

ADDENDUM TO POLICY: USE OF RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION, REASONABLE FORCE AND PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Effective from April 2026
To be read alongside the existing CST policy

1. Status of this Addendum

This addendum has been developed to ensure compliance with updated guidance issued by the Department for Education entitled "*Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools*" (effective April 2026).

It must be read in conjunction with the school's existing [policy on restrictive intervention, reasonable force and physical restraint](#). This document supplements, but does not replace, the current policy and will remain in force until a full policy review is completed.

2. Expansion of Scope and Terminology

The school recognises that the updated guidance introduces a broader framework for understanding restrictive intervention.

Restrictive intervention is now defined as any action, whether physical or non-physical, which is intended to prevent, restrict or subdue a pupil's movement.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- The use of reasonable force
- Physical restraint
- Seclusion
- Restraint that occurs without direct physical contact

This represents a shift from previous policy, which primarily focused on physical restraint and reasonable force. The school adopts this broader definition with immediate effect.

3. Core Principles

In addition to the principles already outlined in the existing policy, the school affirms the following:

- Restrictive intervention will **never be used as a form of punishment**
- Any use of restrictive intervention must be:
 - o Necessary
 - o Proportionate
 - o Time-limited
 - o The least restrictive option available
- The welfare, dignity and safety of the pupil must remain central at all times
- Wherever possible, staff will:
 - o Explain what is happening
 - o Explain why the intervention is necessary
 - o Support the pupil to understand how the intervention can be brought to an end

4. Seclusion

The current policy does not explicitly define or regulate seclusion. This addendum introduces the following requirements.

Seclusion is defined as the confinement of a pupil away from others, where they are prevented from leaving.

The school will ensure that:

- Seclusion is used **only as a safety measure to prevent harm**, not as a disciplinary sanction
- It is **never implemented through threat or punishment**
- The environment used is:
 - Safe
 - Calm
 - Not intimidating or distressing
- The pupil is **continuously supervised** throughout the period of seclusion
- The pupil is allowed to leave **as soon as the risk of harm has reduced**

All incidents of seclusion are subject to the recording and reporting requirements outlined below.

5. Prevention, De-escalation and SEND

In line with updated guidance from the Department for Education, the school places a strong emphasis on prevention and the reduction of the need for restrictive interventions.

Staff will take proactive steps to identify and respond to early signs of distress, escalation or dysregulation in pupils. This includes recognising known triggers, adapting the environment where appropriate, and using effective de-escalation strategies to prevent situations from reaching a point where restrictive intervention becomes necessary.

Where pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), staff will take full account of the ways in which communication needs, sensory differences, trauma, anxiety or other vulnerabilities may influence behaviour. The school recognises that pupils with SEND may be disproportionately affected by restrictive interventions and will take reasonable steps to minimise this risk.

Where there is an identified risk that a pupil may require restrictive intervention, the school will ensure that appropriate behaviour support plans and risk assessments are in place. These will be developed, where appropriate, in collaboration with parents, the pupil, and relevant professionals. Such plans will be reviewed regularly and following any significant incident, to ensure that they remain effective and responsive to the pupil's needs.

6. Recording Duties (Statutory Requirements)

The school acknowledges its statutory duty to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place for the recording of restrictive interventions.

All significant incidents involving the use of force must be recorded in writing as soon as practicable after the event. The record should be completed by the staff member or members involved, and every effort should be made to ensure that this is done on the same day as the incident.

In addition to significant uses of force, the school must also record all incidents of seclusion and all incidents of restraint, including those that do not involve direct physical contact. These

requirements apply irrespective of whether the intervention forms part of an agreed behaviour support plan.

The school will ensure that its recording systems are robust, consistent and capable of capturing all required information in accordance with statutory guidance. Records will be kept in a Number and Bound Book or on CPOMS.

Each record will include, as a minimum, the names of those involved, the time, date, location and duration of the incident, relevant contextual information about the pupil, a clear account of the events leading up to the incident, the reasons why the intervention was considered necessary, the type and degree of intervention used, details of any injury sustained, and any follow-up actions taken.

7. Reporting Duties to Parents (Statutory – Significant Change)

The updated guidance introduces strengthened expectations regarding communication with parents following restrictive interventions. The school recognises that this represents a significant development in practice and will ensure full compliance.

Following any significant incident involving the use of force, the school will inform the pupil's parents as soon as practicable. The school will endeavour to ensure that this communication takes place on the same day as the incident. This information will normally be provided in writing, for example via email or the school's established communication systems.

The written report will include, as a minimum, the time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention, a clear explanation of why the intervention was considered necessary, the type and degree of force used, and details of any injury sustained by the pupil. In addition to incidents involving force, the school will also inform parents in writing of all seclusion incidents and all restraint incidents that fall within the scope of the 2025 Regulations, including those that do not involve direct physical contact. The same expectation applies that parents are informed as soon as practicable, and wherever possible on the same day. The requirement to report to parents applies even where restrictive interventions are anticipated within an agreed behaviour support plan.

There are limited circumstances in which reporting to parents may not be appropriate. These might include where it is judged that informing parents would be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil. In such cases, the school will follow the appropriate alternative reporting arrangements, including informing another appropriate individual or the relevant local authority where necessary.

Where appropriate, the school will offer parents the opportunity to engage in a follow-up discussion. This will support a shared understanding of the incident, allow consideration of triggers and preventative strategies, and inform any necessary revisions to behaviour support plans.

8. Post-Incident Support

The school recognises that incidents involving restrictive intervention can have a significant impact on pupils, staff and others involved. Appropriate support will therefore be provided following any such incident.

Where required, the school will ensure that immediate medical assessment or treatment is made available to any pupil or member of staff who may have been injured. In addition, a structured debriefing process will take place as soon as practicable after the incident.

This process will aim to support reflection, learning and the restoration of relationships. Wherever possible, the debrief will be facilitated by a member of staff who was not directly involved in the incident, in order to provide an objective perspective.

The school will also consider the needs of other pupils who may have witnessed the incident and provide appropriate reassurance or support where necessary.

9. Monitoring and Governance

The Trust Education Central Team, the governing body and school leaders will ensure that all duties relating to restrictive intervention are effectively implemented and monitored.

Records of restrictive interventions will be reviewed regularly in order to identify patterns, trends and areas for improvement. This will include analysis of repeat incidents, the effectiveness of preventative strategies, and any emerging training needs for staff.

Particular attention will be given to identifying any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions affecting pupils with SEND or those who share protected characteristics. The school will use this analysis to inform continuous improvement in policy, practice and staff development.

10. Implementation

The school will take all necessary steps to ensure that this addendum is implemented effectively and without delay.

This will include ensuring that staff are aware of and understand the updated requirements, that recording and reporting systems are fully compliant, and that communication processes support timely and effective engagement with parents.

Behaviour support plans, risk assessments and related documentation will be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect the changes set out in this addendum.