

De-escalation and Positive Handling Policy Addendum

March 2026: Update in line with new DfE Guidance, Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)

4. Responsibilities and accountabilities

Additional information

Responsibilities of the Trust Board, and carried out by the Trust education central team

- To ensure there is a procedure for supplying a copy of the written record of the seclusion or restraint incident to parents/carers.
- Regularly review data on restrictive interventions to ensure school leaders:
 - identify and implement improvements to policies and practices
 - identify areas of learning and development for school staff
 - understand pupils' repeat patterns and triggers to interrogate the effectiveness of preventative strategies and pupil support measures
 - identify any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics, have SEN, or other types of vulnerability.

5. Definitions

Additional definitions

Significant incident: 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.

Seclusion: 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.

7. Legal Guidance

Additional section

Seclusion

Seclusion - a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving - should only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation.

In such circumstances, the pupil is not acting with intent. Seclusion should not be implemented by staff through threat of punishment.

The place to which the pupil is confined should be safe and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil. The pupil should be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion.

As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil should be allowed to leave. An incident involving the use of seclusion must be recorded and reported in accordance with the procedures outlined in Section 8, 'Reporting'.

Seclusion, as defined in this guidance, is not a disciplinary response to deliberate or wilful misbehaviour. There are disciplinary measures that are similar, such as removal from the classroom. Schools should refer to the DfE, 'Behaviour in schools' guidance for further information on these and other disciplinary measures

8.2 Reporting to parents/carers

Additional information

Information reported to parents/carers, as outlined in Section 8.2, must now be reported in writing e.g. by email. This should be provided as soon as possible after the incident. As stated in the policy, schools should follow the written report with an invitation to have a follow up discussion about the incident.

In addition, parents/carers must be given a copy of the written record of the seclusion or restraint incident.