



Restrictive Interventions and Reasonable Force Policy

2026-2027

This document applies to all academies and operations of Cambrian Learning Trust.

www.cambrianlearningtrust.org

Document Control			
Author	Head of Inclusion	Approved By	Trust Board
Last Reviewed	April 2026	Next Review	April 2027
Review Cycle	Annually	Version	2026 - 2027

Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Aims of Policy	4
3. Principles	5
4. Legislation and Guidance.....	5
5. Definitions.....	6
6. General Guidance.....	7
6.1. Appropriate physical contact with pupils	7
6.2. Seclusion.....	8
6.3. Planned Seclusion.....	8
6.4. Recording and Reporting.....	8
7. Roles and Responsibilities	9
7.1. The Trustees	9
7.2. The Local Governing Committee	9
7.3. The Headteacher.....	9
7.4. All Staff.....	10
7.5. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	11
7.6. Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENDCo).....	11
8. Acceptable Uses of Force	11
9. Unacceptable uses of force.....	12
10. Using reasonable force to search pupils	12
11. Prevention and De-escalation Strategies.....	13
11.1. De-escalation when a situation arises.....	13
12. Deciding when the use of restrictive interventions is appropriate.....	14
12.1. Necessity and Proportionality	14
12.2. Pupil and Staff Welfare	15
12.2.1. Pupil Welfare	15
12.2.2. Supporting following an incident	15
13. Considerations for pupils with SEND	16
14. Training and risk assessments	17
15. Recording and reporting arrangements	17
15.1. Recording incidents.....	17
15.2. Reporting incidents to parents/carers	18
15.2.1. Following up with parents/carers after an incident.....	19
15.3. Reporting incidents to the local authority	19
16. Complaints and Allegations	20

17. Monitoring and review 20

18. Links with other policies..... 20

Appendix A: Reasonable Force Reporting Form 21

Appendix B: Example Pupil Debrief Form 23

Appendix C: Example Staff Debrief Form..... 25

Appendix D: Example Restorative Conversation Script (Post Incident) 27

Appendix E: Example Seclusion Plan 29

Appendix F: Restrictive Intervention & Reasonable Force: Parent Summary 32

1. Introduction

Positive behaviour is central to successful education and safeguarding. Calm, safe, and predictable environments enable pupils to feel secure, develop a sense of belonging, and thrive academically and socially. Cambrian Learning Trust schools are committed to nurturing positive, respectful relationships and embedding relational and restorative practice that reduces the likelihood of conflict and minimises the need for restrictive interventions.

This policy sets out how Cambrian Learning Trust schools manage behaviour safely and lawfully, including the use of physical contact, reasonable force, and other restrictive interventions. Such measures are used only when necessary to protect safety, and never as a sanction, coercion, or to secure compliance.

In line with DfE expectations, each school should ensure that sufficient staff are trained in accredited physical intervention approaches (e.g., Team Teach or equivalent), with at least two trained staff available to support wherever possible.

2. Aims of Policy

- Minimise the need to use restrictive interventions, through early support, prevention and de-escalation strategies
- Ensure restrictive interventions are used only as a last resort, when there is a significant and immediate risk of injury, harm, serious disruption, or damage, and no effective alternative exists.
- Help school staff feel confident in knowing how to use restrictive interventions safely, appropriately and lawfully, when they are necessary
- Ensure full compliance with the statutory duty to **record and report significant incidents** involving reasonable force or other restrictive interventions to parents/carers
- Protect the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all pupils and staff, and help create a positive and safe place for everyone at school
- Provide clear guidance on what constitutes physical intervention and other restrictive measures, including non-physical restrictions.
- Ensure all interventions are reasonable, necessary, proportionate, and used for the minimum time required.
- Promote preventative, relational, and trauma-informed practice to reduce the need for restrictive interventions over time.

3. Principles

- a) Prevention, early intervention, and de-escalation are the primary approaches to managing challenging behaviour.
- b) Restrictive interventions - physical or non-physical - are used only when absolutely necessary to prevent significant harm or disruption.
- c) Any intervention must uphold the safety, dignity, and rights of all involved
- d) All significant incidents must be recorded and reported in line with statutory requirements.
- e) For a small number of pupils, planned restrictive interventions may be appropriate and must be detailed in an Individual Support Plan or Risk Reduction Plan, developed with parental involvement and reviewed regularly.
- f) Interventions must take account of pupils' SEND, communication needs, trauma history, and medical conditions, ensuring reasonable adjustments are made.

4. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education (DfE) [guidance on restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools](#). It also meets the requirements of:

- [Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- Section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, inserted by the [Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009](#)
- [Section 550ZA](#) and [section 550ZB](#) of the Education Act 1996
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#) and associated regulations
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [The Schools \(Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint\) \(No. 2\) \(England\) Regulations 2025](#)
- Department for Education guidance on [searching, screening and confiscation](#)
- Paragraph 16A of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (inserted by [The Schools \(Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint\) \(No. 2\) \(England\) Regulations 2025](#))

5. Definitions

The terms we use in this policy are defined as follows. These definitions are based on the Department for Education's guidance on restrictive interventions [Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance](#)

- **Restrictive interventions** are used to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of the body or part of the body. This policy uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

Examples of restrictive interventions could include:

- Supervised seclusion of a pupil in an area away from others, where the pupil is prevented from leaving for their own safety and/or the safety of others
- Passive physical contact, such as a staff member blocking a pupil's path if they're running towards danger (like a busy road), or staff standing between pupils to prevent a fight

- **Reasonable force** refers to the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to restrain children, using no more force than is needed for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.

Examples of the use of reasonable force could include:

- A staff member guiding a pupil to safety by the arm
- Staff breaking up a fight between pupils
- A staff member restraining a pupil to prevent injury to the pupil, or others

- **Restraint** is a form of non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact.

Examples could include:

- A staff member holding a pupil's arms to their sides when the pupil is attempting to harm themselves or others
- Removing a pupil's crutches

- **Seclusion** is a non-disciplinary intervention that keeps a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevents them from leaving, for the safety of that pupil and/or others. This could be through physical obstruction or by making the pupil believe that they will be punished if they leave. For example, putting a pupil into a safe space/room until they calm down is a form of seclusion.
- A **significant incident** is any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between a member of staff and a pupil. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

6. General Guidance

Physical intervention should only be used to avert imminent danger, significant harm, or serious disruption. Staff must use **dynamic risk assessment** and professional judgement, prioritising their own safety and that of pupils.

Preventative and de-escalation strategies should always be attempted first, including:

- Verbal and non-verbal calming techniques
- Distraction or redirection
- Offering time, space, or sensory regulation
- Adjusting the environment
- Use of supportive adult

6.1. Appropriate physical contact with pupils

Trust schools do not have 'no contact' policies. We do not grant any requests by parents/carers or staff members not to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions.

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with pupils which does not give rise to any question over the use of reasonable force or other restrictive interventions.

Examples include:

- Providing first aid to a pupil
- Guiding or escorting a pupil through the school building or on a school trip by holding their hand
- Comforting a pupil who is upset
- Offering congratulations or praise, such as with a pat on the back or handshake
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- When demonstrating exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

In assessing whether physical contact is appropriate in any given situation, staff should use their professional judgement, and have regard to:

- Trust child protection and safeguarding policy
- The specific circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present
- Factors including, but not limited to:

- The pupil's age
- Any known vulnerabilities, including whether the pupil has special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- Whether any alternative strategies that don't involve physical contact can be used

6.2. Seclusion

As defined above, seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention that keeps a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevents them from leaving, for the safety of that pupil and/or others. This could be through physical obstruction or by making the pupil believe that they will be punished if they leave. For example, putting a pupil into a safe space/room until they calm down is a form of seclusion.

We only use seclusion as a safety measure when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. Seclusion is not used as a threat or sanction. Seclusion is not a disciplinary response to deliberate or wilful misbehaviour. Please see our Relational Behaviour policy for information on response to misbehaviour [Cambrian Learning Trust - Policies and Procedures](#)

During seclusion:

- The pupil will be secluded in a safe place that does not feel threatening or intimidating to them
- The pupil will be supervised at all times, by at least 1 member of staff

Any incident involving the use of seclusion will be recorded and reported in accordance with the procedures set out in section 12 of this policy.

6.3. Planned Seclusion

If seclusion may be required for a pupil with predictable high-risk behaviours:

- It must be included in a Risk Assessment/Individual Support Plan.
- Parents/carers must be involved in planning
- The plan must be reviewed regularly

6.4. Recording and Reporting

All seclusion incidents are significant incidents and must be:

- Recorded in full

- Reported to parents/carers as soon as practicable
- Reviewed by senior leaders
- Analysed for patterns, triggers, and risk reduction opportunities-reduction opportunities

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1. The Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving this policy

7.2. The Local Governing Committee

The LGC is responsible for:

- Ensuring that a procedure is in place for recording and reporting each:
 - Significant incident involving force
 - Seclusion incident
 - Restraint incident
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the procedures for recording and reporting the use of force, seclusion and restraint are followed.
- Regularly reviewing and interrogating data on the use of restrictive interventions in our school
- Supporting and challenging school leaders to identify where changes may be needed to practice. For example:
 - If approaches have been used for some time but haven't been effective
 - If there is any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions, including in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics or have SEND or other types of vulnerabilities

7.3. The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Overall implementation and oversight of this policy

- Making sure that appropriate and high-quality training on preventative strategies and the safe and lawful use of restrictive interventions is provided for staff who need it, based on our school's individual context and needs
- Ensuring adequate staffing levels to support positive behaviour management
- Monitoring incidents involving restrictive interventions, including regular review of incidents to refine and improve processes
- Ensuring compliance with recording and reporting requirements
- Authorising staff to search a pupil or their belongings if they have good reason to think the pupil has a prohibited or banned item
- Following the procedures set out in our complaints policy to deal with any complaint about the use of restrictive interventions
- Following the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) if an allegation regarding inappropriate use of force and/or other restrictive intervention is made against a member of staff

7.4. All Staff

All members of staff are responsible for:

- Making sure they have read and understood the principles of this policy and any other linked policies
- Using de-escalation techniques and positive behaviour management strategies to try to minimise and prevent the need for restrictive interventions
- Accurately recording every seclusion incident, restraint incident and significant incident involving force that they are involved in
- Reporting these incidents to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- Recording any injuries that occur as part of an incident involving restrictive intervention, and following our health and safety policy to ensure these are reported to the Health and Safety Executive where necessary
- Taking part in training on preventative strategies and the safe and lawful use of restrictive interventions, if relevant to their role (this may include additional training appropriate to their responsibilities)
- Engaging in follow-up conversation(s) to debrief and reflect on incidents involving restrictive intervention that they were involved in, to help us understand what happened and why

7.5. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for:

- Reporting every seclusion incident, restraint incident and significant incident involving force to each parent/carer of the pupil involved
- Making sure records are kept securely and in accordance with safeguarding and data protection procedures
- Contacting the local authority in cases where informing a pupil's parent/carer of the use of reasonable force, seclusion or restraint on their child would put that child at risk of significant harm (see sections 12.2 and 12.3 of this policy)

7.6. Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENDCo)

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- Working with pupils, parents/carers and relevant school staff to develop and review behaviour support plans and risk assessments for any pupils with SEND where it's been identified that there is an increased likelihood of the need to use restrictive interventions
- Ensuring staff are aware of individual pupil needs and associated behaviour support strategies
- Working with staff who know pupils well, to identify and manage risk (such as trigger points when challenging behaviour is more likely to occur)
- Working with pupils, parents/carers, staff and other relevant professionals to develop prevention and de-escalation strategies
- Advising on reasonable adjustments for any pupils with disabilities when considering prevention and de-escalation strategies.
- Participating in the review of restrictive intervention incidents involving any pupil with SEND
- Providing advice and support on the application of this policy for pupils with SEND
- Contributing to staff training on SEND and behaviour management, including the use of restrictive interventions

8. Acceptable Uses of Force

All our school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain situations.

Staff can use reasonable force to prevent or stop a pupil from:

- Hurting themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Damaging property
- Causing disorder among pupils, in or out of lessons

While all staff have this power, some staff, especially those who work closely with pupils who might show challenging behaviour, are more likely to need to use it than others.

We will ensure staff are adequately trained and that risk assessments are carried out where necessary. See section 11 of this policy for information on training and risk assessments.

Any significant incident involving the use of force will be recorded and reported in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

9. Unacceptable uses of force

It is illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of sanction. We never use force as a sanction, threat or deterrent.

Our staff understand that any form of force or restraint carries a risk of physical and psychological harm, so we always avoid using these measures where possible.

The following uses of force are **never acceptable**:

- Staff using force for the purpose of sanction
- Staff restraining a pupil in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example by covering their nose and/or mouth or applying pressure to their neck or abdomen
- Staff using force on the ground. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should release their hold or move into a safer position as quickly as possible

10. Using reasonable force to search pupils

The headteacher and any member of staff authorised by the headteacher have a statutory power to search a pupil or their belongings if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item (as listed in the DfE's [searching, screening and confiscation guidance](#)) or an item banned under our school rules.

They can use reasonable force to search for prohibited items (as listed in the DfE's searching, screening and confiscation guidance), such as knives, weapons, stolen items or illegal drugs. They cannot use reasonable force to search for items that are banned under school rules only, such as mobile phones, for example.

The decision to use reasonable force to carry out a search should be made carefully, on a case-by-case basis and taking into consideration the level of risk to pupils and staff. Please see our Relational Behaviour policy for more information on how we conduct searches. [Cambrian Learning Trust - Policies and Procedures](#)

11. Prevention and De-escalation Strategies

Restrictive intervention is used only when necessary. We aim to minimise its use as much as possible, using both whole-school and individual approaches.

Our whole-school approaches includes: (list is not exhaustive)

- Consideration of how our school and classroom environment can support all pupils to achieve and thrive
- Sharing best practice for whole-class behaviour management, and for managing communal spaces such as corridors and playgrounds
- Training staff in effective communication strategies, such as using appropriate tone of voice and empathy to aid de-escalation
- Development of positive and respectful staff-pupil relationships and trust
- Recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform improvement planning

The individual approaches we use may include: (list is not exhaustive)

- Working closely with parents/carers to support individual pupils
- Strategies to support individual pupils based on their identified needs, including:
 - The development of behaviour support plans
 - Strategies to help pupils calm down before their behaviour escalates
 - Making 'reasonable adjustments' where a pupil has a disability, to help them participate in school life as fully as possible

11.1. De-escalation when a situation arises

When a staff member is faced with a situation where a restrictive intervention may need to be used, they should consider using de-escalation techniques first, wherever possible. Techniques that could be used in these situations include: (list is not exhaustive)

- Having open body language and being aware of a pupil's personal space
- Taking a pupil away from an 'audience' – speaking to them on their own rather than in front of a group of other pupils or staff

- Using empathy – asking the pupil to help you understand their feelings
- Distraction techniques
- Offering a calm space for the pupil to go to so they can self-regulate
- Verbal warnings – calmly reminding the pupil of the consequences of their behaviour

12. Deciding when the use of restrictive interventions is appropriate

12.1. Necessity and Proportionality

The decision on whether to use restrictive interventions is down to the professional judgment of the staff member and will always depend on the individual circumstances of each situation.

Staff should always consider whether there are other ways to manage the situation, such as the de-escalation techniques outlined in this policy and/or seeking assistance from a colleague. However, there may be times when staff have no other choice but to use restrictive interventions, to reduce the risk of harm to the pupil and/or others.

When assessing whether a restrictive intervention is required, staff should always consider:

- **Is it necessary?**
 - Are there other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage the situation?
 - Is a restrictive intervention likely to successfully reduce the risks, or could its use escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself?
- **Is it proportionate?**
 - Staff should use the least amount of force or the least restrictive intervention for the least amount of time required to reduce the risks
 - If the intervention itself is escalating the situation, staff should reconsider their approach and attempt an alternative strategy
 - Staff should consider the individual circumstances of the pupil, such as their age, size and any medical conditions, SEND or other vulnerabilities

12.2. Pupil and Staff Welfare

12.2.1. Pupil Welfare

The most important consideration when using a restrictive intervention is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil involved, as well as the safety of other pupils and staff. Staff should always consider the potential impact on the pupil's welfare balanced against any actions taken. For example, staff should bear in mind that pupils who have experienced adverse life events, trauma or neglect, or who have diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, communication difficulties or other needs, may find the use of restrictive interventions particularly distressing.

If a restrictive intervention is needed, staff should always aim to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity. This includes consideration of the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers.

Staff should, wherever possible, clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why, and what the pupil needs to do, including using verbal and non-verbal strategies where needed, and giving time for the pupil to process information and respond where appropriate.

Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.

12.2.2. Supporting following an incident

As soon as possible after any use of restrictive intervention, school will evaluate the incident to understand why restrictive intervention was used, the impact on pupils and staff, any patterns and trends, and how another incident could be avoided in the future.

School will make sure each pupil and staff member involved get the right support, including a medical assessment and treatment if needed, and an opportunity to reflect on and talk through the incident.

This follow-up conversation(s) will be part of the overall debriefing process to understand what happened during the incident and why, based on separate reflections from all parties involved. Conversations should also aim to repair and rebuild relationships through dialogue. *Appendix 2 and 3 or similar may be used to support follow-up conversations.*

Wherever possible, this process will be facilitated by a staff member who was not involved in the incident. It may also include the presence of an additional person to ensure impartiality and support. The school will continue to monitor pupil and staff wellbeing and provide additional support if needed.

Depending on the circumstances, support may also be offered to those who witnessed the incident.

13. Considerations for pupils with SEND

We understand that pupils with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to themselves and others. Pupils who have difficulty communicating verbally might show their needs and discomfort through their actions.

Trust schools are committed to understanding what might trigger challenging behaviour in pupils with SEND, and to providing the right support and an inclusive environment.

Schools will carry out risk assessments for pupils with SEND, where identified that there is an increased likelihood of needing to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions. Trust schools are aware of their duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities to avoid disadvantage and ensure they can take part in school life as fully as possible.

Schools will utilise staff who know individual pupils well to help identify and manage risk, such as trigger points when challenging behaviour is more likely to occur, and develop proactive strategies to reduce the likelihood of restrictive interventions being used. We will also work with the pupil, their parents/carers and other professionals to develop prevention and de-escalation strategies.

These strategies might include:

- Removing stimuli that may be causing distress to the pupil
- Staff members changing how they communicate with the pupil, such as being more mindful of body language, facial expressions and/or tone of voice
- Helping the pupil express their emotions before getting overwhelmed
- Engaging the pupil in activities to help them regulate their emotions
- Distracting the pupil with familiar objects or activities to redirect their attention

Where appropriate, we will create individual behaviour support plans for pupils with SEND. The plan will be reviewed regularly, and following any significant incident, with the pupil and parents/carers to make sure it's still working well. The plan will:

- Outline any adjustments, such as to address aspects of the school environment which the pupil finds challenging
- Explain the best ways to communicate with the pupil

- In some cases, specify when increased physical contact with staff might be appropriate. These situations will be discussed with everyone involved and clearly written down in the plan

14. Training and risk assessments

Schools will make sure that all staff who are likely to need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions are adequately trained in their safe and lawful use and in preventative strategies.

Schools have a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff. Therefore, risk assessments will be carried out 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.

15. Recording and reporting arrangements

We have a legal duty to record and report all:

- Significant incidents involving force
- Seclusion incidents
- Restraint incidents

15.1. Recording incidents

Trust schools will have a clear process in place for recording the incidents listed above – Use of Appendix 1 and uploaded to CPOMs.

Staff must record incidents, as soon as possible after the event, and should endeavour to do this on the same day. Staff should do this even if the use of restrictive interventions is agreed as part of a pupil's support plan.

For significant incidents involving force, we will record:

- The names of the pupil and staff members directly involved
- Any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether they have an identified special educational need or disability, and their SEN status code
- The time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- A clear and brief description of what happened, including:
 - What led up to the incident
 - Any known or potential triggers for the behaviour

- Any preventative or de-escalation strategies used
- The type and degree of reasonable force used
- Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable
- A brief explanation of why using force was assessed as necessary in that situation
- Details of any support given after the incident, such as medical help or emotional support
- When and how parents/carers were notified
- Witness accounts, as appropriate

For seclusion incidents and restraint incidents, we will record:

- The names of the pupil and staff members directly involved
- Any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether they have an identified special educational need or disability, and their SEN status code
- The time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- A brief explanation of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that situation
- Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable
- Details of any support given after the incident, such as medical help or emotional support
- When and how parents/carers were notified
- Witness accounts, as appropriate

Note: if a seclusion or restraint incident also constitutes a significant incident involving force, schools will record it in line with our procedure for recording significant incidents involving force. It does not need to be recorded twice.

Completed reports will be kept securely on CPOMs and retained in line with our data protection procedures.

15.2. Reporting incidents to parents/carers

Schools will inform parents/carers about an incident as soon as possible after it happens and will endeavour to do this on the same day. A written record will be given to parents/carers and parents/carers will be asked to sign to confirm they have received this and are aware of the incident. Schools will do this even if the use of restrictive interventions is agreed as part of a pupil's support plan.

There is one exception to this:

- If a member of staff thinks that telling the pupil's parents/carers would likely result in significant harm to that pupil. In these cases, school will report the incident to any parent(s)/carer(s) who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm or, if there are none, to the local authority where the pupil ordinarily resides

When a school reports significant incidents involving force to parents/carers, they will include the following details:

- The time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- A brief explanation of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that situation
- A short description of the type and degree of force that was used
- Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable

When schools report seclusion incidents and restraint incidents to parents/carers, this may involve a telephone call initially but all reports will be in writing.

Note: if a seclusion or restraint incident also constitutes a significant incident involving force, schools will report it in line with our procedure for reporting significant incidents involving force. It does not need to be reported twice.

When reporting to parents/carers, schools will have regard to data protection requirements when deciding what information to share. For example, we will not include any identifying details of any other pupil.

15.2.1. Following up with parents/carers after an incident

Parents/carers will be invited to have a follow-up discussion about the incident, where appropriate. This discussion might include:

- Any behavioural triggers or warning signs of an impending incident
- Whether any agreed behaviour support plans were followed
- What de-escalation strategies were used and how effective they were
- What might be done differently in the future

15.3. Reporting incidents to the local authority

In cases where schools have assessed that an incident needs to be reported to the local authority where the pupil ordinarily resides, this report will include all the information that

we would normally share with the pupil's parents/carers, as well as the reasons why school thought it was unsafe to tell the pupil's parents/carers directly.

In cases where a pupil has parents/carers and is the subject of a care order under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 or is being accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989, schools will report the incident to the relevant local authority in addition to the parents/carers (unless we deem it unsafe to inform the parents/carers, as set out in section 12.2 of this policy).

16. Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints about the use of restrictive interventions will be handled through our Trust complaints policy, which you can find at [Cambrian Learning Trust - Policies and Procedures](#)

We take any allegation of inappropriate use of force and/or other restrictive interventions made against a member of staff very seriously. We will deal with allegations in line with our Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

17. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Inclusion.

At every review, this policy will be approved by the Trust Board.

18. Links with other policies

This policy takes into consideration the DfE's statutory guidance *Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools* and should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Relational Behaviour Principles and Policy
- School Behaviour policy/procedures
- SEND Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Suspensions & Exclusions Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions

Appendix A: Reasonable Force Reporting Form

School Name:	
Date of Report:	
Name of Staff Member completing report:	
Role:	
1. Pupil Information	
Pupil Name:	
Year Group/Class:	
Date and Time of Incident:	
Location of Incident:	
2. Summary of Incident	
Provide a clear, factual description of what happened leading up to the use of reasonable force:	
What occurred before the intervention: <i>(Describe behaviour, triggers, context, and any de-escalation attempts).</i>	
Reason the intervention was necessary:	<input type="checkbox"/> Prevent harm to the pupil <input type="checkbox"/> Prevent harm to others <input type="checkbox"/> Prevent serious damage to property <input type="checkbox"/> Prevent disruption to learning <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (please specify):
3. Description of the Intervention	
Explain what type of reasonable force was used, keeping the description factual and proportionate:	
Type of intervention used: <i>(e.g., guiding by the arm, blocking movement, separating pupils, holding to prevent harm)</i>	
Duration of intervention:	
Staff involved:	

4. Pupil Response	
Pupil's reaction during the incident:	
Any injuries observed or reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To pupil: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No • To staff: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, provide details:	
First aid provided: <i>(If applicable, include who administered it.)</i>	
5. Follow-up Actions	
Support provided to the pupil after the incident:	
Restorative conversation held	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Behaviour/Support/R/A plan updated:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Referral to DSL/SLT:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
6. Parent/Carer Notification	
Date and time parents/carers were informed:	
Method of contact:	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone call <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> In person <input type="checkbox"/> Letter sent home
Name of staff member who informed parents/carers:	
7. Parent/Carer Notification	
(For return to school or signed in school presence)	
I have received and read the Reasonable Force Incident Report regarding my child	
Parent/Carer Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Appendix B: Example Pupil Debrief Form

(to be adapted by schools as appropriate)

School Name:	
Pupil Name:	
Date of Birth:	
Year Group / Class:	
Date of Debrief:	
Staff Member Supporting Debrief:	
1. Helping you feel safe	
How are you feeling now:	<input type="checkbox"/> Calm <input type="checkbox"/> Upset <input type="checkbox"/> Angry <input type="checkbox"/> Worried <input type="checkbox"/> Tired <input type="checkbox"/> Confused <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (please specify):
Do you feel safe now:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If no, what would help you feel safe?	
2. Your voice about what happened	
Can you tell us what you remember about what happened? <i>(Use the pupil's own words. Avoid leading questions).</i>	
What were you trying to do or communicate at the time?	
Is there anything that made the situation harder for you? <i>(Noise, people, emotions, misunderstanding, sensory triggers, etc).</i>	
3. Understanding the Intervention	
Do you understand why adults had to step in to keep people safe?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

If no, explain supportively: (Staff complete this section if needed.)	
How did the intervention make you feel?	
4. Moving Forward	
What could help you next time you start to feel overwhelmed or unsafe? (Strategies, safe spaces, trusted adults, regulation tools.)	
Is there anything you want adults in school to reasonably do differently to help you?	
Do you want to talk to someone else about this?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, who:	
5. Pupil Confirmation	
This form shows what you shared. You can add or change anything if you want	
Pupil Signature (if appropriate):	
Date:	

Appendix C: Example Staff Debrief Form

(to be adapted by schools as appropriate)

School Name:	
Staff Member Name:	
Role:	
Date of Debrief:	
Debrief Facilitator:	
Other Staff Present:	
1. Immediate Reflection	
How are you feeling following the incident? (Emotional check-in to support staff wellbeing.)	
Were you physically injured?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, details:	
2. Review of the Incident	
Brief summary of events from your perspective:	
What de-escalation strategies were attempted before physical intervention? (List those used and reflect on their effectiveness.)	
Was the intervention proportionate, necessary, and in line with the school's Positive Handling Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Were there any environmental or contextual factors that contributed?	
3. Impact and Safeguarding Considerations	
Did the pupil show signs of distress, trauma, or dysregulation before, during, or after the incident?	
Were there any safeguarding concerns identified?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, details and actions taken:	
Was the DSL informed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

4. Professional Reflection	
What went well in managing the situation?	
What could be improved next time?	
Are there any training needs identified?	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive handling <input type="checkbox"/> De-escalation <input type="checkbox"/> Trauma-informed practice <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour support <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (please specify):
5. Follow-up Actions	
Does the pupil require additional support or adjustments? (E.g., support plan/RA updates, pastoral support, SEND review, reasonable adjustments.)	
Do staff require follow-up support or supervision?	
Any actions for SLT/DSL:	
6. Staff Confirmation	
I confirm that this debrief reflects my account and professional reflection	
Staff Signature:	
Date:	

Appendix D: Example Restorative Conversation Script (Post Incident)

(to be adapted by schools as appropriate)

Purpose

To help the pupil feel safe, understand what happened, repair relationships, and plan for safer choices in the future.

1. Re-establish Safety and Regulation

Staff: “Before we talk about what happened, I want to check how you’re feeling now.” “Is there anything you need to feel calmer or safer before we start?” *(Offer water, time, sensory tools, quiet space.)*

If the pupil is still dysregulated: “That’s okay. We can pause and come back to this when you’re ready.”

2. Invite the Pupil’s Voice

Staff: “I want to understand what things felt like for you.” “Can you tell me what you remember happening, in your own words?” *(Allow silence. Avoid correcting or challenging their version.)*

Follow-ups: “What were you trying to do or say at the time?” “What was going on for you inside your body or mind?” “Was anything making the situation harder for you?”

3. Acknowledge Feelings and Experiences

Staff: “Thank you for telling me that.” “It sounds like you were feeling... [reflect their words: overwhelmed / angry / scared / confused].” “It’s important that we understand what led up to this.”

(This step validates without agreeing with unsafe behaviour.)

4. Explain the Safety Intervention (without blame)

Staff: “Adults stepped in because someone was at risk of getting hurt.” “Our job is always to keep you and others safe.” “The hold/guide/block was only used to stop harm and ended as soon as it was safe.”

(Keep this factual, brief, and non-defensive.)

5. Repair and Relationship Building

Staff: “I’m sorry that the situation felt so difficult for you.” “I want us to move forward positively.” “Is there anything you want to say to me or anyone else involved?”

If appropriate: “Would you like help to talk with the other person?” “Would you like to write or draw how you felt?”

6. Problem-Solving Together

Staff: “Let’s think about what might help next time you start to feel like that.” “What could adults do that would help you sooner?” “What could you try that might keep you safe?” “Who are the adults you feel safest going to?”

Offer options if needed:

- “Would taking space help?”
- “Would a signal or card help you tell us you’re struggling?”
- “Would a quiet area or sensory tool help?”

7. Agree on a Plan

Staff: “So, next time you feel [their feeling], you can try [strategy].” “And adults will try to [agreed support].” “Does that feel fair and helpful to you?”

8. Close the Conversation

Staff: “Thank you for talking with me.” “I’m glad we could sort this out together.” “You’re safe, and we’re here to help you.”

Appendix E: Example Seclusion Plan

(to be adapted by schools as appropriate)

<p>Pupil Details:</p>	<p>Name: DOB: Year Group: Primary Needs / SEND: Communication Needs: Known Triggers / Trauma History: Parent/Carer Involvement: Yes / No (details)</p>
<p>Rationale for Considering Seclusion:</p>	<p>Seclusion is a restrictive intervention where a pupil is supervised in a room or area they cannot leave. It is used only to prevent immediate and significant risk of harm when no safer alternative exists.</p> <p>Why seclusion may be required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of foreseeable risks • Evidence of previous high-risk incidents • Why less restrictive strategies may not always be sufficient
<p>Risks Posed By the Pupil During High-Risk Incidents</p>	<p>Identify specific risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm to self • Harm to others • Serious damage to property • Absconding into danger • Other risks <p>Detail behaviours:</p>
<p>Risks Posed To the Pupil if Seclusion Is Used</p>	<p>Identify vulnerabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional distress • Escalation of behaviour • Impact on trauma history • Communication barriers • Medical or sensory vulnerabilities <p>Detail vulnerabilities:</p>
<p>Preventative & De-escalation Measures</p>	<p>Strategies that must be attempted first:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal de-escalation • Sensory regulation • Change of adult • Offering time/space • Environmental adjustments • Distraction/redirection • Access to safe spaces the pupil can freely leave <p>Effectiveness: Yes / Sometimes / No (details)</p>

<p>4A. Threshold for Seclusion Use</p>	<p>Seclusion may only be used when there is an immediate and significant risk of harm and no less restrictive option is viable.</p> <p>Describe the threshold for this pupil:</p>
<p>Location</p>	<p>Designated Seclusion Space: Safety Checks Completed: Yes / No Environmental Risks Identified: Mitigations in Place:</p> <p>Space must be safe, appropriate, hazard-free, ventilated, and unlocked.</p>
<p>Supervision Requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff must monitor wellbeing, breathing, distress, and communication <p>Authorised staff:</p>
<p>Duration and ending criteria</p>	<p>Maximum duration before review: (e.g., 5–10 minutes)</p> <p>Seclusion must end when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate risk has passed • Pupil is calm enough to move safely • A safer alternative becomes possible
<p>Recording Requirements</p>	<p>All seclusion incidents must be recorded, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antecedents • De-escalation attempted • Rationale for seclusion • Duration • Staff involved • Pupil presentation • Injuries or medical support • Post-incident actions
<p>Reporting to Parents/Carers</p>	<p>Parents/carers must be informed as soon as practicable, normally the same day</p>
<p>Post-Incident Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil debrief (adapted to communication needs) • Staff debrief • Review of triggers and strategies • Update to Risk Reduction Plan if needed
<p>Monitoring by Leaders</p>	<p>Senior leaders must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review patterns • Check proportionality

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure seclusion reduces over time • Review training needs
<p>Parent/Carer agreement</p>	<p>Comments:</p> <p>Signature: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>
<p>Review Schedule</p>	<p>Must be reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After any seclusion incident • After significant behavioural changes • At least once per term <p>Next Review Date:</p>

Appendix F: Restrictive Intervention & Reasonable Force: Parent Summary

Our Commitment

Cambrian Learning Trust schools aim to create calm, safe, and predictable environments where children feel secure, respected, and able to learn. We focus on positive relationships, early support, and de-escalation so that restrictive interventions are rarely needed.

Restrictive interventions are **only ever used to keep people safe**, never as a sanction or to force compliance.

What Is Reasonable Force?

Staff may use reasonable force **only when absolutely necessary** to prevent:

- A child hurting themselves or someone else
- Serious damage to property
- A criminal offence
- Serious disruption to the safety or order of the school

Reasonable force means using **the least amount of force for the shortest time** to keep everyone safe.

Everyday contact—like guiding a child by the hand or offering comfort—is **not** restrictive intervention.

What Are Restrictive Interventions?

These are actions that limit a child's movement or freedom. They include:

- **Physical interventions** (e.g., guiding or holding to prevent harm)
- **Non-physical interventions** (e.g., blocking a doorway, removing unsafe objects)
- **Environmental restrictions** (e.g., limiting access to unsafe areas)

Mechanical restraints are **not used** in CLT schools.

Restrictive interventions are always a **last resort**.

Seclusion

Seclusion means supervising a child in a room or area **they cannot leave**. It is a serious intervention and is used **only in exceptional circumstances** where there is an immediate risk of harm and no safer alternative.

Seclusion is **never** used as a sanction or to secure compliance.

If seclusion is ever used:

- A child is **continuously supervised**
- The space must be safe and appropriate
- It lasts **only as long as needed** to reduce immediate risk
- Parents/carers are informed

If a child may need planned seclusion due to predictable risks, this will be discussed with parents/carers and included in a personalised plan.

How We Keep Children Safe

Before any restrictive intervention, staff always try:

- Calming and de-escalation strategies
- Offering space, time, or sensory support
- Adjusting the environment
- Using trusted adults

Staff are trained in accredited approaches (e.g., Team Teach).

We consider each child's needs, including SEND, communication differences, trauma history, and medical needs.

Recording and Informing Parents/Carers

Schools must record and report all **significant incidents** involving reasonable force or restrictive interventions.

Parents/carers will be informed **as soon as possible**, normally the same day.

Records include what happened, why it was necessary, what was tried beforehand, and what support will follow.

Working Together

We want to work in partnership with families. If you have questions about this policy, your child's support plan, or how we keep children safe, please speak to your child's school