



PRIORY SCHOOL
EDGBASTON

CARE AND CONTROL POLICY (INCLUDING PHYSICAL RESTRAINT)

(STATUTORY)

Trustee Committee:	Risk and Compliance	
Date Approved:	September 2026	
Next of Review:	September 2028	
Member of Staff Responsible:	AF Alex Flood Assistant Headteacher	
Trustee Overseer:	SWR Shernice Watts Rai	
Intended Audience:	Options: Employees, Volunteers, Parents, Pupils, and Visitors	
Relevance:	Whole School	Yes
	Early Years	Yes
	Preparatory	Yes
	Seniors	Yes
Access:	Website	Yes
	Internal	No
	Restricted	No

Our Mission Statement

Priory School is a thriving, co-educational independent school founded upon a rich Catholic heritage which welcomes those from all faiths and none.

In partnership with parents and guardians we provide a nurturing, family-based ethos, alongside high-standards of teaching and learning, enabling all pupils to achieve their potential.

We embrace diversity and interfaith understanding alongside awareness of environmental and global issues, in response to the needs of our time.

The Governors and staff at Priory School are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors, regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional or cultural needs.

The Governors, staff, and pupils are committed to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils and staff.

To meet the needs of our school community, all our policies, including this policy, can be made available on different formats such as different font sizes or styles, colour, or alternate languages.

The Governing Council understands it has responsibility for ensuring the effective oversight of this policy and will assess, evaluate, and review as necessary.

1.Introduction

This policy has been developed in response to:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 93)
- KCSIE 2026
- Children Act 1989
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Schools Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint (No.2) Regulations 2025
- Independent School Standards Regulations
- ISS Guidance April 2026
- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice

The policy reflects The School and Inspections Act 2006 section 93 which reinforces previous guidance. Section 93 of the Education Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following.

- a. Committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil).
- b. Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil); or
- c. Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

The staff to which this power applies is defined in Section 95 of the act. They are:

- a. Any teacher who works at the school, and
- b. Any other person whom the Head has authorised to have control or charge of pupils. This:
 - i) Includes support staff whose job normally includes supervising pupils such as teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors.
 - ii) Can also include people to whom the Head has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge of pupils such as paid members of staff whose job does not normally involve supervising pupils (for example catering staff or site services staff, parents accompanying pupils on school-organised visits).
 - iii) Does not include prefects.
 - iv) The power may be used where the pupil (including a pupil from another school) is on school premises or elsewhere in the lawful control or charge of the staff member (for example on a school visit).
 - v) The policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies, in particular Prep Pastoral Care, Senior Pastoral Care, Safeguarding and Prep Behaviour and Senior Positive Behaviour.

2. Definitions

Seclusion

Seclusion means the isolation of a pupil away from other pupils in a room or area from which the pupil is prevented from leaving.

(The School does not use seclusion as a behavioural sanction or disciplinary consequence.)

Supervised Cooling-Off

A supervised cooling-off period is not seclusion where a pupil chooses to access a safe space, remains under appropriate supervision, has access to support and is free to leave.

Restrictive Intervention

Restrictive intervention refers to any act by a member of staff that intentionally restricts a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom of action.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint involves the positive application of force with the intention of preventing a pupil from moving freely.

Non-Contact Restrictive Intervention

Restrictive interventions may include non-contact actions where a member of staff intentionally restricts a pupil's freedom of movement or access to equipment, including:

- blocking a doorway;
- restricting access to an area;
- preventing access to personal items;
- removing mobility aids, walking aids or equipment where necessary to prevent immediate harm.

3. Two Parallel Reporting Duties

The School recognises two separate reporting frameworks:

Section 93 Education and Inspections Act 2006

Reporting and recording of significant uses of reasonable force.

Standards 16 and 32A / Schools Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint Regulations 2025

Where an incident engages both frameworks, a single investigation and record may be used provided all information required under both regimes is captured.

4. Purpose of the Policy

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in our school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school/provision respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff in school/provision. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required. Priory School acknowledges that physical techniques are only part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management.

The types of force used could include:

- a. Passive physical contact resulting from standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path:
- b. Active physical contact such as:
 - i) Leading a pupil by the hand or arm:

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- ii) Ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
- iii) In more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds, which may require specific expertise or training.

Decisions on whether the precise circumstances of an incident justify the use of significant force must be reasonable. Typically, such decisions have to be made quickly, with little time for reflection. Nevertheless, staff need to make the clearest possible judgements about:

- c. The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used. The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
- d. The chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired results by other means, the more likely it is that using force may be justified; and
- e. The relative risk associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force be justified.

Examples of situations that particularly call for judgments of this kind include:

- a. A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- b. Pupils are fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others;
- c. A pupil is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate damage to property;
- d. A pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- e. A pupil absconds from a class or tried to leave the school other than at the authorised time. Refusal of a pupil to remain in a particular place is not enough on its own to justify use of force. It would be justifiable where allowing a pupil to leave would:
 - i) Entail serious risks to the pupil's safety (taking into account age and understanding), to the safety of other pupils or staff, or of damage to property; or
 - ii) Lead to behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline, such as disrupting other classes;
- f. A pupil persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave a classroom.
- g. A pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson; or
- h. A pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school or sporting event.

In these examples use of force would be reasonable (and therefore lawful) if it was clear that the behaviour was sufficiently dangerous or disruptive to warrant physical intervention of the degree applied and could not realistically be dealt with by other means.

Wherever possible, these judgements should take account of the characteristics of the pupil, including his or her age, understanding and any SEND or disability that he or she may have. This would include the outcomes of any risk assessment and, as appropriate, any specific strategies and techniques set out in the pupil's IEP.

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Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff would be justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principle of seeking to use the minimum force required to achieve the desired result). Such situations could include preventing a pupil running off the pavement onto a busy road or preventing a pupil from hitting someone with a dangerous object such as a glass bottle or hammer.

Staff should make every effort to avoid acting in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. However, in the most extreme circumstances it may not always be possible to avoid injuring a pupil.

Staff should always avoid touching or restraining a pupil in a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct.

5. Prohibition of Seclusion as a Behaviour Sanction

The School does not operate seclusion rooms and does not use seclusion as:

- a disciplinary sanction;
- a consequence for poor behaviour;
- an isolation strategy;
- a substitute for adequate staffing;
- a substitute for de-escalation.

6. Cooling Off Arrangements

Where a pupil requires time to regulate emotions, staff may facilitate a supervised cooling-off period.

During a cooling-off period:

- the pupil remains observable;
- communication remains available;
- the pupil is supported by an appropriate adult;
- the pupil is not physically prevented from leaving unless the legal threshold for restraint has been met;
- the arrangement is regularly reviewed.

7. Staff Training

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in this school:

- (i) Clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care in taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary and
- (ii) Are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations.

Training should include:

- reasonable force;

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- restrictive intervention;
- de-escalation;
- safeguarding implications;
- trauma-informed practice;
- SEND considerations;
- seclusion definitions;
- lawful cooling-off arrangements;
- recording expectations;
- parental notification requirements.

Staff will receive specific training on language used during incidents to ensure communication remains calm, respectful, non-threatening and supportive of de-escalation.

Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

As endorsed in the school's Behaviour Policies, staff utilise consistent positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order.

Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to pupils or staff, property, buildings or the environment. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches should be taken according to the circumstances of the incident and in association with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 93:

- Verbal acknowledgement of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain; (this includes negotiation, care and concern).
- Further verbal reprimand stating:
 - that this is the second request for compliance;
 - an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable;
 - an explanation of what will happen if the unacceptable behaviour continues.
- Warning of intention to intervene physically and that this will cease when the pupil complies, if possible, summon assistance from the appropriate Assistant or Deputy Head.
- Physical intervention. Reasonable force being used to prevent a child harming him or herself, others or property.

8. Recording

The following information must be recorded within 24 hours:

Pupil Details

- full name;
- year group;
- SEND status;
- EHCP status;
- known disabilities;

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- relevant medical conditions.

Incident Details

- date;
- start time;
- finish time;
- duration;
- location;
- staff involved;
- witnesses present.

Context

- antecedents/triggers;
- behaviour presented;
- risk posed;
- persons at risk.

De-escalation

- de-escalation strategies attempted;
- preventative measures used;
- pupil response.

Intervention

- type of intervention used;
- degree of force used;
- whether the intervention involved restraint;
- whether the intervention involved seclusion;
- justification for intervention.

Outcome

- injuries to pupil;
- injuries to staff;
- property damage;
- safeguarding concerns identified.

Professional Judgement

A clear explanation of why the use of reasonable force was judged necessary, proportionate and the least restrictive option available.

Follow-Up

- parental notification date and time;
- staff debrief completed;
- pupil debrief completed;
- support plan amended;

- safeguarding referral made (where appropriate).

9. Parental Notification

Parents will normally be informed on the same day of any incident involving restraint or seclusion.

Notification should be made in writing and should include:

- date of incident;
- time of incident;
- location;
- summary of events;
- de-escalation attempted;
- intervention used;
- duration;
- injuries sustained;
- support provided;
- next steps.

Limited Exception

Parents will only not be informed where the Headteacher or DSL determines that notification would place the child or another individual at significant risk of harm.

Any decision not to notify should be fully documented.

10. Disciplinary Penalty Exclusion Statement

Restrictive intervention must never be used as a substitute for suspension, exclusion or behavioural sanctions.

11. Restrictive Intervention and Safeguarding

The School recognises that restrictive intervention is a safeguarding matter.

The DSL will:

- review incidents;
- identify patterns;
- consider SEND implications;
- consider equality implications;
- assess whether Early Help is required;
- assess whether safeguarding referrals are required;
- review repeat incidents.

Restrictive interventions will always be considered within the wider safeguarding framework described in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Particular regard will be given where a pupil:

- has SEND;

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- has a social, emotional or mental health need;
- has experienced trauma;
- has experienced previous restraint incidents;
- is subject to a Child Protection Plan;
- is Looked After or Previously Looked After.

12. Monitoring Incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use reasonable force, this will always be recorded and documented following agreed procedures. Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert the Head to the needs of any pupil(s) whose behaviour may require the use of reasonable force.

Monitoring of incidents will take place on a regular basis and the results used to inform planning to meet individual pupil and school needs.

The Headteacher and DSL will review all incidents involving restraint and seclusion.

Annual reports to Governors should include:

- total restraints;
- total seclusions;
- pupil groups affected;
- SEND trends;
- injuries;
- staff training completed;
- safeguarding themes identified.

13. Action after an Incident

The Head will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

14. Review of Behaviour Programme

Child Protection Procedure (this may involve investigations by Police and/or Social Services)

Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure

School Behaviour Policies

Exclusions Procedure in the case of violence or assault against a member of staff

The member of staff will be kept informed of any action taken.

In the case of any action concerning a member of staff, he/she will be advised to seek advice from his/her professional association/union.

15. Complaints

The availability of a clear policy about reasonable force and early involvement of parents should reduce the likelihood of complaints but may not eliminate them.

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Any complaints about staff will be investigated through the School's Complaints Policy. If necessary, the complaint will be dealt with by the Staff Disciplinary Procedures and/or Safeguarding Procedures.

The school will make reference to any umbrella policy that may exist e.g. Behaviour Policy, Exclusion Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Safeguarding Policy

16. EYFS

The School will inform OFSTED and local Safeguarding agencies of any serious accident, illness or injury.

Corporal punishment will never be used or threatened.

Physical intervention may be used to avert immediate danger of personal injury. Any occasion on which physical intervention is used, must be recorded and parents informed on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Please refer to the EYFS Behaviour Policy in conjunction with this section.

17. Guidelines on Physical Restraint

Use of force to control or restrain pupils at Priory School is very rarely necessary. Pupils are well behaved and there is a good relationship between pupils and between pupils and staff.

Objective

To enable all staff who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Injuring themselves or others.
- Committing a serious breach of good order and school discipline whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere.
- Causing serious damage to property (including a pupil's own property).

The provision applies when on the school premises (including visiting pupils) and when on an authorised activity outside of the school. Pupils, including Prefects, do not have the right to use reasonable force for the purpose of controlling or restraining pupils.

Deciding whether to use force

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.

As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention. School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil. All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the headmaster has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

When can reasonable force be used?

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- Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
- In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

Reasonable force can be used to:

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so.
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit.
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others.
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground.
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts. It cannot be used as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Reasonable force can also be used to search pupils without consent for the following “prohibited items”:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property

Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

Using force

Where possible a verbal warning should be given. As far as possible force should not be used unless another responsible adult is present to support or help.

18. Recording Incidents

The Pastoral Assistant Head will retain a record of all such occasions (except minor or trivial incidents). This may help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident or should be helpful should there be a complaint. The member of staff concerned should tell the Pastoral Assistant Head, or another senior member of staff if she is not available and provide a written report on the form available from the Pastoral Assistant Head, as soon as possible afterwards.

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from a senior colleague or a representative of their professional association when compiling a report. They should also keep a copy of the report. The Pastoral Assistant Head, or member of staff to whom the incident is reported, will need to consider whether the parents of the child concerned should be contacted immediately or at the end of the school day, and whether parents should be told orally or in writing.

19. Complaints

Effective communication with parents whose child has been involved in a physical restraint incident, and close adherence to this policy should help to avoid complaints from parents. It may not necessarily prevent a complaint, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff may lead to an investigation, either internally or in more serious cases by the Police and Social Services Department under child protection procedures.

20. Physical Contact with Pupils in Other Circumstances

There are occasions when physical contact with a pupil may be proper or necessary. Some physical contact may be necessary to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons, sports coaching, Music or DT, or if a member of staff has to give first aid. Touching may also be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. Teachers will use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support. There may be some children for whom touching is particularly unwelcome.

21. Monitoring and Review

This policy is subject to ongoing monitoring and will be formally reviewed at least annually by the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Governing Body. The review will take account of changes to legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding practice, inspection requirements and the school's own monitoring of incidents and outcomes. Interim reviews will be undertaken where necessary to ensure continued compliance with the Independent School Standards, Keeping Children Safe in Education, the EYFS Framework and other relevant statutory guidance.

As part of the annual review, the School will analyse records of restraint, reasonable force and any incidents involving seclusion or other restrictive interventions to identify trends, training needs, safeguarding concerns and opportunities to reduce the use of restrictive practices. Findings will be reported to Governors as part of the School's safeguarding oversight arrangements.