



# **RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS AND USE OF REASONABLE FORCE POLICY**

<b>Mount St Joseph Document Control Table</b>			
<b>Document Title:</b>	<b>Restrictive Interventions and Use of Reasonable Force Policy</b>	<b>Author name / post:</b>	<b>Mount St Joseph</b>
<b>Version Number:</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>Document status:</b>	<b>SLT</b>
<b>Date Approved:</b>	<b>April 2026</b>	<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>SLT</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>April 2026</b>	<b>Date of next review:</b>	<b>April 2027</b>
<b>Publication method:</b>	<b>OneDrive Website</b>	<b>Date published</b>	<b>April 2026</b>
<b>Superseded Version:</b>	<b>1.0</b>		

<b>Document History</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Notes on Revisions</b>
1.0	01.04.2026	New Policy – DfE guidance April 2026

## 1. Mission Statement

At Mount St Joseph Catholic School, our approach to behaviour is rooted in our Catholic ethos, recognising the dignity of every individual. We are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and supportive environment where all pupils can flourish.

This policy reflects our duty to safeguard pupils while promoting compassion, respect, and restorative approaches in line with Gospel values.

## 2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff
- Provide clear guidance on the use of restrictive interventions
- Ensure any use of force is lawful, proportionate, and a last resort
- Promote de-escalation and preventative strategies
- Ensure transparency, accountability, and safeguarding

## 3. Legal Framework

This policy is based on guidance from the Department for Education (April 2026) regarding the use of reasonable force in schools.

Staff are legally permitted to use reasonable force to:

- Prevent injury to a pupil or others
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent a criminal offence
- Maintain good order and discipline

## 4. Definition of Restrictive Intervention

Restrictive intervention refers to any action that limits a pupil's movement, liberty, or freedom to act independently.

This may include:

- Physical restraint
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Removing a pupil from a situation
- Use of a safe, supervised space (in line with guidance)

## 5. Principles

At Mount St Joseph:

- Restrictive interventions are **only used as a last resort**

- The **minimum force necessary** is applied
- The intervention must be **reasonable, proportionate, and necessary**
- The **safety and dignity of the pupil** is always prioritised
- Force must **never be used as punishment**

## 6. Prevention and De-escalation

Our primary focus is prevention.

Staff will:

- Build positive relationships with pupils
- Use calm communication and de-escalation techniques
- Identify triggers and early warning signs
- Implement behaviour support plans where appropriate
- Make reasonable adjustments, particularly for pupils with SEND

Restrictive intervention should only occur when these strategies have failed or are not appropriate due to immediate risk.

## 7. Prohibited Practices

The following are strictly prohibited:

- Use of force as punishment
- Any restraint that restricts breathing
- Holding a pupil around the neck or applying pressure to the head
- Deliberate infliction of pain
- Seclusion used as punishment
- Excessive or prolonged restraint

## 8. Use of Reasonable Force

When reasonable force is used:

- It must be **proportionate to the risk**
- Applied for the **shortest possible time**
- Continuously reviewed during the incident
- Stopped as soon as the risk is reduced

Where possible, staff should seek assistance from colleagues.

## 9. Recording and Reporting

All incidents involving restrictive intervention must be:

- **Recorded promptly** using the school's reporting system

- Include:
  - The reason for intervention
  - De-escalation strategies attempted
  - Type and duration of intervention
  - Outcome and any injuries
- **Reported to parents/carers** as soon as possible
- Reviewed by senior staff

## 10. Post-Incident Support

Following an incident:

- Pupils will be supported to reflect and recover
- Staff involved will receive appropriate support
- Incidents will be reviewed to prevent recurrence
- Behaviour plans may be updated

## 11. Training

- Staff will receive appropriate training in behaviour management and de-escalation
- Identified staff may receive additional training in safe physical intervention
- Regular updates and refreshers will be provided

## 12. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Headteacher:** Ensures policy implementation and compliance
- **Senior Leaders:** Monitor incidents and ensure appropriate responses
- **Staff:** Follow policy and prioritise de-escalation
- **Governors:** Provide oversight and ensure safeguarding standards

## 13. Safeguarding and SEND

Mount St Joseph recognises that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable.

We will:

- Use individual risk assessments and behaviour plans
- Make reasonable adjustments
- Work closely with parents and external agencies
- Monitor patterns of intervention to ensure fairness and appropriateness

#### **14. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually
- Monitored through incident data and safeguarding reviews
- Updated in line with national guidance

#### **15. Complaints and allegations**

Any complaints regarding the use of restrictive interventions will be dealt with in accordance with the school's normal complaints procedure. If an allegation regarding inappropriate use of force and/or other restrictive interventions is made against a member of staff, the procedures in Keeping Children Safe in Education should be followed. This includes the provisions regarding suspension of staff.

#### **16. Conclusion**

At Mount St Joseph, restrictive intervention is used only in exceptional circumstances. Our priority is always to prevent harm through positive relationships, restorative practice, and a strong Catholic ethos that values dignity, compassion, and respect for all.