



East Midlands
Education Trust

Restrictive Interventions Policy

Review Date:	Spring 2026	Reviewed and adopted by:	Trustees
Next Review Due:	Spring 2028	Updated by:	D. Painton
Mid-reviews (statutory):			
Document Number:	POL-SCH-007	<i>The information contained in this document is considered proprietary to East Midlands Education Trust in that these items and processes were developed at private expense. This information shall not be released, disclosed, or duplicated.</i>	

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 All East Midlands Education Trust (EMET) schools aim to create a safe, caring and friendly environment for all pupils so that they can learn effectively, improve their life chances and achieve their full potential.
- 1.2 The Trust recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children and protecting them from harm. All our children have equal rights to support and protection. We believe that all students and staff have the right to be and feel safe whilst at school or on a school run activity.
- 1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Trust policies	School policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complaints• Equality• Health and safety• Safeguarding• SEND• Staff Code of Conduct• Whistleblowing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anti-bullying• Behaviour

2. Legislation and guidance

- 2.1 This policy is based on the following Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance:
 - Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- 2.2 This policy is also based on the following legislation:
 - 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
 - The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- 2.3 This policy also complies with our funding agreement the Trust's articles of association.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Restrictive intervention** is a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This policy uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.
- 3.2 **Reasonable force** is 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.

- 3.3 A **significant incident** is any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.
- 3.4 **Seclusion** is a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others, and preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction, blocking, or making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave.
- 3.5 **Restraint** is a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact (for example, holding a pupil's arms to their sides or removing a pupil's crutches would both be considered forms of restraint).

4. Equality statement

- 4.1 EMET has due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PESD), which places a general duty on schools and colleges to have, in the exercise of their functions, due regard for the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation (and any other conduct prohibited under The Equality Act 2010); to advance equality of opportunity; and to foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 4.2 Provisions in The Equality Act 2010 allow schools and colleges to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with specific disadvantages affecting pupils with a particular protected characteristic, such that their needs can be met. There may, therefore, be times when the school may consider positive action to support a group of pupils if there was evidence that they were being disproportionately affected by a particular issue or concern.

5. Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1 This policy applies to all staff and volunteers across the trust. It also applies to extended school and off-site activities.
- 5.2 **All staff** are responsible for:
 - Knowing and understanding:
 - the contents of this policy and those that are listed in section 1.3
 - when they can or should lawfully use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions and how to do so safely
 - the systems for reporting behaviour and/or safeguarding concerns about pupils including incidents in which restrictive interventions have been used
 - Reporting all concerns in a timely manner using the procedures as set out in this policy and/or those policies listed in section 1.3
 - Following their school's procedures
- 5.3 Each school's **Headteacher** is responsible for implementing this policy, including:
 - Ensuring that all staff, including temporary staff, and volunteers are informed about the school's systems to manage and de-escalate behaviour as part of their induction

- Ensuring that all staff, including temporary staff, and volunteers, understand the procedures set out in this policy
- Ensuring that all staff have training on positive behaviour management, de-escalation and the safe and lawful use of restrictive interventions appropriate to their role, and that this training is refreshed on a regular basis
- Communicating this policy to parents and carers when their child joins the school and via the school website
- Ensuring that records of the use of restrictive interventions are well organised, appropriately detailed and kept securely
- Ensuring that Governors receive regular reports on the use of restrictive interventions in the school

5.4 Each school's **Governing Body** is responsible for:

- Being aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty)
- Appointing a link governor to monitor the effectiveness of this policy in conjunction with the full Governing Body
- Ensuring that all staff undergo training suitable for their role and in line with the information in this policy
- Reviewing and evaluating data and information on the use of restrictive interventions in the school on a regular basis

6. The use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force

6.1 Under Section 93 of the Education Inspection Act (2006), all members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force to prevent or stop a pupil from:

- causing injury to themselves or others
- committing a criminal offence
- damaging property
- causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

6.2 The trust recognises that parental consent is not required to use restrictive interventions, including reasonable force.

6.3 Each school will take proactive steps to minimise the need for restrictive interventions through:

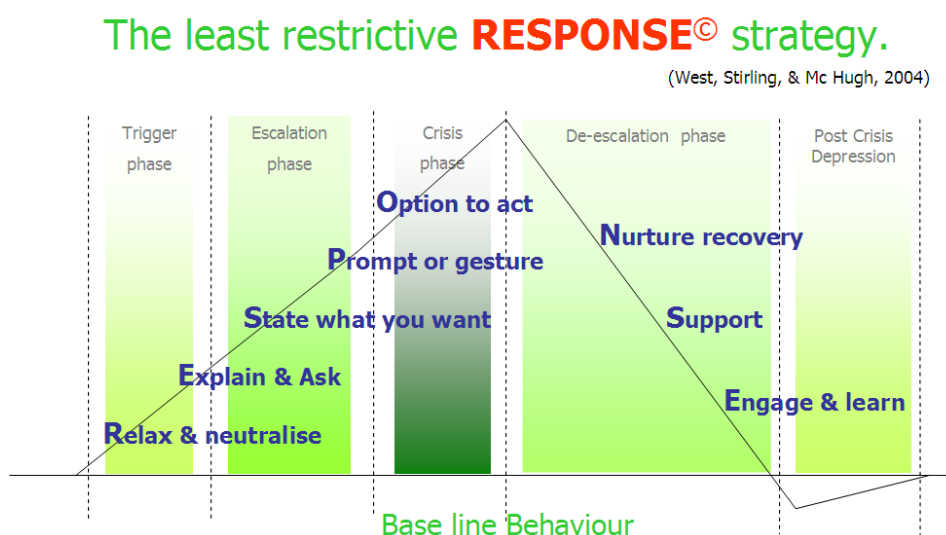
- positive behaviour support
- trauma-informed practice
- early interventions
- reasonable adjustments
- de-escalation strategies

6.4 Our staff will only use restrictive interventions as a last resort. Actions will always be taken to try to de-escalate incidents as they arise and to prevent them from reaching crisis point. Staff will only use

restrictive interventions when the risks involved with doing so are outweighed by the risks associated with not doing so.

- 6.5 The trust recognises that it is unlawful for a member of staff to use force on a pupil for the purposes of punishment or to enforce compliance for safeguarding or safety reasons.
- 6.6 Where force is used, a member of staff will use the minimum amount of force required. Wherever possible, they will do so with another member of staff present. Pupils will never be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation. Staff will avoid any intervention that is likely to injure a pupil unless circumstances are so extreme that there is no viable alternative. Force will be used only as part of a broader response based on the RESPONSE strategy.

Overlaid onto The Assault Cycle (Kaplan & Wheeler, 1983)



Relax and neutralise: Try to respond in a relaxed way that does not focus attention on the behaviour i.e. interact and focus on the person whilst downplaying the behaviour to neutralise its effect. Maintain a neutral response and attempt to positively interact with the person.

Explain and ask: Explain what you want the person to do. This should be in the form of a request that can be understood by the person to encourage them to behave differently.

State: State what you want the person to do. This requires a clear and assertive statement that can be understood by the person to encourage them to behave differently.

Prompt or gesture: Prompt the person to change their behaviour by adding a physical gesture or physical contact to your verbal interactions.

Option to act: Option to act to interrupt the behaviour and reduce risk. You may be able to justify a physical action to 'disengage' from the person, or to implement some type of restrictive physical restriction in the form of 'safe holding' to reduce the immediate or potential risk(s).

Nurture recovery: Nurture the recovery process. This requires staff to work with the person to help them to regain personal control and composure, thus moving towards a lower-risk state of baseline behaviour.

Support: Supporting people after an event is crucial in helping to avoid a repeat incident in the short-term, and to help people to deal effectively with their experience.

Engage and learn: Engaging with the person at an appropriate time after the event will help them to express their thoughts, feelings and perceptions of the incident and staff responses. This process will encourage reflection and the potential for learning by all parties and offer an opportunity to make complaints. By ensuring a transparent and open approach, staff will benefit greatly by gaining a better understanding and insight into the person and their particular needs.

- 6.7 Where force is used, pupils will be assessed by a qualified first aider and provided appropriate medical support for any injuries as soon as possible.
- 6.8 An individual risk assessment will be undertaken where it is known that restrictive interventions are more likely to be necessary for a particular pupil, such as a pupil whose SEND is associated with extreme behaviours.

6.9 Schools will not grant any requests from parents or staff members not to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions. The trust recognises that the adoption of a 'no contact' policy can leave staff unable to intervene where reasonable in the circumstances to fully protect pupils. In addition, there are other circumstances in which it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with pupils. Examples of such occasions include:

- to give first aid
- to guide or escort pupils, such as holding the hand of a pupil at the front/back of the line when going to assembly, when walking together around the school or on a school trip, or when helping a pupil to a space they have chosen to access to self-regulate
- to comfort a distressed pupil
- 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 assessing whether physical contact is appropriate in a give situation, a member of staff will use their judgement but have regard to the school's safeguarding policy, the applicable circumstances, the pupil's age and whether the pupil has SEND or any other vulnerabilities. They will also consider whether any alternative strategies that do not include physical contact can be used.

6.10 Headteachers 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. Further details are outlined in the school's behaviour policy., Under this policy, 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.

6.11 Seclusion will only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behaviour dysregulation. The place to which the pupil is confined will be safe and all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure it does not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil. The pupil will be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion. The period of seclusion will be brought to an end as soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced.

7. Staff training

7.1 All staff are provided with training on:

- positive behaviour management
- de-escalation and assessing risk
- the safe and lawful use of restrictive interventions including reasonable force

7.2 The training provided to staff will be relevant to their role and take account of the context of their school and needs of their pupils.

7.3 Training will be provided on induction and updated regularly.

8. Recording and reporting

8.1 Each significant incident in which a member of staff uses a restrictive intervention on a pupil (including force, restraint or seclusion) will be recorded by the school on whose roll the pupil is registered. The record will include:

- the names of the pupil and any 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
- the time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- a 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
- a 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
- details of when and by whom parents/carers were notified of the incident

8.2 An incident that results in the use of one or more restrictive interventions by a member of staff will be reported to the pupil's parent/carer, provided that doing so would not be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil. This remains the case where the use of restrictive interventions in certain circumstances is agreed with parents/carers as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan. When the incident is reported, the school will provide the parent/carer with the following information:

- the time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance
- where force was used, a brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
- details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable

The school will ensure that the parent/carer is offered the opportunity for a follow-up discussion about the incident.

8.3 The Governing Body will regularly review and interrogate data on restrictive interventions to ensure that school leaders are identifying and implementing:

- improvements that can be made to policies and practice including support measures for pupils and staff
- additional staff training needs
- repeat patterns and triggers
- any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics, have SEND or are vulnerable in some other way

9. Post-incident support and review

9.1 After any incident involved the use of one or more restrictive interventions, pupils and staff will be provided with appropriate support.

9.2 Incidents will be reviewed to identify learning and reduce future risk.

10. Complaints and allegations

- 10.1 If any party has a concern or complaint over the implementation of this policy, they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the Headteacher, in accordance with the complaints policy.
- 10.2 If an allegation regarding inappropriate use of force and/or other restrictive interventions is made against a member of staff, this matter will be followed up in accordance with the safeguarding and disciplinary policies.
- 10.3 If a member of staff, governor or volunteer working in our school has a concern about wrongdoing or malpractice, in relation to safeguarding or any other matter, it is important that they can raise this concern without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The East Midlands Education Trust's whistleblowing policy sets out further details on raising such concerns.

11. Monitoring and review

- 11.1 The implementation of this policy will be monitored in each school by the Headteacher. Support and further monitoring will be provided by the trust central team as required.
- 11.2 This policy will be reviewed every two years or in the event of changes to national legislation or statutory guidance.