



*Creative
Education
Trust*

Restrictive Intervention Policy

Policy Owner	Director of Education
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1. Purpose and Vision

- 1.1 Creative Education Trust (CET) is committed to creating inclusive schools that are ambitious for every student and equitable in the support they provide. We work to remove barriers so that all students can participate fully, feel a strong sense of belonging, and achieve their potential. Creating a safe, calm and supportive environment, where positive relationships and emotional wellbeing are prioritised, is central to this vision.
- 1.2 As a trust, we place strong emphasis on proactive adaptations, early intervention, and preventative strategies that reduce distress and de-escalate challenging situations. We recognise that restrictive interventions can have a significant physical and psychological impact on both students and staff, and therefore our approach is firmly rooted in person-centred, relational practice, dignity, and restorative support.
- 1.3 This policy sets out CET's framework for preventing, responding to and minimising the use of restrictive interventions. It explains how schools will identify risk, assess need, and implement effective support for students whose behaviour may require additional planning to maintain safety. It also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of staff and how we will work collaboratively with appropriate external partners to ensure effective training.
- 1.4 While the focus is primarily on prevention and non-restrictive approaches, it is recognised that there may be rare and exceptional circumstances where a restrictive physical intervention becomes necessary to prevent serious harm. In such cases, any intervention will always be a last resort, reasonable, proportionate, and carried out in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) guidance (April 2026) and recognised best-practice frameworks.
- 1.5 Through this policy, CET ensures that any use of restraint is lawful, safe, accountable, and always in the best interests of the student.

2. Core Principles

- 2.1 The following core principles underpin all practice related to behaviour support and restrictive interventions:
 - High quality first teaching, with thoughtful, proportionate adaptations that help students remain part of the classroom and wider school community, reduces the need for academic, behavioural or physical interventions.
 - Early identification of additional needs, supported by timely and proportionate intervention, is essential to preventing escalation and reducing the likelihood of significant incidents.
 - Restrictive interventions can have significant physical and psychological impact on students and staff. They must, therefore, only be used when necessary,



proportionate and lawful, and only after less restrictive measures have been attempted or assessed as inappropriate.

- Prevention, de-escalation and relationship-based practice should always be prioritised, ensuring responses protect safety while upholding dignity, safeguarding and the rights of the whole school community.
- Meeting statutory recording and reporting duties (April 2026), and consistently reviewing data, helps to continuously improve our practice and the quality of our provisions.

3. Legal Framework and Related Documents

3.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following CET documents and policies:

- Behaviour Framework and Positive Relationships and Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Quality of Education Frameworks

3.2 This policy is informed by the following statutory and regulatory frameworks, which set out the legal context for the use of restrictive interventions in schools:

- 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
- Department for Education guidance: *Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools* (April 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0–25 years (2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)

4. Definitions

4.1 Restrictive intervention

Any action - physical or non-physical - that prevents, restricts or subdues a student's movement, liberty or independence. "Reasonable force" is one type of restrictive intervention.

4.2 Reasonable force

Physical force used only when necessary to prevent injury, criminal behaviour,



serious damage to property, or significant disorder. It must be necessary, proportionate, and used for the least amount of time possible. It must never be used as a punishment.

4.3 **Restraint**

A form of restrictive intervention that immobilises or limits a student’s movement, with or without direct physical contact. This includes force-related restraint and non-force restraint. Examples of non-force restraint include removing an item essential to movement (such as a walking aid), blocking a student’s path with your body (“body blocking”), using environmental controls (e.g., locking or holding a door closed), restricting access to an area, or altering the environment to prevent movement etc.

4.4 **Seclusion**

A non-disciplinary safety measure used only when a student is acutely dysregulated and poses a risk of harm, involving keeping the student in a place away from others and preventing them from leaving. It is different to restraint because the student is alone, not free to leave and because it involves supervision at a distance or from outside the room. From April 2026, schools also have legal duties to record and report seclusion.

4.5 **Significant incident**

Any incident where a restrictive intervention goes beyond ordinary physical contact and therefore triggers statutory recording and reporting duties (see DfE April 2026 guidance). This includes the use of reasonable force, seclusion, and non-force restraint.

5. **Roles and Responsibilities**

Role	Core Responsibilities
Trust Board / Trustees	Ensure a compliant trust-wide restrictive intervention policy is in place; review trust-wide trends in incident data and obtain assurance that appropriate arrangements for prevention and training are made.
Central Team	Ensure all academies adopt and follow the trust policy; monitor trends, patterns and academy-level risks; ensure adequate training, resources and safeguarding capacity across the trust.
Principal / Headteacher	Implement the policy locally and ensure staff understand their duties and complete relevant training; ensure every incident of force, seclusion or non-force restraint is recorded and reported correctly; oversee post-incident actions, debrief and updates to plans; ensure timely communication with parents (unless a safeguarding exception applies); escalate concerns and patterns to the DSL and, where appropriate, trust safeguarding team.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Review all incidents for safeguarding implications; decide if parent notification is unsafe and may cause serious harm; advise on alternative reporting (usually Local Authority) in line with April 2026



Role	Core Responsibilities
	guidance; ensure records are accurate and secure; escalate concerns/patterns to leaders and external agencies as required.
SENDCo / Pastoral Leads	Ensure students with SEND have effective support plans and risk assessments; review and update plans after incidents; support staff understanding of triggers, communication needs and preventative strategies.
All Staff (including support, agency and supply)	Prioritise prevention, de-escalation and relationship-based practice; follow the Staff Code of Conduct and use restrictive interventions only when lawful, necessary, proportionate and time-limited; immediately inform the Principal/DSL of any incident; complete written records the same day where practicable; participate in post-incident debrief and implement follow-up actions.
Students	Contribute to the review process where appropriate; provide feedback on triggers and what helps them feel safe and supported; engage in restorative processes as appropriate.
Parents / Carers	Participate in discussions about triggers, support strategies and updates to plans; support the school in ensuring the student's successful reintegration and ongoing wellbeing.

6. Prevention

6.1 The trust prioritises proactive and preventative strategies to reduce distress and minimise the need for restrictive interventions. Staff use a quality first teaching, consistent, relationship-based approaches and a variety of interventions and adaptations to maintain safety and support regulation in the first instance.

6.2 Key de-escalation approaches at CET include:

- High quality Curriculum and Teaching frameworks, supported by adaptations, which are made according to need
- Positive behaviour support, de-escalation techniques and predictable routines
- Trauma-informed and relational practice
- Environmental adaptations to reduce triggers and sensory overload
- Early identification of additional needs and use of timely, proportionate support and interventions
- Strong, trusting relationships between staff and students
- Partnership work with parents/carers and relevant external professionals.

6.3 **De-escalation is always the first response. Restrictive interventions are used only when these strategies are insufficient to maintain immediate safety.**



7. Use of Restrictive Interventions

- 7.1 Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, all members of school staff have a statutory power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances, including to prevent a student from:
- causing injury to themselves or others
 - committing a criminal offence
 - causing serious damage to property
 - causing significant disorder
- 7.2 This power applies whenever staff are lawfully in charge of students, both on and off the school site. Any use of force must always be reasonable in the circumstances, meaning necessary, proportionate, and used only for the minimum time required to mitigate the immediate risk.
- 7.3 In addition, Section 93A places a statutory duty on governing bodies and trustees to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the recording and reporting of all significant incidents involving the use of force.
- 7.4 Any decision to use a restrictive intervention is a matter of professional judgement, based on the specific risks and circumstances at the time.
- 7.5 Staff must always consider the following principles:
- 7.5.1 Necessity** – Only where there is an immediate risk of harm and other strategies (de-escalation, redirection, calling for support) are unlikely to be effective or safe.
- 7.5.2 Proportionality** – The least restrictive option, using the minimum amount of force for the shortest possible time; reduce or cease if it is not reducing risk or is escalating distress / causing physical harm. For example, staff must not use any technique that restricts or interferes with a student’s airway, breathing or circulation (e.g., pressure to the neck/throat/chest/abdomen, covering the mouth or nose, or any position compromising respiration). Likewise, ground restraint carries elevated risk and should be avoided wherever possible. If a student is unintentionally brought to the ground, staff must immediately reduce risk by repositioning or releasing holds as soon as safe, moving to a safer standing or alternative position.
- 7.5.3 Student welfare and dignity** – Consider physical and psychological safety; maintain dignity wherever possible; communicate calmly and clearly.
- 7.5.4 Vulnerabilities, SEND and Equality** – Take account of SEND, medical needs, communication differences, sensory sensitivities, trauma history and other vulnerabilities. Ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments and avoiding discrimination. For example, ensure



Risk Assessments are in place for the most vulnerable, use quiet voices, give additional processing time, limit onlookers, move away from high-stimulus areas, use familiar adults / Key Workers and avoid direct physical contact for those with sensory needs etc.

- 7.6 Restrictive interventions must never be used as a punishment, disciplinary sanction, or for compliance or convenience.
- 7.7 They must be used only as a last-resort safety measure and must end as soon as the immediate risk has passed.
- 7.8 The April 2026 DfE guidance applies to force restraint, non-force restraint and seclusion.
- 7.9 Any intervention that presents, or begins to present, a medical risk must stop immediately. Where there is any concern about breathing, circulation, loss of consciousness or injury, staff must seek urgent medical assessment.

8. Use of Seclusion

- 8.1 Seclusion must only be used to reduce an immediate risk of harm. It must never be used to coerce, threaten or control a student, nor implemented through the threat of punishment or by suggesting negative consequences if the student attempts to leave.
- 8.2 Any space used for seclusion must be safe, suitable and non-threatening, taking account of age, needs, vulnerabilities and sensory sensitivities. It must not place the student's physical or psychological wellbeing at risk and should support regulation.
- 8.3 A student who is secluded must be continuously supervised by a member of staff, with active and purposeful monitoring of physical and emotional wellbeing and immediate response to distress, illness or risk.
- 8.4 Seclusion must end as soon as the immediate risk has reduced. It must not continue beyond the point at which it is necessary to manage safety, and students should be supported to rejoin others safely as soon as they are able.
- 8.5 All seclusion incidents are subject to the statutory recording and parental reporting duties set out in the 2025 Regulations.

9. Reasonable Force for Searching Students

- 9.1 The principal/headteacher and/or staff authorised by them may search a student or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect possession of a prohibited item (e.g., knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, or any article likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property).



9.2 Where a lawful search is taking place for a prohibited item, staff may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to conduct that search. Any use of force must be consistent with this policy's principles.

9.3 Reasonable force must not be used to search for items banned only by the school's rules

10. Post- Incident response

10.1 Recording and Reporting Significant Incidents

10.1.1 Every significant incident involving a restrictive intervention, including use of force, seclusion and non-force restraint, must be recorded in writing as soon as practicable, and no later than the same day wherever possible.

10.1.2 This duty applies even where the intervention was anticipated within a Behaviour Support Plan or Pastoral Risk Assessment.

10.1.3 The staff member(s) directly involved will complete the record, which must include:

- names of the student and staff involved
- relevant student needs or circumstances (including SEND)
- date, time, location and approximate duration of the incident
- a clear factual account of what happened and why the intervention was necessary, including context, triggers and behaviours of concern
- preventative or de-escalation strategies used beforehand
- the type and degree of force used (if applicable)
- details of any injuries to student or staff
- post-incident support and follow-up actions, including welfare checks, first aid, and any restorative or emotional support

10.1.4 Parents/carers will be informed in writing as soon as practicable, and no later than the same day, unless a lawful safeguarding exception applies.

10.1.5 In CET schools, reporting may only be withheld where informing a specific parent/carer would be likely to result in serious harm to the student. In such cases, the incident must be reported to the Head of Safeguarding, who will advise on next steps, including whether to inform the Local Authority, in line with the April 2026 guidance.

10.1.6 The written report to parents/carers will include:

- date, time, location and duration of the incident
- a brief explanation of why the intervention was necessary
- the type and degree of force used, or the form of seclusion/non-force restraint
- any injuries or welfare concerns, and details of immediate support provided



10.1.7 Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the school will conduct restorative meetings with the staff and students involved; parents/carers will be invited to discuss the incident, explore triggers, review preventative approaches, and agree any updates to Behaviour Support Plans or risk assessments.

10.1.8 Any injuries or health concerns will also be recorded under the school's health and safety procedures and reported to the HSE where required (i.e., only if RIDDOR thresholds are met, such as hospital treatment for a student, specified injuries, or staff over-7-day incapacitation).

10.2 Support and Review

10.2.1 Following any restrictive intervention, the school will take timely, proportionate steps to safeguard the wellbeing of all involved, understand the circumstances of the incident, and reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

10.2.2 This will include:

- checking the student and involved staff for injury, distress or illness as soon as practicable
- administering first aid and seeking medical assessment or treatment where needed
- providing emotional or safeguarding support (pastoral staff, trusted adult, counselling or other appropriate services) for the student, staff or witnesses
- holding a reflective debrief to support wellbeing and learning, facilitated by someone not directly involved; this may include the student and their parent/carer where appropriate

10.2.3 A debrief will involve:

- a factual review of events, including early warning signs and triggers
- reflection on prevention and de-escalation strategies used and their effectiveness
- identification of alternative approaches or adjustments to reduce future risk, including updates to behaviour support plans, risk assessments and reasonable adjustments

11. Training Implications

11.1 Creative Education Trust (CET) recognises that staff training is a critical component of preventing the need for restrictive interventions and ensuring that, where they are used, they are applied safely, lawfully and proportionately.

11.2 Training in the principles and practices outlined in this policy is mandatory for all staff, with the level and depth of training tailored to role responsibilities.



- 11.3 In line with the April 2026 DfE guidance, training will support staff to:
- assess necessity and proportionality
 - understand risks to physical and psychological wellbeing
 - recognise the impact of trauma and SEND
 - provide positive behaviour support and de-escalate serious incidents wherever possible
 - make defensible professional judgements, including where decisions must be taken quickly
 - record, report and review incidents appropriately, identifying learning
- 11.4 Each school will ensure that training needs are informed by its student cohort, incident patterns and trends, and relevant risk assessments. As an employer, the trust will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff, including regular refresher training, access to advice and support, and additional guidance for staff working with students who present higher levels of risk.
- 11.5 To maintain the highest standards of safety and accountability, any training that includes restrictive interventions, as defined within this policy, will only be delivered using evidence-based approaches and by suitably qualified, experienced trainers. As best practice, the trust will only commission training that complies with the Restraint Reduction Training Standards and is accredited through the BILD ACT framework.

12. Monitoring, Review and Accountability

- 12.1 This policy is reviewed annually by the Director of Education and updated as required and/or when statutory guidance changes.
- 12.2 The Board of Trustees approves the policy and any changes.
- 12.3 Each school maintains records and, in consultation with the principal, reports on the use of restrictive interventions at the Academy Improvement Board (AIB).
- 12.4 Leaders will monitor incidents and follow-up actions to identify patterns, emerging risks or training needs. Repeated use of restrictive interventions or other concerns will trigger further review, multi-agency engagement and/or escalation through safeguarding or SEND processes, as appropriate.
- 12.5 Trust-wide data will be reviewed at Safeguarding Committees, where trustees will use summative incident information to inform scrutiny and challenge around prevention, vulnerable groups, staff training and the support required to reduce future risk.



13. Complaints about Restrictive Interventions

- 13.1 Parents/carers are urged to raise concerns promptly with the school in order that a solution can be agreed quickly.
- 13.2 Initial Restrictive Intervention concerns should be raised with the headteacher/principal informally.
- 13.3 If unresolved, concerns should follow the trust's formal Complaints Policy.