



**The Tapscott
Learning
Trust**
*Working together,
achieving for all*

Restrictive Interventions and Reasonable Force Policy

Review frequency	3 Years
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Ratified by	Trust Board
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Next Review	Summer 2028

1. Introduction and Philosophy

This policy outlines our approach to the use of restrictive interventions, integrating Team Teach strategies within the framework of the April 2026 Department for Education guidance.

We aim to, and believe in, providing opportunities for our pupils to reflect and develop skills, including communication, confidence, resilience and independence.

As a Trust, we follow Team Teach strategies, which develop and promote team building, personal safety, communication, as well as verbal and non-verbal de-escalation techniques for dealing with challenging behaviour. This reduces the need for physical intervention. As a last resort, we also train our staff to use positive handling techniques to resolve conflicts in ways that are safe and which provide opportunities for repair and reflection for everyone involved.

Our policy and procedures comply with our duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the public sector equality duty where relevant: Equality Act 2010.

2. Definitions

- **Restrictive Intervention:** An umbrella term for physical and non-physical actions used to prevent, restrict, or subdue a pupil's body movement.
- **Reasonable Force:** Using no more force than is necessary for the shortest amount of time to achieve a safe outcome.
- **Seclusion:** A non-disciplinary safety measure where a pupil is kept alone (with supervision) in a room and prevented from leaving to protect others from harm during high emotional dysregulation.
- **Restraint:** An intervention that immobilises a pupil or limits movement, which may or may not involve physical contact (e.g., removing a walking aid).

Use of reasonable force to search pupils

- Head teachers and staff who 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.
- 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.
- Staff should refer to the Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools guidance document for detailed advice on searching a pupil.

6 Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. 7 Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools 8 In this context, "prohibited item" specifically means an item listed in section 550ZA(3) of the Education Act 1996. 9 Section 550ZB(5) of the Education Act 1996

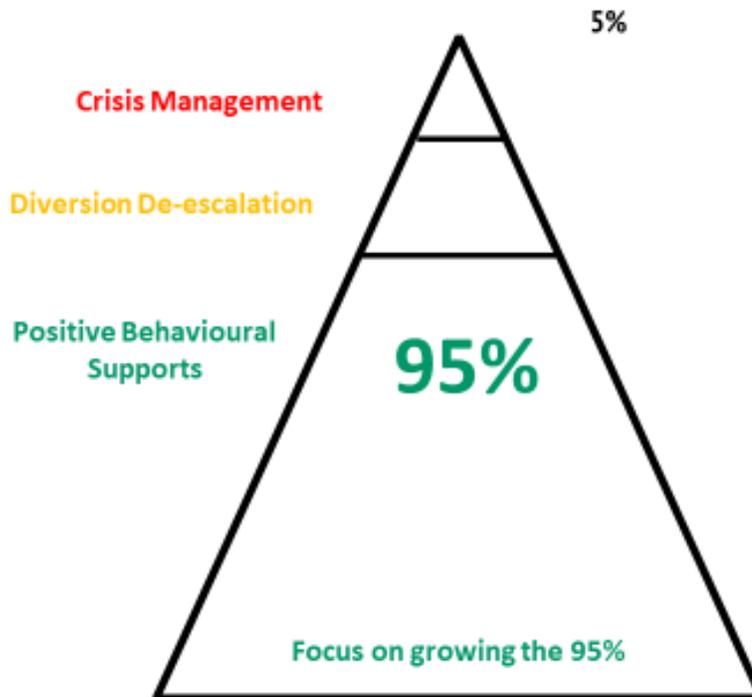
3. Preventative Strategies and Whole-School Measures

To minimise the need for restrictive interventions, staff will employ Team Teach de-escalation techniques and whole-school measures.

Procedures and Team Teach Core Values

- Behaviour is often the result of a breakdown in communication.
- Behavioural interventions which seek only to control behaviour, rather than understanding its meaning, are likely to prevent individuals from making the most of their potential.
- Restrictive Interventions can be applied to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder, not as a form of discipline.
- The decision on whether or not to use restrictive interventions is down to the member of staff who has responsibility for their care and protection.
- Judgement of the staff member concerned should always depend on the individual circumstances.
- Staff should make sure that these procedures are actioned in a reasonable, proportionate manner and if necessary.
- Staff should aim to understand the cause and what function the behaviour serves, as well as to support the pupils in learning more socially acceptable ways of expressing their feelings.
- The purpose is to support adults' understanding and management of behaviour by embedding the teaching of physical techniques within a holistic, positive behavioural support, de-escalation approach. The purpose is to encourage the promotion of socially acceptable behaviours for all concerned.
- It is about how adults show restraint, rather than apply it.

Positive Handling Approach Diagram



All staff must be aware that they must not:

- Use force as a punishment, as this would fall within the definition of corporal punishment.
- Use pain to gain compliance.
- Deprive the child of food or drink.
- Humiliate and/or degrade the child or young person.
- Use punitive measures to intentionally cause discomfort or distress.
- Confine children in rooms that are unsafe and/or unheated as punishment.
- Lock children in rooms to isolate them.

• **Environmental Support:** Considering how the classroom layout supports all pupils.

• **Effective Communication:** Using an appropriate tone of voice and empathy during de-escalation.

• **Individual Support:** Developing Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) for vulnerable pupils in collaboration with parents to identify triggers and preferred calming strategies.

4. When Restrictive Interventions May Be Used

All staff have the legal power to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

1. Causing injury to themselves or others.
2. Committing a criminal offence.
3. Damaging property.

4. Causing disorder.

5. Unacceptable Uses of Force

The following practices are **strictly prohibited**:

- **Force as punishment:** It is illegal to use force to punish a pupil.
- **Respiratory interference:** Restraining a pupil in a way that affects breathing, such as applying pressure to the neck or abdomen.
- **Pain for compliance:** Intentionally using pain to gain a pupil's cooperation.
- **Ground holds:** If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, they must be released or moved to a safer position immediately.

6. Appropriate Physical Contact

We do not have a "no contact" policy. Appropriate physical contact is often necessary for teaching and well-being.

• Examples from Guidance:

- Guiding/Escorting: • 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
- Comforting: Providing support to a distressed pupil.
- Instructional: Demonstrating how to use a musical instrument or showing techniques in PE.
- First Aid: Administering medical assistance.
- Identified as part of sensory needs in EHCP

7. Support for Pupils with SEND

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may express distress as a way to communicate through behaviour. Staff must seek to understand underlying causes and triggers such as sensory overload or anxiety. Where appropriate, school staff should work with pupils with SEND and their parents in the co-production of any necessary behaviour support plans. Behaviour support plans should outline any adjustments, such as to address aspects of the school environment which the pupil finds challenging and ways for pupils to communicate their needs effectively.

8. Statutory Recording and Reporting Duties **Recording (Internal)**

Incidents must be recorded in writing (using the Google form) as soon as practicable, and no later than the same day. Records must include:

- Names of staff and pupils involved.
- Time, date, location, and duration.
- A brief account of the incident, including triggers, de-escalation used, and why the intervention was necessary.
- Details of any injuries or medical treatment required.

Reporting (To Parents)

Parents **must be informed** of each significant incident as soon as practicable, ideally by the end of the school day or as agreed, where a child has a Behaviour Plan in relation to their SEND. This will be in writing.

- Time, date location and approximate duration of the intervention
- A brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary
- A brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
- Details of any physical injuries and any post-incident support

9. Post-Incident Support and Review

Following an incident, the school will facilitate a debriefing process for both staff and pupils to repair relationships and foster learning.

- Debriefing: Ideally facilitated by a staff member not involved in the incident.
- Data Monitoring: Leaders will regularly review data on restrictive interventions to identify patterns, ensure equality, and improve school policies, reporting information to Governors regularly.

10. Team Teach/ further training

All schools within the Trust will provide effective training in the following ways:

- Train our staff accredited course, factoring in their roles and responsibilities.
- Notify Staff of any updates and changes in the management of challenging behaviour and handling techniques, and changes in current legislation / legal considerations.
- Review and assess any areas of additional training requirements through risk assessment and situations arising.
- Carry out regular assessment by SMT of presenting behaviours and risks within the school environment
- All staff will carry out statutory training regarding reasonable force (The Key)