	Restrictive Intervention Policy	
	Policy Statement The Bridge SEN School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment in which every pupil is treated with dignity, respect and compassion. We recognise that pupils in a SEND setting may communicate distress, pain, anxiety, sensory overload, confusion or unmet need through behaviour. Restrictive intervention is not a behaviour-management technique, a punishment or a consequence. It is a last-resort safety response. The Bridge SEN School will work proactively to understand pupils, remove barriers, make reasonable adjustments and reduce the likelihood that restrictive intervention is needed. Where an intervention is necessary to prevent or stop a risk of harm or another circumstance permitted by law, staff must act lawfully, calmly and in the pupil's best interests, using the least restrictive response for the shortest time necessary. The decision must be based on the circumstances at the time, not solely on a pupil's diagnosis, history or behaviour support plan. The Bridge SEN School will learn from every incident, support pupils and staff afterwards, involve parents and relevant professionals, and use incident information to improve practice and prevent recurrence. **Purpose and scope** This policy sets out the principles and procedures governing restrictive interventions at The Bridge SEN School. It applies to all employees and, where relevant, agency staff, volunteers, contractors and other adults working with pupils on the school's behalf. The Headteacher/Principal will ensure that relevant adults understand the policy and their responsibilities.	

	The policy applies on The Bridge SEN School site and, where relevant, during school-led activities, educational visits and transport arrangements for which The Bridge SEN School is responsible. It should be read alongside the school's safeguarding, behaviour/positive behaviour support, health and safety, medical needs and complaints policies. **Aims** ● To prevent and minimize the need for restrictive interventions through high-quality relationships, accessible communication, positive support and early intervention. ● To protect pupils, staff and others from injury or significant harm while preserving pupils' dignity, rights and welfare. ● To ensure that any intervention is lawful, necessary, proportionate, safe, time-limited and appropriate to the individual circumstances. ● To make responsibilities for decision-making, recording, reporting, review and support clear. ● To identify patterns, address inequalities and improve provision through learning from incidents. **Definitions** **Restrictive intervention:** A means to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. It is an umbrella term covering physical and non-physical actions aimed at restraining pupils. **Reasonable force:** A term used in legislation which includes physical restrictive interventions. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time. What is reasonable depends on the circumstances. **Significant incident:** An incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff. This includes physical force used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention. **Restraint:** A non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. It may or may not involve direct physical contact. For example, holding a pupil's arms to their sides or removing a pupil's crutches may constitute restraint.	

Seclusion: A non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and preventing them from leaving, whether by physical obstruction, blocking or making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave.

Legal and guidance framework

This policy is based principally on the Department for Education (DfE) guidance, Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026). The Bridge SEN School will have regard to the statutory guidance on recording and reporting significant incidents involving force.

- Education and Inspections Act 2006, particularly sections 93 and 93A.
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025.
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated regulations.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments and the public sector equality duty where applicable.
- Education Act 1996, including relevant provisions concerning searches.

This policy is not a complete statement of the law. The Bridge SEN School will seek advice where necessary and will keep this policy under review when legislation or statutory guidance changes.

Core principles

- Prevention first: staff must use proactive support, reasonable adjustments and de-escalation wherever possible.
- Last resort: a restrictive intervention may only be considered where it is necessary to address an immediate or continuing risk or another lawful circumstance set out in this policy.
- Necessity: staff must consider whether a less restrictive and effective response is available.
- Proportionality: staff must use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary, for the shortest time required to reduce the risk.

	● Individuality: staff must consider the pupil's age, size, communication, sensory profile, disability, medical needs, trauma history, vulnerabilities and known triggers. ● Dignity and welfare: staff must communicate calmly, protect privacy where possible and continually consider the pupil's physical and emotional welfare. ● No punishment: force, restraint and seclusion must never be used to punish, intimidate, humiliate or secure compliance. ● Accountability: incidents must be recorded, reported, reviewed and used to improve support. **Preventing the need for restrictive intervention** The Bridge SEN School will promote an environment that supports regulation, communication, participation and safety. Prevention is a shared responsibility and should be reflected in classroom practice, the organisation of The Bridge SEN School day and individual pupil planning. **7.1 Whole-School approaches** ● Create predictable, inclusive and appropriately adapted environments, considering noise, lighting, crowding, transitions, waiting times and access to calm spaces. ● Build trusting relationships and use respectful, empathetic communication, including an appropriate tone, pace and amount of language. ● Ensure pupils have accessible ways to communicate choices, discomfort, pain, refusal, anxiety and requests for help or a break. ● Use consistent approaches across classrooms, corridors, playgrounds, dining areas, transport and other communal spaces. ● Ensure staff know how to recognise early signs of distress and respond before escalation. ● Record and review patterns in incidents to inform school improvement and staff development.	

7.2 Individualised support

Where a pupil may be at increased risk of restrictive intervention, staff who know the pupil well should work with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals to understand the function and context of behaviour and identify triggers. Plans should be co-produced with the pupil and family where appropriate and accessible to the adults who need to use them.

A pupil's Behaviour Support Plan / Positive Behaviour Support Plan should, as appropriate, include:

- The pupil's strengths, preferences, communication methods and how they indicate consent, refusal, discomfort or distress.
- Known or possible triggers, early warning signs and contextual factors, including pain, illness, sensory overload, unfamiliar people or environments, changes to routine, fear or anxiety.
- Preventative strategies and reasonable adjustments, including environmental adaptations and support for transitions.
- De-escalation approaches that are known to help, and approaches that may increase distress and should be avoided.
- The pupil's preferred regulation strategies, trusted adults and agreed safe spaces.
- Relevant health, mobility, sensory, medication and other risk information, with clear instructions for accessing clinical advice where needed.
- Any identified risk and a linked risk assessment, including practical measures to reduce that risk.
- Where increased physical contact may be appropriate, the circumstances, purpose, agreed parameters and staff training requirements. This does not authorise force in advance or remove the need to assess each incident at the time.
- How the plan will be reviewed, including after any significant incident.

Plans must be reviewed periodically with the pupil and parent/carer and following a significant incident. The Bridge SEN School will amend plans in light of evidence about what has and has not worked.

When restrictive intervention may be used

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. Reasonable force may be used to prevent or stop a pupil from:

- Causing injury to themselves or others.
- Committing a criminal offence.
- Damaging property.
- Causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

A decision must be made in the circumstances of the individual incident. Staff must not assume that intervention is justified because a pupil has a particular diagnosis, has previously been restrained, is refusing an instruction, is distressed, is displaying behaviour that is inconvenient, or has a plan which mentions restrictive intervention.

8.1 Decision-making test

Is it necessary? Have less restrictive and effective options been considered? Is intervention likely to reduce the risk, or could it escalate the situation or cause greater harm? Can staff seek support from colleagues without increasing risk?

Is it proportionate? Is the proposed response the least restrictive option and the minimum force necessary for the shortest time? Have the pupil's age, size, disability, medical needs, vulnerabilities and equality implications been considered?

Have welfare and dignity been considered? Could the intervention cause physical or psychological harm or particular distress? Can the pupil be supported away from peers? Can staff explain calmly what is happening and what the pupil can do? Are communication and processing needs being respected?

Staff must continually reassess the situation. If an intervention is not reducing the risk, is escalating distress or is no longer necessary, staff must change approach, reduce or stop the intervention as appropriate.

9. Safety requirements and prohibited practice

The following requirements apply whenever staff are responding to a crisis:

- Force must never be used as punishment or to cause pain, humiliation, intimidation or compliance.
- Staff must never use a restraint that affects a pupil's airway, breathing or circulation. This includes covering the mouth or nose, or applying pressure to the neck or abdomen.
- Staff must take particular care where an intervention occurs on or near the ground. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff must release holds or reposition to a safer alternative or standing position as quickly as possible.
- Staff must remain alert to changes in the pupil's breathing, colour, responsiveness, distress, pain or other signs of medical difficulty and stop/reassess immediately where safety requires.
- The intervention must end as soon as the risk has reduced sufficiently. It must not continue to secure obedience or because the pupil remains upset.
- Where appropriate, the pupil must receive medical assessment and treatment for any injury as soon as possible.

The Bridge SEN School does not operate a blanket 'no contact' policy. Appropriate contact may be needed for first aid, guiding or escorting, comfort, or teaching and demonstrating activities. Staff must use judgement, consider the pupil's SEND and vulnerabilities, the circumstances and whether a non-contact alternative is available. Appropriate contact must not be confused with restrictive intervention.

10. Seclusion

Seclusion, as defined in this policy, is a non-disciplinary safety intervention. It should only be used to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation and is not acting with intent. It must not be used as a disciplinary response to deliberate or wilful misbehaviour, as a punishment, or through a threat of punishment.

Where seclusion is considered necessary:

- The purpose must be to protect others from harm, not to punish or obtain compliance.

- The location must be safe and must not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil.
- The pupil must be supervised at all times.
- Staff must continue to consider the pupil's physical and emotional welfare and communication needs.
- The pupil must be allowed to leave as soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced.
- The incident must be recorded and parents informed in accordance with section 14 of this policy.

A calm room, quiet space or agreed regulation area is not automatically seclusion. It becomes seclusion if the pupil is kept there and prevented from leaving, including by physical obstruction, blocking or making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave. The Bridge SEN School will not describe an intervention by a different name to avoid recording or reporting duties.

11. Staff training and risk management

The Headteacher/Principal will identify staff roles and situations in which restrictive intervention may be more likely to be needed and will determine appropriate training. Staff likely to need to use reasonable force or other restrictive interventions should be adequately trained in safe and lawful use and in prevention and de-escalation strategies.

Training selected by The Bridge SEN School must reflect the principles of the DfE April 2026 guidance and the needs of the school's pupils. Training records will be maintained, including the staff trained, course/provider, date and refresher requirements. Staff must only use techniques for which they have received appropriate training, except that the lawfulness of any action will always depend on the circumstances and the applicable legal powers.

The Bridge SEN School will carry out and review risk assessments so that staff who regularly work with pupils where restrictive intervention may be required can do so as safely as reasonably practicable. Risk assessments should consider pupil-specific risks, staffing, the environment, communication, health information, training and preventative measures.

12. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Governing body / Trust Board / Proprietor	Ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place; take reasonable steps to ensure recording and reporting procedures are followed; regularly review incident data, patterns, training needs and disproportionate use.
Headteacher / Principal	Lead implementation; ensure staff understand the policy; arrange appropriate training and risk assessment; oversee incident review, parent communication, safeguarding responses and policy evaluation.
Designated senior leader for restrictive intervention	Receive and review incident records; ensure required notifications are made; arrange debriefs and support; monitor trends and follow-up actions.
All staff	Prioritise prevention; know pupils' plans and risk assessments; use only lawful, necessary and proportionate responses; seek help where safe; record and report incidents promptly; participate in review and learning.
Parents/carers	Work in partnership with The Bridge SEN School to share relevant information about the pupil's needs, health, communication, triggers and effective support, and to contribute to reviews of individual plans.
Pupils	Be supported, in a way appropriate to their communication and understanding, to express their views, preferences and experiences and to contribute to plans and post-incident reflection.

13. Immediate actions after an incident

1. Ensure the pupil, other pupils and staff are safe. Call for assistance or emergency services where needed.
2. End the restrictive intervention as soon as it is no longer necessary to address the risk.

3. Check the pupil and staff member for injury or distress. Arrange medical assessment and treatment as appropriate and record injuries under the school's procedures.
4. Provide support to other pupils who witnessed the incident where necessary.
5. Inform the designated senior leader as soon as practicable.
6. Make the required written record and ensure parent/carer notification takes place within the timescales in section 14.
7. Arrange separate, supportive debrief conversations and review the pupil's plan and risk assessment.

14. Recording and reporting

The Bridge SEN School will maintain written procedures for recording and reporting each significant incident involving use of force and each incident of seclusion or restraint. These duties apply even where the intervention is described in or agreed as part of a pupil's Behaviour Support Plan / Positive Behaviour Support Plan.

14.1 Significant incidents involving use of force

Each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil must be recorded in writing as soon as practicable after the event. The staff member(s) involved should make the record and should endeavour to do so no later than the same day.

The record must include, as a minimum:

- Names of the pupil and staff directly involved.
- Relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil has an identified SEND and their SEN status code.
- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention.
- A brief account of what led up to the incident, known or possible triggers, preventative and de-escalation strategies used and, where relevant, the type and degree of force applied.
- Details of any physical injuries sustained.
- Why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance.

- Post-incident support, including medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts.

The Bridge SEN School should also record useful additional information, such as pupil and witness accounts, when parents were notified and follow-up actions.

The Bridge SEN School must have a procedure to report each significant use of force to the pupil's parent(s) as soon as practicable and should endeavour to do so no later than the same day. The report should be in writing and include the time, date, location and approximate duration; why force was necessary; the type and degree of force; and details of any physical injuries. This is currently in place and is managed by the teacher and headteacher.

The reporting exceptions are where the pupil is aged 20 or over, or where it appears to the staff member that reporting to a parent would be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil. In the latter case, the incident must be reported to any parent to whom it can safely be reported or, if there are none, to the local authority within whose area the pupil is ordinarily resident. The designated senior leader must be consulted promptly about the safe reporting route.

14.2 Seclusion and restraint incidents

Each incident of seclusion or restraint must be recorded in writing as soon as practicable after the event. The staff member(s) involved should make the record and should endeavour to do so no later than the same day. This includes restraint without direct physical contact, for example removing a pupil's walking aid.

The record must include, as a minimum:

- Names of the pupil and staff directly involved.
- Time, date, location and approximate duration.
- Relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including identified SEND and SEN status code.
- Why the intervention was assessed as necessary.
- Details of any physical injuries sustained.
- Post-incident support, including medical treatment or support for other adverse impacts.

Parents must be informed in writing as soon as practicable and The Bridge SEN School should endeavour to do so no later than the same day. The information must be provided even where the intervention is included in an agreed pupil plan. The same exceptions apply as set out in section 14.1: pupil aged 20 or over, or a report likely to result in serious harm. Where

the latter applies, the incident must be reported to a parent who can safely be informed or, if there are none, to the relevant local authority.
Where a restraint incident also constitutes a significant use of force, The Bridge SEN School only needs to follow the significant-use-of-force reporting procedure; the same information does not need to be reported twice. Where restraint does not constitute significant use of force, the seclusion/restraint procedure must be followed.

14.3 Notification and follow-up with parents

The Bridge SEN School will communicate with parents/carers sensitively, factually and without delay. Where appropriate, parents will be invited to a follow-up discussion covering triggers and warning signs, whether the pupil's plan was followed, the de-escalation strategies used and their effectiveness, and what may be changed to reduce the likelihood of recurrence. Any agreed changes will be documented.

15. Post-incident support, debrief and review

As soon as practicable, The Bridge SEN School will evaluate each incident to understand why intervention was used, its impact on the pupil and staff, any patterns or trends and how similar incidents may be avoided.
The pupil and staff member involved should be offered follow-up conversations to support reflection, learning and wellbeing. These should be separate initially where appropriate, and should explore what happened and why, repair relationships and identify improvements. The discussion should ideally be facilitated by a staff member who was not involved in the incident; an additional person may support impartiality.
The Bridge SEN School will monitor pupil and staff wellbeing and provide further support where needed, which may include additional conversations, counselling or other appropriate resources. Pupils who witness an incident and may have become distressed or seen a peer injured will also be offered appropriate support.
Following a significant incident, The Bridge SEN School will review the pupil's behaviour support plan and risk assessment with the pupil, parent/carer and relevant professionals as appropriate. The review should consider whether the

environment, communication approach, staffing, curriculum, timetable, health support or reasonable adjustments need to change.

16. Monitoring, governance and equality

The designated senior leader will maintain a secure central record of incidents and provide regular anonymised analysis to the Headteacher/Principal and governing body / Trust Board / proprietor. The frequency of reporting will be [insert frequency].

Governors/proprietors should regularly review and interrogate data to ensure that the school:

- Identifies and implements improvements to policies and practice, particularly where approaches have not been effective.
- Identifies staff learning and development needs.
- Understands repeat patterns and triggers and evaluates the effectiveness of pupil support measures.
- Identifies any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics, have SEN or other vulnerabilities.

Analysis must be proportionate and avoid over-interpreting small subgroups. The Bridge SEN School will use findings to improve support and reduce the need for restrictive interventions, not to label or penalise pupils.

17. Complaints and allegations

Complaints about the use of restrictive interventions will be handled under the school's normal complaints procedure. Where an allegation of inappropriate use of force or another restrictive intervention is made against a member of staff, The Bridge SEN School will follow the procedures in Keeping Children Safe in Education and its safeguarding/child protection procedures, including relevant provisions regarding suspension of staff.

All concerns will be taken seriously, recorded and referred to the appropriate senior leader or safeguarding lead. The Bridge SEN School will preserve relevant records and consider any immediate safeguarding or welfare action required.

	18. Information, access and review This policy will be made available to all staff, pupils in an accessible form appropriate to their age and communication needs, and parents/carers. Staff will be made aware of any changes and receive appropriate briefing or training. The policy will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner following changes in legislation or statutory guidance, a significant incident or pattern of incidents, a complaint or allegation, or learning from monitoring and evaluation. ***Source document*** *Department for Education (April 2026), Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools: Guidance for schools in England.*	
	Appendix 1: **Restrictive intervention incident record – minimum checklist** This checklist supports, but does not replace, the school's approved incident recording system. Complete as soon as practicable and endeavour to do so on the same day. ● ☐ Pupil's name and SEN status code; relevant SEND, health, communication and vulnerability information. ● ☐ Names and roles of staff directly involved and any witnesses. ● ☐ Date, time, location and approximate start/end time or duration. ● ☐ What happened immediately before the incident; context, known/possible triggers and early warning signs.	

- ☐ Preventative and de-escalation strategies attempted and their impact.
- ☐ Type of intervention: force / restraint (with or without physical contact) / seclusion; clear factual description.
- ☐ Why the intervention was necessary; risk being addressed and why a less restrictive response was not sufficient.
- ☐ How proportionality, pupil welfare, dignity, communication and relevant vulnerabilities were considered.
- ☐ Any injury, pain, breathing difficulty, distress or other adverse impact; medical assessment/treatment arranged.
- ☐ How and when the intervention ended; confirmation that it ended as soon as the risk reduced.
- ☐ Support offered to pupil, staff and witnesses; debrief and follow-up arrangements.
- ☐ Parent/carer informed: by whom, when, how and what information was provided; if not, reason and escalation/alternative reporting route.
- ☐ Plan/risk assessment review required, responsible person and target date.

Appendix 2:

Quick decision prompt for staff

In an immediate situation, staff should use professional judgement and training. This prompt does not replace training or the need to assess the circumstances.

8. What is the immediate risk? Is someone at risk of injury, a criminal offence, property damage or disorder?
9. Can I reduce the risk through communication, space, environmental change, distraction, support from a trusted adult or another less restrictive strategy?
10. If intervention is necessary, what is the least restrictive response, using no more force than necessary and for the shortest time?
11. Have I considered the pupil's SEND, communication, sensory, medical and trauma-related needs, dignity and welfare?
12. Am I continually reassessing? Stop or change the intervention as soon as it is no longer necessary or is increasing risk.
13. Afterwards: check welfare, seek medical help if appropriate, report to the senior leader, record and notify parents in line with this policy.

Appendix 3:

School-specific arrangements to complete before approval

Arrangement	School detail
Designated senior leader for restrictive intervention	James Nuttall, Headteacher
Safeguarding lead / deputy safeguarding lead	James Nuttal (Designated Safeguarding Lead) Priya Parthiban (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)
Incident recording system and location of forms	Access incident paper forms on Google Drive which can be printed. Incidents can also be logged electronically through Bromcom
Who checks records and parent notifications	James Nuttall/ School Administrator
How parents are contacted outside normal school hours	Through communication book and Emails
Staff training provider, approved approaches and refresher arrangements	Intelligensa Limited, Education Psychologist
How governors/trustees receive data and how often	Email Contact. Governor meeting termly and when there are emergencies
Relevant local authority reporting/contact arrangements	See contact of Student Resident Local Authority under the admission register.

		Where current pupil plans and risk assessments are stored	Bromcom, Individual Folders under the Google Drive		
	Updated November 2026			Next update scheduled for November 2027	