



RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS POLICY

Responsible for Policy	
Author	Deputy Head (Wellbeing and EY)
Approval	Compliance Committee
Review Dates	
Policy Date	Spring Term 2026
Next Review Date	Spring Term 2027
This policy applies to Hazelwood School and Hazelwood School Nursery (including EYFS)	

1. Introduction

Hazelwood School recognises its responsibility under Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils.

This policy applies to all pupils at Hazelwood School, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). When implementing this policy, staff will always consider the age, development, and individual needs of the child.

This policy reflects current statutory guidance and legislation including:

- Restrictive Interventions, including Use of Reasonable Force in Schools (DfE, April 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Sections 93 and 93A)
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No.2) (England) Regulations 2025
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Hazelwood School aims to minimise the need for restrictive interventions through effective behaviour management, prevention strategies and de-escalation. However, there may be occasions where the use of reasonable force or other restrictive interventions is lawful and necessary to keep pupils and staff safe.

Physical intervention must always be a last resort.

2. Definitions

Restrictive Intervention

Any action intended to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of a pupil.

Reasonable Force

The use of no more force than is necessary and for the shortest time possible to prevent harm.

Restraint

An intervention that limits a pupil's movement. This may include physical contact.

Seclusion

Keeping a pupil apart from others and preventing them from leaving in order to manage a serious risk of harm. Seclusion must never be used as a disciplinary punishment.

Significant Incident

An incident where force is used beyond normal physical contact between staff and pupils.

3. Who Can Use Reasonable Force

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, all members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force where necessary.

Reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from:

- causing injury to themselves or others
- committing a criminal offence
- damaging property
- causing serious disorder within the school.

School leaders will ensure that staff who may need to use restrictive interventions are appropriately trained in safe practice and de-escalation strategies where necessary.

The school also has duties under Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the safety of staff and pupils.

4. Appropriate Physical Contact

Hazelwood School does not operate a "no contact" policy, as this could prevent staff from protecting pupils or supporting their welfare.

Physical contact may be appropriate in many circumstances, including:

- providing first aid
- comforting a distressed pupil
- guiding or escorting pupils
- supporting a pupil who is upset or anxious
- demonstrating techniques in PE, sport or music
- congratulating or praising pupils.

Staff must exercise professional judgement, considering safeguarding guidance, the pupil's age and understanding, and any vulnerabilities.

5. Preventative Approaches

The school seeks to reduce the need for restrictive interventions through:

- positive behaviour management

- clear expectations and routines
- supportive staff–pupil relationships
- effective communication and de-escalation techniques
- providing pupils with time and space to regulate emotions
- identifying triggers for distress or anxiety.

Where appropriate, individual behaviour support plans may be developed in partnership with parents and relevant professionals.

6. When Restrictive Intervention May Be Used

Restrictive intervention may only be used when it is necessary, reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.

Staff should consider:

Necessity

Whether alternative strategies could manage the situation safely.

Proportionality

Using the least restrictive option and minimum force necessary for the shortest possible time.

Pupil Welfare

The pupil's dignity, emotional wellbeing and any known vulnerabilities.

Where possible, staff should:

- explain the intervention to the pupil
- reassure them the action is to keep people safe and not a punishment
- seek assistance from another member of staff.

Other pupils must never be used to assist in restraining a child.

7. Pupils with SEND or Additional Needs

Pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) may experience distress due to factors such as:

- sensory overload
- anxiety or fear
- unfamiliar environments
- communication difficulties.

Hazelwood School will seek to understand underlying triggers and will work with parents and professionals to support pupils effectively.

Where appropriate, the school may implement behaviour support plans or risk assessments and make reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

8. Prohibited or Unsafe Practices

The following actions must never be used:

- holding a pupil around the neck or restricting breathing
- covering the mouth or nose
- applying pressure to the neck, chest or abdomen
- slapping, punching or kicking
- twisting or forcing limbs against joints
- pulling hair or ears
- holding a pupil face down on the ground
- touching a pupil in a way that could be considered indecent.

These restrictions are particularly important in Early Years, where children are more physically vulnerable.

9. Seclusion

Seclusion may only be used as a safety measure to prevent harm to others when a pupil is experiencing significant emotional or behavioural distress.

Seclusion must:

- not be used as a punishment
- take place in a safe and supervised environment
- end as soon as the immediate risk has reduced.

All incidents of seclusion must be recorded and reported in accordance with the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (England) Regulations 2025.

10. After an Incident

Following any restrictive intervention:

- The Headteacher must be informed as soon as possible.
- The incident must be recorded as soon as practicable and ideally the same day.
- Any injuries should receive appropriate medical attention.
- Staff and pupils should be supported through a post-incident discussion or debrief.

This process allows reflection, relationship repair and helps prevent future incidents.

11. Recording Incidents

In accordance with Section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, schools must record each significant incident involving the use of force.

Records should include:

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

- what led to the incident
- any de-escalation strategies used
- why the intervention was considered necessary
- the type of intervention used
- details of any injuries
- any follow-up support provided.

Records must be made as soon as practicable after the incident.

12. Informing Parents

Under statutory guidance, parents must be informed as soon as practicable and ideally on the same day when significant force, restraint or seclusion has been used.

Information shared with parents should include:

- the time, date and location of the incident
- why intervention was necessary
- the type of intervention used
- details of any injuries.

Parents may be invited to discuss the incident and review any behaviour support plans where appropriate.

13. Monitoring and Review

The school will monitor incidents involving restrictive interventions to:

- identify patterns or triggers
- review behaviour support strategies
- ensure interventions are used appropriately
- identify any disproportionate use with vulnerable groups.

This monitoring supports the school's safeguarding duties and continuous improvement.

14. Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints regarding the use of restrictive interventions will be managed through the school's complaints procedure.

Allegations regarding inappropriate use of force will be handled in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the school's safeguarding procedures.