive intervention.

4. Principles

The school is committed to:

- Prevention first: using de-escalation, relational practice, and positive behaviour support.
- Proportionality: any intervention must be the minimum necessary to keep people safe.
- Safety and dignity: protecting the emotional and physical wellbeing of pupils.
- Transparency: clear recording, reporting, and communication with parents.
- Safeguarding: recognising that restrictive interventions are safeguarding actions and must be treated as such.
- Inclusion: ensuring pupils with SEND or vulnerabilities are protected from disproportionate intervention.

5. When Restrictive Intervention May Be Used

Restrictive intervention may be used only when absolutely necessary to prevent:

- Serious injury to the pupil or others
- Significant damage to property
- Behaviour that poses a serious risk to safety
- Serious disruption to learning where all other strategies have failed

Staff must consider:

- The pupil's age, SEND needs, medical conditions, and known triggers
- Whether the risk can be mitigated through alternative strategies
- Whether the intervention is the least restrictive option available

6. Prohibited Practices

The following are *never permitted*:

- Pain-inducing techniques
- Restrictive interventions used as punishment
- Mechanical or chemical restraint
- Seclusion without supervision
- Holding a pupil in a way that restricts breathing
- Any action that could be degrading, humiliating, or unsafe

These prohibitions reflect the strengthened expectations in the 2026 guidance.

7. Staff Training

- Only staff who are trained in accredited behaviour intervention approaches may use physical restraint.
- All staff receive annual training in:
 - De-escalation
 - Trauma-informed practice
 - Positive behaviour support
 - Legal duties and safeguarding
- Training records are maintained by the school.

8. Pupils with SEND or Vulnerabilities

The guidance places particular emphasis on protecting pupils with SEND from disproportionate intervention.

The school will:

- develop individual risk reduction plans (RRPs) for pupils with known behavioural risks.
- involve parents, carers, and external professionals in planning.
- ensure staff understand the pupil's communication needs, triggers, and calming strategies.
- review plans regularly and after any incident.
- ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND or other vulnerabilities are clearly identified and met through preventative, needs-led approaches, thereby reducing the likelihood of disproportionate intervention and promoting safe, appropriate support.

9. Recording and Reporting (Statutory Requirement)

The 2026 guidance introduces legally enforceable duties to record and report all uses of force and seclusion.

Recording

A written record must be completed as soon as possible and include:

- Date, time, and location
- Staff involved
- Pupil(s) involved
- Triggering events
- De-escalation strategies attempted
- Type and duration of intervention
- Injuries or distress
- Follow-up actions

Reporting

- Parents/carers must be informed on the same day where possible.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must review all incidents.
- Governors receive anonymised termly reports.
- Serious incidents are reported to the local authority and safeguarding partners as required.

10. Post-Incident Support

The school will provide:

For pupils:

- Emotional check-ins
- Restorative conversations
- Review of risk reduction plans
- Support to reintegrate into learning

For staff:

- Debriefing
- Access to supervision or wellbeing support
- Opportunities for reflective practice

11. Communication with Parents and Carers

The school will:

- share this policy annually
- inform parents of any restrictive intervention involving their child
- involve parents in risk reduction planning
- provide opportunities for discussion following incidents

12. Monitoring and Review

- The DSL and senior leadership team will monitor patterns, frequency, and context of interventions.
- Governors will scrutinise data termly.
- The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if guidance changes.

13. Linked Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety Policy