



**Every Child Matters Academy Trust**  
**Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy**

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<b>Approved by Chair of Trustees</b>	Signature	Name
		W.Ward
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## 1. Aims & Principles

The policy has been developed in response to the DfE guidance 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools' effective from April 2026 .

The aims of the policy are to;

- Safeguard pupils, staff, and visitors by providing a clear framework for the lawful, safe and proportionate use of physical intervention where necessary.
- Promote a positive and inclusive behaviour culture that prioritises prevention, early intervention and de-escalation strategies, reducing the need for restrictive practices.
- Ensure compliance with statutory requirements and DfE guidance, including the appropriate use, recording and review of restrictive interventions.
- Protect the dignity, rights and wellbeing of pupils, ensuring that physical intervention is used only as a last resort and for the shortest possible duration.
- Support staff confidence and consistency, by clarifying when and how physical intervention may be used and ensuring appropriate training and guidance are in place.
- Ensure transparency and accountability, through clear expectations for recording, reporting and reviewing incidents involving physical intervention.
- Promote partnership with parents and carers, ensuring timely communication following significant incidents and collaborative planning to reduce future risk.
- Enable effective monitoring and continuous improvement, using incident data to inform training, policy review and improvements in behaviour support practice across the Trust.

This policy links to the following policies:

- Behaviour
- Safeguarding
- Anti-Bullying
- SEND

## 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

**Restrictive Intervention;** Any action taken by a member of staff that intentionally limits a pupil's movement, liberty or independence. Restrictive interventions may be physical or non-physical and must only be used where necessary to prevent harm, serious disruption or criminal behaviour. All restrictive interventions must be lawful, proportionate and used for the shortest time possible.

**Physical Intervention / Reasonable Force;** A type of restrictive intervention involving physical contact with a pupil, used to prevent:

- injury to the pupil or others
- serious damage to property
- a criminal offence

- serious disruption to the safe and orderly running of the school

“Reasonable force” refers to the degree of force used, not the action itself. What is reasonable will depend on the circumstances, the age, size and needs of the pupil, and the seriousness of the risk involved.

**Positive Handling;** A term sometimes used to describe planned, trained physical interventions that are intended to keep people safe. While this term may be used in training contexts, it is not a legal term and does not remove the requirement for interventions to meet the definition of reasonable and proportionate force.

**De-escalation;** A range of strategies used to reduce agitation, anxiety or conflict, including verbal reassurance, calm body language, offering choices, distraction, and time and space. De-escalation strategies must always be attempted before considering restrictive intervention, wherever it is safe to do so.

**Significant Incident;** Any incident involving the use of physical intervention or restrictive practices that goes beyond normal physical contact.

Significant incidents must be recorded, reported and reviewed in line with Trust procedures and DfE guidance.

**Seclusion;** The supervised isolation of a pupil in a room or space from which they are prevented from leaving. Seclusion is a restrictive practice and should not be used in mainstream primary schools except in exceptional circumstances where it is lawful, risk-assessed and compliant with safeguarding requirements.

**Personalised Handling Plan / Behaviour Support Plan;** A documented plan identifying known risks, triggers, preventative strategies and agreed responses for a pupil whose behaviour may present a foreseeable risk. These plans should be developed collaboratively and reviewed regularly.

### **3. Legislation and statutory guidance**

This policy is informed by and complies with relevant legislation, including the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which provide school staff with the legal power to use reasonable force where necessary to prevent injury, criminal offences or serious damage to property. It also reflects the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, and the Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR), ensuring that the rights, safety, dignity and wellbeing of pupils and staff are protected.

The policy has been developed in line with the Department for Education’s statutory guidance Restrictive Interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools (effective April 2026) and Keeping Children Safe in Education. It also takes account of duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice, emphasising the importance of prevention,

reasonable adjustments, safeguarding, appropriate recording and review, and transparent engagement with parents and carers.

#### **4. Roles & Responsibilities**

All Staff;

- Familiarise themselves with this policy and understand the principles of safe, lawful and proportionate use of Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPI).
- Understand when the use of RPI may be appropriate, including recognising the difference between routine physical contact, supportive handling, and restrictive intervention in response to imminent risk of harm.
- Prioritise prevention and de-escalation strategies wherever possible, including verbal reassurance, calm body language, offering choices, distraction, and allowing pupils time and space to self-regulate.
- Use RPI only as a last resort, when all other strategies have failed or where there is an immediate risk of harm to the pupil, others, or property, in line with professional judgement and proportionality.
- Participate, where appropriate, in training offered relevant to behaviour management, RPI techniques, de-escalation, and safeguarding, and ensure skills are updated regularly in line with Trust requirements.
- Follow individual Personalised Handling Plans and Behaviour Support Plans, adapting strategies according to agreed plans.
- Review and update plans following incidents, changes in pupil needs, or after consultation with parents/carers and relevant professionals.
- Record all incidents of restrictive intervention promptly, accurately, and in the Trust-approved format.
- Report incidents appropriately, escalating any concerns, injuries, or complaints to senior leadership or safeguarding leads in line with Trust procedures.
- Participate in post-incident debriefs to support their own wellbeing, the wellbeing of pupils involved, and to contribute to learning and improvements in practice.
- Reflect on practice to help reduce future risk and ensure that any lessons learned inform behaviour support planning, risk assessments, and school-wide behaviour strategies.

Headteachers;

- Ensure all staff, including temporary or supply staff, are aware of and understand this policy and their responsibilities under it.
- Communicate expectations around the safe and proportionate use of Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPI) to all staff, pupils, parents, and governors.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training in de-escalation techniques, safe RPI methods, and behaviour management strategies.
- Identify staff who may need additional support or bespoke training to safely manage complex behaviour.

- Monitor the use of RPI across the school to ensure it is used only when necessary and proportionate.
- Analyse patterns in behaviour incidents to identify triggers, risks, and training needs.
- Ensure preventative strategies, risk assessments, and behaviour support plans are actively implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Ensure all significant incidents involving RPI are accurately recorded in the Trust-approved format.
- Review recorded incidents to ensure they comply with Trust procedures and DfE statutory guidance.
- Notify parents/carers of significant incidents in a timely and transparent manner, following Trust guidance.
- Ensure that all RPI use is consistent with safeguarding responsibilities and that pupils' dignity and rights are respected.
- Ensure individual Personalised Handling Plans and Behaviour Support Plans are in place for pupils who present foreseeable behavioural risks.
- Ensure staff are aware of and follow these plans to minimise the need for RPI.
- Provide assurance to the Trust Board and local governing bodies that this policy is implemented effectively.
- Ensure compliance with statutory guidance and Trust policies, including recording, reporting, and safeguarding requirements.
- Promote a positive behaviour culture across the school that prioritises prevention, de-escalation, and pupil wellbeing.
- Encourage reflective practice among staff to reduce the likelihood of future incidents.
- Lead by example in modelling safe, lawful, and proportionate behaviour management strategies.

#### Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);

- Monitor incidents involving physical intervention from a safeguarding perspective.
- Ensure concerns or patterns are escalated appropriately.
- Advise on safeguarding implications and next steps following significant incidents

#### Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO);

- Support the development and review of Personalised Handling Plans and Behaviour Support Plans.
- Ensure reasonable adjustments are considered for pupils with SEND.
- Work with parents, carers and external professionals to reduce the need for restrictive interventions.

#### Parents and Carers;

- Work in partnership with the school to support positive behaviour.
- Engage with behaviour planning and review processes where relevant.
- Raise any concerns through the appropriate academy channels.

Local Governing Body;

- Understand and promote compliance with the policy within their school.
- Provide local oversight and challenge, ensuring the policy is implemented consistently and effectively.
- Monitor safeguarding and behaviour data, including anonymised information on the use of restrictive interventions, to identify patterns, concerns or training needs.
- Seek assurance from school leaders that:
  - staff receive appropriate training
  - incidents are recorded, reported and reviewed in line with Trust requirements
  - preventative and de-escalation strategies are prioritised.
- Ensure pupil welfare and rights are protected, particularly for vulnerable pupils and those with SEND.
- Support transparency and accountability, including oversight of complaints related to physical intervention, in line with the Trust's Complaints Policy.

Chief Executive Officer;

- Ensure consistent implementation of this policy across all academies within the Trust.
- Ensure appropriate systems are in place for training, recording, reporting and monitoring incidents.
- Review Trust-wide data relating to restrictive interventions to identify trends and areas for improvement.

Trust Board / Trustees;

- Approve and periodically review this policy.
- Ensure the Trust meets its statutory duties relating to safeguarding, health and safety, and the use of restrictive interventions.
- Provide appropriate oversight and challenge through monitoring and reporting

## **5. Training**

Training in the use of Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPI) is a key part of ECM Trust's approach to promoting safe, positive behaviour and safeguarding pupils and staff. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that staff are appropriately trained. Training is also provided as part of on-going professional development to maintain competence, confidence, and compliance with statutory guidance.

ECM Trust has a member of staff who is licensed as a Team Teach Intermediate trainer and is responsible for the delivery of RPI training to staff. This ensures that continuous professional development (CPD) around restrictive interventions is robust, with a focus on prevention, risk reduction, and minimising the use of restraint. Clear protocols are embedded within training to safeguard pupils and staff, promote lawful and proportionate practice, and ensure that any RPI is the last resort.

All training includes both theoretical and practical components, covering:

- National and local guidance on Restrictive Physical Interventions
- Possible causes of challenging behaviour
- Prevention and early intervention strategies
- Positive behaviour management
- De-escalation techniques
- Risk assessment and behaviour support planning
- Post- incident reflection and learning
- Recording, reporting, and reviewing incidents in line with Trust procedures and statutory requirements

Physical intervention techniques are not treated in isolation. Training emphasises creating learning opportunities from incidents that support pupils to understand and take responsibility for their behaviour, while maintaining safety and dignity. Staff are trained to repair and rebuild pupil-staff relationships after incidents, ensuring a positive and safe learning environment is restored.

All RPI techniques and interventions take account of the pupil's:

- Age and developmental stage
- Gender
- Physical, emotional, and intellectual development
- Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Social context and background
- Medical needs

Staff are trained to implement a gradual, graded system of response, escalating only when necessary and using the minimum force required for the shortest possible time. De-escalation, diversion, and other preventative strategies remain the primary focus, in accordance with the updated DfE guidance.

## **6. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by Geraldine Foster-Wilson (CEO). At every review, it will be approved by the Trust board.

