

HANDEL HOUSE SCHOOL
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HANDEL HOUSE SCHOOL
RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS POLICY
(INCLUDING USE OF REASONABLE FORCE)

This policy which applies to the whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is available on the School website and upon request from the school office.

Legal Status:

This policy has been written taking into account the following documents:

- DfE; Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (2026)
- Education and Inspections Act 2006, sections 93 and 93A
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- DfE Behaviour in Schools (2024)

To be read with:

- Safeguarding - Child Protection Policy
- Health, Safety and Welfare Policy
- Safeguarding – Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Behaviour Management including Discipline and Sanctions Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy and Implications
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Complaints Procedure

Available from:

- The School Office and website

Written by: Mr Mark Raisborough Headteacher/Proprietor (April 2026)

Approved by School Advisory Board (July 2026)

Next interim review by School Advisory Board (November 2026)

Signed: Mr Mark Raisborough Headteacher/Proprietor

Date: April 2026

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS POLICY (INCLUDING USE OF REASONABLE FORCE)

1. Introduction and Aims

This policy sets out Handel House School's approach to restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in line with the Department for Education Guidance *Restrictive Interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools* (DfE April 2026)

Handel House School is committed to:

- Promoting positive behaviour and emotional regulation
- Preventing situations that may give rise to restrictive interventions
- Ensuring that any restrictive intervention is used only as a last resort, is lawful, proportionate, necessary and time-limited, and maintains the safety and dignity of all involved.

All members of Handel House School staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. The power to use reasonable force applies whether pupils are on School premises or elsewhere, as long as the pupils are in the lawful control or charge of a staff member. This includes during School organised visits.

The aims of this Policy are:

- To support the school in establishing a calm, safe and supportive environment that is conducive to learning
- to form part of the School's whole-school approach to safeguarding and behaviour in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- To protect every person in the school community from harm
- To protect all pupils from any form of physical intervention that is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful
- To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations
- To proactively minimise the need to use restrictive interventions through early support, prevention and de-escalation strategies.

2. Key Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout this Policy:

Restrictive intervention - Any action that intentionally limits a pupil's movement, liberty or freedom in order to prevent harm.

Reasonable force - Force used to prevent injury, damage, serious disorder or a criminal offence, and which is proportionate to risk.

Restraint - The use of physical contact to hold a pupil in order to restrict movement. This may include force or non-force restraint.

Seclusion - The supervised confinement of a pupil away from others where they are prevented from leaving, used only to manage serious risk.

Significant incident - Any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff. This is the threshold that triggers the statutory duty to record and report to parents under s.93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Everyday physical contact - Appropriate physical contact (e.g. guiding, comforting, first-aid) that does not constitute a restrictive intervention.

3. Principles Governing Use

Staff at Handel House School recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the last in a range of strategies available to secure pupils' safety and wellbeing and to maintain good order and discipline. This Policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Management and Safeguarding Policies.

Restrictive interventions:

- Are used only when there is a significant risk of harm
- Are never used as punishment, discipline or to enforce compliance
- Must be the least restrictive option available

- Must be proportionate to the risk and used for the shortest time possible
- Must prioritise safety, dignity and emotional wellbeing
- Restrictive interventions must never be used in a manner that is deliberately painful, humiliating or degrading, and must always respect the pupil's rights, dignity and welfare.

Handel House School does not operate a 'no-contact' policy. The school will not grant requests from parents or staff members that reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions should never be used with a particular pupil. The adoption of such a policy would leave staff unable to intervene where reasonable in the circumstances to protect pupils.

4. Prevention and De-escalation

Handel House School places strong emphasis on prevention, including

- Positive behaviour cultures
- Early identification of risk
- De-escalation strategies
- Individual support and risk assessments for pupils who may require additional support.

Restrictive interventions should only be considered when de-escalation strategies have failed or are inappropriate due to immediate risk.

5. Authorisation and training

All Handel House School staff have the legal power to use reasonable force. However:

- Wherever reasonably practicable, physical restraint should only be undertaken by staff who have received appropriate training. However, all staff retain the legal power to use reasonable force where necessary to prevent harm.
- Staff who may need to use restrictive interventions will receive appropriate initial and refresher training in prevention, de-escalation, lawful use of reasonable force, safeguarding, recording and post-incident support. Training will be reviewed regularly to ensure staff remain competent and confident.
- Staff are expected to act within their competence
- No member of staff is expected to place themselves at risk of serious injury

6. Use of restrictive interventions

When restrictive intervention is necessary, all staff must:

- Use calm, clear communication
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Continuously monitor the pupil's physical and emotional wellbeing throughout the intervention.
- The physical and emotional wellbeing of the pupil must be continually assessed throughout the intervention. If there are any signs of medical distress, breathing difficulties or other health concerns, the intervention must cease immediately where it is safe to do so and medical assistance sought without delay.
- Cease the intervention as soon as risk reduces

Prohibited practices include:

- Restricting breathing or circulation
- Holding around the neck
- Prone (face-down) restraint must never be used except where there is an immediate and serious risk of harm and no safer alternative is available. If used, it must last only for the shortest possible time and be subject to immediate management review.

7. Seclusion

Seclusion is defined as 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. This may only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. In such circumstances, the pupil is not acting with intent. Seclusion must never be used as a punishment, to enforce compliance, or as a routine behaviour management tool. When seclusion is used:

- The place to which a pupil is confined must be safe and must not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil
- The pupil must be supervised at all times - Staff supervising must be able to communicate with the pupil at all times and continually assess whether seclusion remains necessary.
- As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil must be allowed to leave
- The incident must be recorded and reported to parents in accordance with the recording and reporting procedures set out in Section 8 of this Policy.

8. Recording and Reporting Incidents

In accordance with section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, a written record must be made of every significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil. The Headteacher/Proprietor or DSL should be notified immediately and this record must be logged as soon as is practicable and no later than the same working day. As a minimum the record must include:

- Names of the pupil and staff directly involved
- Any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil has an identified SEND and their SEN status
- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- A brief account of the incident, including what led up to it, identified or potential triggers, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, the type of force applied and the degree of force
- A brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary
- Details of any post-incident support, including medical treatment for injuries to both pupils and staff.

Similarly, in accordance with section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, a written report must be made of every significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil to the parents of the pupil involved as soon as is practicable after the incident, and no later than the same working day, unless it has been deemed that reporting would likely cause significant harm to the pupil. Initial contact should be made by phone, followed by a report in writing. As a minimum the report must include:

- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- A brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary
- A brief account of the type and degree of force used
- Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable

9. Post-incident Support and Review

Following any incident:

- Pupils and staff must be supported
- A debrief should take place
- Behaviour support plans and risk assessments should be put in place/reviewed if required
- The pupil should be offered the opportunity to discuss the incident with an appropriate member of staff;
- Staff involved should receive an opportunity to debrief and reflect;
- Parents should be invited to contribute to any review where appropriate;
- Risk assessments, behaviour support plans and SEND documentation should be reviewed and amended if necessary;
- Consideration should be given to whether further support or referrals are required.
- Where CCTV is available and relevant, footage should be retained in accordance with the school's data protection procedures and reviewed as part of the post-incident process where appropriate.

Where any use of restrictive intervention gives rise to safeguarding concerns about the conduct of staff or the welfare of a pupil, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider whether the matter requires referral in accordance with the Child Protection Policy and statutory safeguarding guidance.

10. SEND and Vulnerability

Handel House School recognises the disproportionate impact of restrictive interventions on pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities and therefore:

- Uses individual risk assessments where appropriate
- Works proactively with families and external agencies

- Monitors patterns and disproportionality

Handel House School recognises that behaviours which challenge may arise from unmet needs, communication difficulties, trauma or disability, and staff will seek to understand the underlying causes before considering restrictive intervention.

11. Monitoring and Review

Handel House School will undertake systematic, ongoing auditing of logs documenting any situations in which restrictive interventions have been applied separate from individual incident and Policy reviews. The audit, conducted by the Headteacher/Proprietor, will examine patterns and trends across incidents to identify any concerning developments. Findings will be reported to the School Advisory Board, who will specifically examine:

- Any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions against pupils who share protected characteristics, have SEND or other vulnerabilities
- Repeated patterns involving individual pupils and the effectiveness of any behaviour support plans in place
- Any patterns suggesting training or development needs for particular staff members
- Whether the overall frequency and nature of incidents is changing over time and whether policy or environmental changes are having the desired effect.

The School Advisory Board will satisfy itself that restrictive interventions remain exceptional and that the school's preventative approaches are effective in reducing the need for their use.

Parents who have concerns regarding the use of restrictive intervention may raise these through the school's Complaints Procedure.

The Headteacher will ensure that lessons learned from incidents involving restrictive interventions are shared with staff where appropriate to improve practice and reduce future use.

This Policy will be subject to review annually by the Headteacher/Proprietor, the DSL and the School Advisory Board.

Mr Mark Raisborough

Date April 2026

Next full Review April 2027

Appendix A

Restrictive Intervention Incident Record Form (for completion by the member of staff involved as soon as practicable and no later than the same working day).

Date of Incident: _____
Time: _____
Location: _____
Approximate duration: _____

Pupil details

Name: _____
Date of birth: _____
Year group: _____
SEN status (if applicable): ☐ EHCP ☐ SEN support
Relevant SEND, medical needs, or other vulnerabilities:

Staff directly involved

Name: _____
Role: _____
Other staff witnesses: _____, _____,

Description of incident

Please provide a factual account of: events immediately before the incident, identified triggers, behaviour presented, risks identified

Preventative and de-escalation strategies used

- ☐ Calm verbal reassurance ☐ Redirection
☐ Offering choices ☐ Distraction ☐ Time and space
☐ Removal of audience ☐ Support from another adult
☐ Behaviour support plan followed
☐ Other (details): _____

Reason restrictive intervention was necessary

- ☐ Prevent injury to the pupil
☐ Prevent injury to another person
☐ Prevent serious damage to property
☐ Prevent serious disorder
☐ Prevent a criminal offence
Explain why intervention was necessary:

Restrictive intervention used

- ☐ Guiding ☐ Escorting ☐ Physical restraint ☐ Seclusion
☐ Other (details): _____
Degree of force used:

Monitoring during intervention

- Was the pupil continuously monitored?
☐ Yes ☐ No
Were there any signs of distress?
☐ Yes ☐ No
Details:

Injuries

Describe any injuries to the pupil:

_____ Describe
any medical treatment required:

Post incident support

- Pupil offered debrief? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Staff debrief completed? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Medical attention provided? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Behaviour support plan reviewed? ☐ Yes ☐ Not required
Risk assessment reviewed? ☐ Yes ☐ Not required

Safeguarding considerations

- Safeguarding concerns identified? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, was DSL informed? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Details: _____

Notifications

Date/time headteacher was notified: _____
Date/time DSL was notified: _____
Date/time parents/guardians were notified: _____

Staff member completing the report

Name: _____ Signed: _____
Date: _____

Headteacher/Proprietor review

Name: _____ Signed: _____
Date: _____ Further action: ☐ Yes ☐ No
Details: _____

Appendix B

Parent Report Following Significant Use of Force *(to be provided as soon as practicable and no later than the same working day unless doing so would likely cause significant harm to the pupil).*

Dear Parent/Carer,

This letter is to inform you that today, a restrictive intervention involving your child was necessary in accordance with Handel House School's Restrictive Interventions Policy.

Incident details

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Approximate duration: _____

Why the intervention was necessary

Type of restrictive intervention used

Degree of force used

The minimum reasonable force necessary and proportionate to the identified risk was used for the shortest time required to ensure safety.

Further details

Injuries sustained

Did your child sustain injuries: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Details: _____

Was medical attention required: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Details: _____

Next steps

☐ behaviour support plan reviewed

☐ risk assessment reviewed

☐ further meeting recommended

☐ other _____

Contact

If you wish to discuss the incident further, please contact:

Mark Raisborough

01427 612426

admin@handelhouseschool.com

Signed: _____

Date: _____