



Physical and Non-Physical Restrictive Interventions

2026

Accessibility Statement	
Author	Adam Dean/ Ashleigh Cambridge
Publish date	May 2026
Review date	June 2028
Enquiries	admin@chattenfreeschool.co.uk
Approved by	Adam Dean
Approval date	May 2026

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR STATEMENT BY HOPE LEARNING COMMUNITY

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff in schools to use reasonable force to safeguard children. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. 'Reasonable' in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'.

All members of staff have the legal power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property and to maintain good order and discipline at the school or among pupils.

When considering using reasonable force staff should, in considering the risks, carefully recognise any specific vulnerabilities of the pupil, including SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions.

Trustees are aware that the needs of the pupils in our schools evolve continually. To enable every school to meet these needs, trustees support the use of physical intervention training within the trust.

Each School will

- Operate within the framework established by DfE guidance (see above)
- Have a clearly defined core of staff that carry out continuous observation and monitoring to enable situational analysis and bespoke training where necessary.

Monitoring arrangements

- Overseen by the Head of each school
- Monitored half termly by the CEO.



PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of all pupils and adults in the school when dealing with incidents that may warrant the use of some form of restrictive and/or physical intervention.

It has been written in consultation with staff and governors, taking into account the Department for Education and Department of Health's guidance on Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention - Section 550A of the 1996 Education Act and the Restrictive interventions including use of reasonable force in schools guidance April 2026 which sets out what staff in schools may legally do to restrain pupils. The act states that:

"A member of staff of a school may use in relation to any pupil at the school, such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of preventing the pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following:

- Committing an offence.
- Causing personal injury to or damage to the property of any person (including the pupil him/herself).
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs during a teaching session or otherwise."

Whilst recognizing the above this policy does not authorise staff to use any degree of physical contact which might reasonably be expected to cause injury. The schools underlying principles for restrictive physical interventions are as follows

- The use of restrictive and/or physical interventions to control or restrain a pupil should wherever possible be avoided and used only as a last resort.
- There are occasions when the use of a restrictive and/or physical intervention is necessary and appropriate.
- When the use of a restrictive and/or physical intervention is necessary it should be reasonable and proportional to the circumstances, and necessary to maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Where restrictive and/or physical intervention is needed it should be removed as soon as is practically possible and safe to do so.
- Members of staff may use such force as is reasonable (professional judgement of the situation) for the purpose of preventing a child from causing personal injury to any person including the pupil himself.

This policy should be seen as an integral part of the wider school behaviour policy. Thus, restrictive physical interventions are only used in the context of whole school strategies.

Chatten Free School have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their employees. Therefore, Chatten 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. Chatten will also provide sufficient training from a qualified individual to ensure staff can support pupils safely.

CONTEXT

The Chatten approach to education requires all policies and practices to ensure that all learners are treated with respect, dignity and compassion. We pride ourselves on improving the lives of autistic young people in a way that that continues into adulthood. We believe we achieve this by ensuring our learners are happy, taught independence and treated with respect.

It is evident that restrictive and/or physical interventions, planned and unplanned can undermine a person's rights to be treated with respect, dignity and compassion. This policy and the practice it underpins is used to

ensure that any potential negative impacts of restrictive and/or physical interventions and their use are significantly minimised and all steps are taken to ensure that this is acted upon.

Any restrictive and/or physical interventions must only be carried out by trained and competent staff according to the principles and guidance set out in training.

POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS TO READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS

The following is a list of terminology used at Chatten Free School in reference to behaviour. We include this list as it may differ from the terminology used in other systems of behaviour support. We hope that this list will help reduce misinterpretation.

- Behaviour policy
- Building a behaviour support plan
- Restrictive interventions, including the use of force in schools - April 2026 (DFE)

DEFINITIONS

All of the definitions below are taken directly from the document '*Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention*' 27 June 2019' and '*Restrictive interventions, including the use of force in schools*' April 2026 from the DfE.

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION

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.

AUTONOMOUS WITHDRAWAL

A learner has actively chosen to move to a quiet space for a period in order to calm and self-regulate their behaviour. The learner is free to leave the area if they wish. Staff should take steps to support them and monitor progress.

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

A form of restraint referring to the supervised containment and isolation of a child away from others in a room/ area from which they are prevented from leaving. Should only be used to contain severe challenging behaviour and as a safety measure, including which is likely to cause harm to others, for the minimum time possible.

Restrictive interventions, including the use of force in schools' April 2026 from the DfE does not distinguish between situation where staff remain in the room (previously referred to as **imposed withdrawal**) and where staff are outside the room with the door closed (previously **seclusion**).

Although legally both of these are now referred to as seclusion Chatten may record the two situations differently to distinguish and support with data collection. Under these circumstances the two can be separated on the following basis:

Seclusion: Pupil is prevented from leaving a space and staff members observe and monitor from outside the room.

Imposed withdrawal: Pupil is prevented from leaving the space and staff members remain in the room with the pupil.

RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Techniques used to restrict liberty of movement are reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances, risk and seriousness of harm; and are applied with the minimum force necessary, for no longer than necessary, by appropriately trained staff

RESTRICTIVE AND/OR PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

In this document, where 'restrictive and/or physical intervention' is written, assume what is meant is both restrictive intervention such as seclusion, etc and restrictive physical intervention such as holds.

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.

SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT

Any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff as described within this document. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

RESTRAINT

a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact. For example, holding a pupil's arms to their sides or removing a pupil's crutches would both be considered forms of restraint.

AVOIDING THE NEED FOR RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS

Focus will always be placed on reducing restrictive and/or physical intervention and using the least restrictive means possible. Positive and proactive approach to behaviour management will be used to further reduce restrictive and/or physical intervention.

Anticipated restrictive and/or physical intervention arrangements for students will be represented within an individual behaviour support plan and individual risk assessment. The behaviour support plan will also contain the proactive antecedent interventions that will be followed to prevent the need for RPI.

The behaviour support plan is shared with parents/carers, who are asked to sign to confirm they have been informed of the plan and understand that staff may need to use professional judgement to apply restrictive interventions where necessary and proportionate in line with this policy and the BSP.

- Parents will be informed following any incident – see recording and reporting for more details.
- All updates to BSP's will be discussed with parents/guardians for updated consent'
- All individual behaviour support plans will all be supervised by an onsite Board-Certified Behaviour Analyst or UKBAcert.

TYPES OF APPROPRIATE RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

Physical interventions should only be used when the risks of employing an intervention are judged lower than the risks of not doing so. Any physical intervention should employ the mini-

imum reasonable force and wherever possible, any audience will be removed. Depending on individual circumstances the use of mats and pillows may be employed to reduce the need for additional intervention.

The school has adopted the SAFE (Safer support Aligned for Education) approach to physical intervention. This is a positive handling strategy that operates within a framework of risk reduction and a holistic approach to behaviour management. Chatten will always have at least one trained instructor for every 25 pupils who will provide regular training and advice for **all** staff members. (SAFE Techniques and Guidance documents)

Physical intervention can take a variety of forms. These might include:

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path, only when there is potential for harm to the pupil or to others.
- Holding to defuse or prevent escalation.
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm.
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the middle of the back.
- In extreme circumstances using more restrictive holds in line with the SAFE training.

PHYSICAL CONTACT IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

There will be occasions when physical contact with a pupil may be appropriate, other than that covered by section 550A of the 1996 Education Act. These may include:

- ◆ Demonstrating PE or CDT techniques.
- ◆ Physical prompts or blocking as part of an ABA program.
- ◆ Administering first aid.
- ◆ Where a pupil is in distress and in need of comfort (usually younger pupils).
- ◆ Physical prompts or help where a child's individual needs necessitate such contact.

Staff should take care not to touch or hold a pupil in a way that might be deemed as inappropriate or indecent. Some pupils may find touching particularly unwelcome. This may be due to cultural background, experience of abuse or a condition such as autism. Staff will be made aware of any relevant information relating to pupils through the normal channels of communication within the school.

Physical contact with pupils becomes increasingly open to misinterpretation as pupils reach adolescence. Staff will take this into account when dealing with older pupils.

For more information on physical contact outside of restrictive and/or physical intervention please see our positive touch policy.

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION

Restrictive interventions such as seclusion and imposed withdrawal should only be used when the risks of employing an intervention are judged lower than the risks of not doing so and are carried out under Chatten Free school duty of care. Learners who are placed in a restrictive intervention will be monitored by staff at all times, communication open and de-escalation techniques used to calm the learner as quickly as possible.

These interventions are never used as a punishment or as a form of discipline.

Although not a restrictive intervention, CFS does collect duration, time of day and date data on any form of autonomous withdrawal undertaken by the learner. The learner will be monitored at all times and are free to leave the room at any time they wish. This data helps identify patterns, support individual pupils, and improve the school's proactive strategies

PLANNING FOR INCIDENTS

Where a pupil's behaviour is such that any restrictive and/or physical intervention may be needed more frequently, a behaviour support plan will be completed. The aim of these assessments will be to identify strategies to manage the pupil to diffuse or calm situations. It will also include any restrictive and/or physical intervention strategies that may need to be employed. The plan will be drawn up in consultation with parents so that they are clear as to what action may need to be taken and where there is an unmanageable risk to students and staff. All staff will be made aware of the plan and briefed as to the strategies.

Unplanned interventions require professional judgement to be exercised in difficult situations, often requiring split-second decisions in response to unforeseen events. Such decisions will include a judgement about the capacity of the child or young person at that moment to make a safe choice.

Where an unplanned intervention takes place steps should be followed to update the behaviour support plan and formalize future restrictive and /or physical intervention where required.

TRAINING

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff are conversant with the principles laid out in this policy and that all practices and procedures are followed correctly. The Headteacher has commissioned training for all staff, training is provided by SAFE (Safer – Support – Aligned – Education) in association with ELITE.

SAFE and ELITE have been endorsed and approved via AOFA qualifications, in conjunction with doctors and medical professionals and Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital Trust. SAFE is also affiliated with the Restraint Reduction Network (RRN) and Chatten Free School are also affiliated with the RRN.

In the school there will at all times be 5-7 trained SAFE trainers who have completed the two day training course enabling them to train staff members in the use of SAFE. This training is renewed yearly.

All new pupil facing staff receive SAFE training from a trained trainer as part of their induction.

All staff receive a refresher training in SAFE from a trained trainer once yearly.

Periodically training will be given to staff to emphasise the importance of avoiding physical intervention and to develop strategies that can prevent behaviours or diffuse situations that need this type of intervention. These may include:

- Avoiding confrontation.
- Giving take-up time.
- Allowing time out.
- Using a low calm voice.
- Adopting a non-aggressive posture with hands low.
- Removing any audience and leaving the teacher to manage the situation.
- Giving choices... allowing the pupil a 'way out'.
- Planning the physical intervention if possible by involving another member of staff (preferably senior staff).

RECORDING THE USE OF RESTRICTIVE AND/OR PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

Staff involved will record the incident as follows on the same school day as it occurred as follows.

- A CPOMS report will be completed on physical intervention including the following
- The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved, where and when the incident took place and the events immediately before the incident.
- The name(s) of any staff or pupils who witnessed the incident.
- How the incident progressed, the pupils' behaviour, anything significant that was said by both pupil(s) and staff.

- The type of intervention and how long it lasted.
- The outcome of the incident and any further action
- Details of any injuries suffered by the pupil(s) and/or members of staff.
- Details of any damage to property.
- This information is automatically available for the Head of School/Deputy Head of school/Assistant Heads of school to view
- The behaviour itself should also be recorded on the learners individualized plan for data analysis.

Any incidents involving restrictive physical interventions will be monitored to ascertain their impact on staff development needs, the care of pupils and any need for additional support. The frequency with which pupils and staff are involved will also be monitored.

REPORTING TO PARENTS/CARERS

The DfE's statutory guidance on reasonable force (expected September 2025, referenced in your policy as April 2026) includes a new statutory requirement for schools to record every 'significant incident' in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil, and to report the incidents to each parent or carer of the pupil. This is outlined in the updated guidance which sets out that schools must "record every 'significant incident' in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil, and to report the incidents to each parent or carer of the pupil.

Where a member of staff uses force on a pupil these incidents will be reported to parents. Parents or carers will be informed:

- What happened prior
- Why RPI was necessary
- For how long it took place
- What RPI was used
- What happened after

The nature of the delivery of this information will vary but will always involve a short written account of what happened either via school Dojo or email

Parents will be given the opportunity to discuss any concerns with the class teacher or a member of SLT if appropriate.

POST INCIDENT SUPPORT

Incidents involving restrictive physical interventions can be upsetting for all concerned and can result in injuries to staff and pupils. After an incident has subsided pupils and staff will be offered emotional support and basic first aid for any injuries. Immediate action will be taken to access medical help for any injuries requiring it. All injuries will be reported and recorded in line with both school procedures and RIDDOR (Reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences regulations 1995). Any incidents that are considered significant are subject to a staff debrief as soon as is reasonably possible. This will highlight what went well, what needs to be changed, emotional impact on staff and pupil and any changes to be made to ensure this doesn't happen again.

COMPLAINTS

The purpose of this policy is to provide protocols and procedures that should avoid complaints. However, staff should be aware that there is always the possibility of a dispute over the use of restrictive physical interventions and may lead to an investigation either under the school's disciplinary procedures or by the police and social services under child protection procedures. Any investigation would focus on whether the school's policy on the use of restrictive physical interventions had been followed. All staff will therefore be periodically reminded of the importance of being conversant with this policy.

If parents wish to raise a complaint they can do so by following the trusts complaint policy available on the HLC website.

ACCESSIBILITY

This policy is published on the school website and a physical copy will be made available on request at no charge. This policy should be read in conjunction with the schools behaviour policy.

PURPOSE

This policy explains how Chatten Free School keeps pupils and staff safe when behaviour presents a risk of harm. Restrictive interventions (physical and non-physical) are only used as a last resort, for the shortest time possible, and solely to prevent injury, damage, or serious disruption.

“The use of restrictive and/or physical interventions... should wherever possible be avoided and used only as a last resort.”

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Staff may use **reasonable force** to prevent injury, damage, or serious disruption.
- Any intervention must be **necessary, proportionate, and reasonable**.
- Physical interventions must only be carried out by **trained and competent staff**.
- The school prioritises **respect, dignity, and compassion** for all learners.
- Interventions must always be **removed as soon as it is safe to do so**.

Any restrictive and/or physical interventions must only be carried out by trained and competent staff

TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS

1. NON-PHYSICAL RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS

- **Autonomous withdrawal** – pupil independently chooses a quiet space and may leave at any time.
- **Imposed withdrawal** – pupil is moved away from others for safety, with minimal restriction.
- **Seclusion** – pupil is prevented from leaving a space; used only for significant risk and monitored continuously.

2. PHYSICAL RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS

Examples include:

- Blocking a pupil's path (where there is a risk of harm)
- Holding to prevent escalation [
- Guiding by hand or arm
- Shepherding away with a hand on the back
- SAFE-approved restrictive holds (in extreme situations only)

All interventions must use the **minimum force necessary** and be applied for the **shortest duration possible**.

AVOIDING THE NEED FOR INTERVENTIONS

The school prioritises **proactive behaviour support** to reduce the need for intervention, including:

- Avoiding confrontation
- Using calm communication
- Allowing processing time and space
- Offering choices and de-escalation strategies
- Removing an audience
- Planning ahead for predictable risks

Each relevant pupil has:

- A **Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)**
- A **Risk Assessment**
- Oversight from a qualified behaviour specialist

Parents are involved in planning, provide informed consent, and are kept updated.

WHEN INTERVENTIONS ARE USED

Restrictive interventions may only be used when:

- There is a **risk of harm** to the pupil or others
- There is **risk of serious property damage**
- Behaviour significantly threatens **safety or good order**

They are **never used as punishment**.

AFTER AN INCIDENT

Staff must:

1. **Notify senior staff** as appropriate.
2. **Record the incident on CPOMS**, including:
 - Events before, during, and after
 - Individuals involved
 - Type and duration of intervention
 - Any injuries or damage

“A CPOMS report will be completed... including the events immediately before the incident... the type of intervention and how long it lasted.”

1. Provide **emotional support and first aid** where required.
2. **Review and update behaviour plans** if needed.

Parents/carers are **always informed** following significant incidents. [

TRAINING AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- All staff receive **SAFE training** and annual refreshers.
 - Trained instructors are available within school to support practice.
 - Staff are expected to prioritise **de-escalation and prevention strategies**.
-

MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT

- The **Headteacher** oversees implementation.
 - The **CEO monitors practice half-termly**.
 - Incident data is reviewed to improve **training, safeguarding, and pupil support**.
-

POST-INCIDENT SUPPORT

Following any incident:

- Pupils and staff receive **emotional and wellbeing support**
- Injuries are treated and recorded
- A **debrief** identifies improvements for future practice.

COMPLAINTS

Any concerns are handled through the school's complaints procedure. Investigations will review whether staff acted in line with policy and guidance.

OVERALL APPROACH

The policy promotes a **safety-first, least restrictive approach**, ensuring interventions are lawful, proportionate, and used only when absolutely necessary—while maintaining the **dignity, rights, and wellbeing of all pupils**.