Mulberry Schools Trust

Restrictive Interventions Policy

Approval Body:	Standards Committee
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Review Date:	
Policy Version:	1

This policy has been adopted by the Mulberry Schools Trust and will be applied to all schools which belong to the Mulberry Schools Trust.

Mulberry Schools Trust Policy on 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force.'

From April 2026

All schools in Mulberry Schools Trust will follow the policy outlined, alongside the school's individual behaviour policy. At Mulberry Schools Trust our schools will minimise the use of restrictive interventions, through prevention and de escalation strategies. These include:

- Ensuring the school and classroom environment support all pupils to achieve and thrive.
- Sharing best practice on whole class behaviour management strategies, and for managing corridors and playgrounds
- Staff training, including communication strategies to de escalate.
- Nurturing trusting and caring relationships across the school
- Recording and analysing data on behaviour incidents
- Working closely with parents to support individual pupil needs
- The development of behaviour support plans, including reasonable adjustments for individuals with SEND.
- Giving pupils the time, space, and strategies to calm down

Each school will ensure that they understand the underlying triggers of challenging behaviours so they can provide proactive support and an inclusive culture. The school will carefully consider the impact of school policies on pupils with SEND, for example, how the school culture and environment is experienced differently by different pupils. Schools will utilise staff who know pupils well to identify risk, trigger points and where challenging behaviour is more likely to occur.

Each school will work with individual pupils, parents, and other professionals to develop prevention and de-escalation strategies. Depending on the circumstances, examples of strategies may include:

- removing stimuli that may be causing distress,
- changing body language, facial expression, and/or tone of voice,
- supporting the pupil to express their emotions before getting overwhelmed,
- engaging the pupil in an activity which can help them manage their feelings of anxiety,
- distracting the pupil in something that interests them or by introducing familiar objects and activities to redirect their attention.

Definitions of key terms used in this policy:

- **Restrictive intervention:** a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This guidance uses 'restrictive

interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

- **Reasonable force:** 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.
- **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.
- **Restraint:** a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement.

In this policy, where the term 'must' is used, the person has a legal requirement to do so.

Section 1. The use of reasonable force

All staff have the legal right to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. These include preventing or stopping a pupil from physically injuring themselves or others, committing a criminal offence, damaging property, or causing significant disorder in school.

Staff who are likely to need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions should be adequately trained in its safe and lawful use and in preventative strategies. Each school leader will make decisions on training based on individual context and need.

Mulberry Schools Trust has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of our employees. Therefore, each school should carry out risk assessments to ensure that staff who regularly work alongside pupils where the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions may be required can do so as safely as possible.

Head teachers, 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. These are legally prohibited items, such as weapons, alcohol, stolen goods, or controlled drugs. Schools will follow the guidance in 'searching, screening and confiscation'.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation

Section 2. The use of seclusion

Seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil in a confined place away from others and prevented from leaving. This 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.

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 this policy.

Section 3. Determining when use of restrictive intervention is appropriate

Staff will consider and decide if interventions are necessary (Are there more effective strategies, will the strategy have impact?), if it is proportionate (Staff will use the least force, for the least time. If the strategy is not working their will seek alternatives). They will consider the needs of the pupil including any medical needs, SEND and vulnerabilities. Staff will consider relevant implications under the equality act.

Staff will always place the pupil's welfare at the centre of decision making. They will consider the impact of any action taken, dignity of the pupil (away from peers wherever possible. Staff will communicate calmly and clearly what is happening and explain what the pupil needs to do. Verbal and non-verbal strategies will be used for pupils with difficulties with speech, language or communication or for those with EAL. Staff will evaluate how the pupil is feeling. This list is not exhaustive, and staff training will enhance staff knowledge in dealing with any potential use of intervention.

Section 4. Following the use of any restrictive intervention

Schools will evaluate all incidents involving the use of restrictive intervention as soon as practicable after the event to understand why it was used, the impact on pupils and staff, any patterns and trends, and how the use of restrictive interventions might be avoided in future, for example by amending or introducing a behaviour support plan.

If appropriate, the pupil and staff member involved will receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. Incidents in which a member of staff uses reasonable force or seclusion on a pupil must be recorded as described in 'Recording and reporting duties' in this document. In addition, any injuries should be recorded in accordance with the school's procedures and reported as appropriate to the Health and Safety Executive.

Schools will hold a follow-up conversation(s) to facilitate reflection, learning and to support pupil and staff wellbeing. This conversation should be framed as part of the overall debriefing process and look to understand what happened during the incident and why, based on separate reflections from both the staff and pupils involved, as well as to repair and rebuild relationships through dialogue. This process should ideally be facilitated by a staff member who was not involved in the incident and may also benefit from the presence of an additional person to ensure

impartiality and support. By engaging in this process, schools will foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Schools will continue to monitor pupil and staff wellbeing and provide additional support if needed, for example through further follow-up conversations, counselling or other resources. Additionally, any pupil who witnesses an incident of restrictive intervention where a peer may have been injured or become distressed will also be provided with appropriate support where necessary.

Section 5. Recording and reporting on the use of restrictive interventions

All incidents must be recorded. This is a statutory requirement. The incident write up must be done as soon as possible, and generally by the end of the same day.

The record must include:

- names of pupil and 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
- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- 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
- 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

The school should also keep a record of the pupils own account, and of communication with parent. The school must communicate details to parent, and wherever possible this should be the same day.

A report of the incident made to parents will include the following details as a minimum:

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

Schools will hold follow up meetings with parents to discuss de escalation strategies and behaviour support plans.

Schools are also required to report in the same way for incidents of seclusion.

Section 6. Evaluation

Schools will carefully monitor and evaluate this policy. This includes:

- identifying and implementing improvements to policies and practices, particularly where approaches have been used for some time but have not been effective.
- identifying areas of learning and development for school staff.
- understand pupils' repeat patterns and triggers to interrogate the effectiveness of pupil support measures, share this information with teachers who work with those pupils to better support them and, where appropriate, their parents, to establish a behaviour support plan or revise an existing plan.
- identifying any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics, have SEN, or other types of vulnerability.

Policy references

- The DfE's guidance on restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools – GOV.UK
- The DfE's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation at school – GOV.UK
- Proposed section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, as set out in prospective section 246 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 – GOV.UK
- Amendment 7(2)(a) of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 – GOV.UK
- The Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025 – GOV.UK

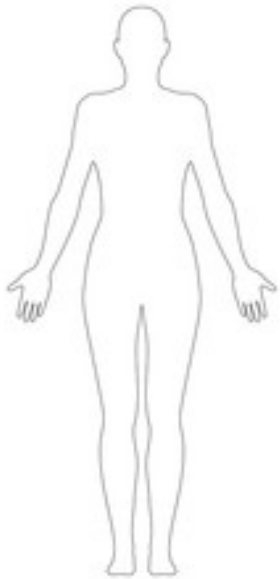
Mulberry Schools Trust

Appendix 1

Recording and Reporting the Use of Reasonable Force by Staff

<table>
<tr><td>Date of Incident:</td><td>Time of Incident:</td><td>Location of Incident:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Pupil(s) involved:</td><td>Year group:</td><td>Specific needs of the pupil(s) involved:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Staff members involved:</td><td colspan="2">Staff member recording the incident:

Role within the incident – please circle as appropriate:
- Witness
- Person using reasonable force
-</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">Body map indicator

  </td><td colspan="2">Details of the incident:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Length of time intervention was used:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Brief account of the incident – including what led to the incident:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Identified potential triggers (if known):</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Any preventative/de-escalation strategies used:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Type and degree of reasonable force used – please tick the box and detail contact/restraint used:

☐ Guided support
☐ Low-level restriction</td></tr>
</table>

	☐ Medium-level restriction ☐ High-level restriction ☐ Any physical injuries sustained (if applicable) and to who – state none if this is the case
Decision making/ assessment of why the use of force was necessary:	
Was the possible us of reasonable force explained to the student in advance of using it?	
Was there a need for any post incident support for the pupil or staff? If so, detail this below:	
When and how were parents notified of the incident and by who:	
Detail any follow up action/learning below. E.g. risk assessment/ safety plan/safe place:	
Signed (Staff Member) Date:	
Signed (Headteacher) Date:	
LAD informed: Outcome:	