Restrictive Interventions (Including the Use of Reasonable Force) Policy

Written by	Reviewed & Ratified by Governors	Shared with Staff	Last Updated	Review Cycle	Next Review Due
Duncan Wakefield Deputy Headteacher	October 2026	September 2026	September 2026	Annually	September 2027

1. Statement of intent

1.1 At Shefford Lower School we strive to create an environment in which children and adults feel happy, safe, secure and valued**.** We have a responsibility for the pastoral care, welfare and safety of all pupils and aim to promote a whole-school approach to positive behaviour that is understood by staff, pupils, parents/carers and partner agencies.

1.2 As a school, we recognise that behaviour is communication and may indicate that a pupil is distressed or unable to express their needs effectively. We therefore prioritise early support, prevention and de-escalation strategies to minimise the need for restrictive interventions.

1.3 There are occasions when the use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion**,** is lawful and necessary to keep pupils and staff safe. These interventions can have a significant physical and emotional impact and are only ever used as a last resort, when other strategies have failed or are not possible.

This policy aims to:

- Minimise the need for restrictive interventions through prevention and de-escalation
- Set out clearly when and how restrictive interventions may be used lawfully and safely
- Support staff to act confidently and professionally in high-risk situations
- Protect pupils from unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful intervention
- Ensure incidents are **recorded, reported, reviewed and learned from**
- Ensure pupils, parents/carers and staff receive appropriate post-incident support

1.4 The governing body supports staff who, as a last resort, use reasonable force **lawfully and in accordance with this policy**.

1.5 Safeguarding Context

1.5.1 At Shefford Lower School, we recognise that situations requiring restrictive interventions often have a safeguarding dimension and may indicate that a pupil is experiencing harm or is at risk. The use of restrictive interventions is intrinsically linked to our safeguarding responsibilities under Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

1.5.2 The use of restrictive interventions may be necessary in response to:

- Child-on-child abuse - including physical violence, sexual violence, sexual harassment, bullying, or other harmful behaviour between peers
- Incidents where a pupil is at immediate risk of harm to themselves or others
- Situations where a pupil's behaviour indicates underlying trauma, abuse, or neglect
- Circumstances where a pupil is being exploited or is at risk of exploitation
- Behaviour linked to mental health difficulties or emotional dysregulation

1.5.3 Understanding the continuum of harmful behaviour
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 establishes a clear continuum of harmful behaviour, from harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) through to sexual violence. Staff must understand that restrictive interventions may be needed at various points on this continuum to keep children safe.
This continuum includes:

- Inappropriate sexual language or jokes
- Unwanted physical contact
- Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB)
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual assault
- Sexual violence

Where restrictive intervention is used in response to behaviour on this continuum, staff must:

- Recognise this as a safeguarding matter requiring DSL involvement
- Understand that both the victim and the perpetrator may need safeguarding support
- Follow the procedures set out in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Never dismiss harmful behaviour as "just banter" or "part of growing up"

1.5.4 **DSL involvement in restrictive intervention incidents**
The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy DSL must be informed immediately of:

- Any restrictive intervention used in response to child-on-child abuse or harmful behaviour
- Any incident that may indicate a safeguarding concern (e.g., behaviour suggesting trauma, abuse, or exploitation)
- Patterns of behaviour requiring repeated intervention that may indicate underlying safeguarding issues
- Incidents involving vulnerable pupils, including:
    - Pupils with SEND
    - Looked-after children or previously looked-after children
    - Children known to children's social care
    - Young carers
    - Pupils with specific medical conditions
- Any incident where the circumstances suggest the pupil may be experiencing abuse, neglect, or exploitation

1.5.5 Responding to child-on-child abuse
Where restrictive interventions are used in response to child-on-child abuse, the school will:

- Follow the procedures set out in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Conduct a risk assessment for both the victim and the perpetrator

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- Provide appropriate support and intervention for all pupils involved, recognising that the perpetrator may also have safeguarding needs
- Consider whether a referral to children's social care or the police is necessary
- Work with parents/carers of all pupils involved (unless doing so would place a child at risk)
- Work with external agencies as necessary (e.g., social care, police, CAMHS)
- Review behaviour plans and risk assessments in light of the incident
- Consider whether other pupils may have been affected and need support
- Act to prevent further incidents and protect all pupils

1.5.6 Recognition of exploitation risks
Staff must be alert to the possibility that behaviour requiring restrictive intervention may be linked to:

- **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)** - where a child is manipulated or coerced into sexual activity in exchange for something
- **Child criminal exploitation (CCE)** - where a child is manipulated or coerced into criminal activity
- **County lines** - a form of CCE involving drug trafficking across county boundaries
- **Modern slavery and trafficking** - where a child is forced, deceived, or coerced into exploitation
- **Financial exploitation** - where a child is manipulated into financial transactions or activities
- **Radicalisation** - being drawn into terrorism or extremism
- **Online exploitation** - including grooming, sexual abuse, or criminal exploitation facilitated through digital means

Where staff have concerns that a pupil's behaviour may be linked to any form of exploitation, they must report this to the DSL immediately, even if restrictive intervention was not ultimately used. The DSL will assess the concern and take appropriate action, which may include referral to children's social care or the police.

1.5.7 Safeguarding training for all staff

All staff members, including those who do not work directly with children, must receive regular safeguarding training that includes:

- Understanding the link between behaviour and safeguarding
- Recognising indicators of abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- Understanding the continuum of harmful sexual behaviour
- Knowing how to respond to disclosures or concerns
- Understanding when and how to involve the DSL
- Understanding the safeguarding context of restrictive interventions

2.0 Legal framework and guidance

This policy is informed by and complies with:
Legislation

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (s.93, s.93A)
- Education Act 1996 (s.550ZA, s.550ZB)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018

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- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025

Statutory guidance

- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'
- DfE (2026) 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force in schools'
- DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for schools'
- HM Government 'Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention'

School policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy and Information Report
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Data Protection and Information Security Policy

3. Definitions

Restrictive interventions

An umbrella term describing physical and non-physical actions that prevent, restrict or subdue a pupil's movement to reduce risk of harm.

Examples include:

- Physical restraint
- Passive physical contact (e.g. blocking a route)
- Supervised seclusion

Reasonable force

The use of physical contact using **no more force than necessary, for the shortest possible time**, to prevent injury, damage, crime or disorder.

Restraint

A form of restrictive intervention that **limits or immobilises** a pupil's movement, with or without direct physical contact.

Seclusion

Keeping a pupil away from others and **preventing them from leaving**, for safety reasons. It is **not punishment** and is strictly time-limited.

Safe touch

Physical contact that is necessary, appropriate and reassuring, and which does not constitute restraint.

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Significant incident
Any incident where physical force goes beyond normal physical contact, including force used to implement a non-physical restriction.

3.1 Appropriate physical contact and safe touch

Shefford Lower School does not operate a "no-contact" policy. Appropriate physical contact may include:

- First aid or medical support
- Comforting a distressed pupil
- Guiding or escorting a pupil safely
- Praise or celebration (e.g. handshake, side-on hug)
- PE and music instruction

Staff always use professional judgement, taking account of:

- Safeguarding guidance
- Age, SEND, vulnerabilities, knowledge of child
- Whether an alternative approach is available

Touch must **never be invasive, humiliating or forceful**.

3.2 Seclusion

Seclusion may be used **only as a safety measure** during acute dysregulation and:

- Is never used as a punishment or threat
- Takes place in a calm, safe space (e.g. wellbeing area)
- Is supervised at all times
- Ends as soon as risk reduces

All seclusion is recorded and reported.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Governing body

- Approves and reviews this policy
- Monitors data on restrictive interventions
- Challenges disproportionate or ineffective practice
- Responds to complaints in liaison with the headteacher

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4.2 Headteacher

- Overall implementation and oversight
- Ensures appropriate training (including Team Teach)
- Reviews incidents and patterns termly
- Ensures recording and reporting compliance
- Handles complaints and allegations

4.3 All staff

All staff members have a responsibility to:

- Use prevention and de-escalation as the first response in all situations
- Use force only when it is lawful, necessary, and proportionate
- Record and report all incidents promptly and accurately
- Engage in reflection and follow-up after incidents
- Maintain professional standards at all times

4.3.1 Staff safeguarding responsibilities

All staff members, including those who do not work directly with children, must:

- **Read and understand Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in its entirety**
- Understand that KCSIE 2026 no longer provides a condensed summary (Annex A), and all staff must read the full Part One
- Understand how restrictive interventions relate to safeguarding and the protection of children
- Recognise that behaviour requiring intervention may indicate that a pupil is experiencing harm or is at risk
- Know how to identify signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- Understand the continuum of harmful sexual behaviour and how to respond appropriately
- Know how to report safeguarding concerns to the DSL or a deputy DSL
- Understand that they must report concerns immediately and not assume someone else will do so
- Attend regular safeguarding training and updates
- Read and understand all relevant safeguarding policies and procedures

Staff must confirm annually that they have read and understood Part One of KCSIE 2026 and this policy.

4.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL (and deputy DSLs) have specific responsibilities in relation to restrictive interventions:

- Ensuring that all incidents with a safeguarding dimension are appropriately assessed and acted upon
- Being consulted on all incidents involving vulnerable pupils or child-on-child abuse
- Ensuring that parents/carers are informed of incidents in a timely and appropriate manner
- Determining when parental notification should be delayed due to safeguarding concerns
- Maintaining secure records of all incidents on CPOMS
- Identifying patterns or trends that may indicate safeguarding concerns
- Making referrals to children's social care or the police when necessary
- Liaising with the local authority when required (e.g., for looked-after children or children with EHC plans)

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- Ensuring that staff understand the safeguarding context of restrictive interventions
- Providing safeguarding supervision and support to staff involved in incidents
- Contributing to post-incident reviews and learning

4.5 SENDCO and Behaviour Lead

- Develops and reviews behaviour plans and risk assessments
- Advises on reasonable adjustments
- Supports staff working with pupils with SEND
- Contributes to training and review

4.6 Supply Staff, Trainee Teachers, and Third-Party Providers

The school recognises that it shares active safeguarding duties regarding supply teachers, trainee teachers, and contracted staff working with our pupils.

All supply staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, and third-party providers working with pupils must:

- Be informed of this policy and their responsibilities under it upon arrival
- Receive a safeguarding induction, including information about the DSL and how to report concerns
- Be made aware of the school's approach to behaviour management and de-escalation
- Be informed of individual pupils' behaviour plans and risk assessments where relevant to their work
- Know how to summon assistance if a situation escalates
- Understand that they should not use restrictive interventions unless they have received appropriate training, except in emergency situations where there is immediate risk of serious harm
- Report any incidents or concerns to permanent school staff immediately
- Follow the school's safeguarding procedures at all times

The school will:

- Provide supply agencies with a copy of this policy and our safeguarding policy in advance
- Ensure supply staff receive a face-to-face induction on their first day, covering:
    - Behaviour management expectations and de-escalation strategies
    - Safeguarding procedures and how to contact the DSL
    - Individual pupils' needs and behaviour plans (where relevant)
    - How to summon assistance in an emergency
- Ensure supply staff know the location of key policies and procedures
- Supervise and support supply staff appropriately, particularly when working with pupils who may require restrictive intervention
- Ensure that any incidents involving supply staff are recorded, reviewed, and learned from
- Provide feedback to supply agencies where performance or conduct concerns arise

Third-party providers (e.g., sports coaches, music teachers, external facilitators, contracted staff) must:

- Be made aware of this policy and our safeguarding policy before working with pupils
- Receive a safeguarding induction appropriate to their role
- Follow the school's behaviour management approach and expectations
- Report any incidents, concerns, or use of restrictive interventions to school staff immediately
- Not use restrictive interventions unless they are appropriately trained and authorised by the school
- Understand that they are subject to the same safeguarding expectations as school staff

The school will ensure that appropriate safeguarding checks (including DBS checks) are completed for all supply staff and third-party providers before they work with pupils.

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5. When reasonable force may be used

Staff may use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

- Hurting themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Damaging property
- Seriously disrupting good order

This power applies on school premises and during off-site activities and trips/visits.

6.0 Unacceptable uses of force

Force must **never** be used:

- As punishment, threat, or deterrent
- In a way that restricts breathing or circulation
- To intentionally restrain a pupil on the ground (prone or supine restraint) - this is prohibited except in the most exceptional circumstances where there is an immediate risk of death or serious injury and no alternative is available
- To restrict a pupil's head or neck
- In a way that applies pressure to joints, particularly in ways that cause pain
- In a way that is humiliating, degrading, or causes emotional harm
- For longer than absolutely necessary to resolve the immediate risk
- Without consideration of the pupil's SEND, medical conditions, trauma history, or individual vulnerabilities
- When the pupil is compliant or the risk has passed
- To force compliance with instructions that are not related to immediate safety

Prohibited techniques include:

- Prone (face-down) restraint - holding a pupil face-down on the ground
- Supine (face-up) restraint on the ground - holding a pupil face-up on the ground
- Any restraint that restricts breathing in any way
- Pressure to the neck, chest, or abdomen
- Holding a pupil by the hair, ears, or clothing around the neck
- Bending fingers or forcing arms up the back
- Holding or pulling a pupil by their clothing in a way that restricts breathing
- Any technique that involves deliberate infliction of pain as a means of control

Emergency situations

In the most exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of death or serious injury and no alternative is available, ground restraint may be used for the shortest possible time. In such cases:

- The pupil must be moved off the ground as soon as it is safe to do so
- The incident must be reported immediately to the Headteacher and DSL
- A full investigation must be conducted
- The incident must be reported to governors
- Parents/carers must be informed and invited to discuss the incident
- The pupil and staff involved must receive appropriate support
- A review must be conducted to identify how such situations can be prevented in future

Reporting injuries

Any use of force that causes injury to a pupil or member of staff must be:

- Reported immediately to the Headteacher and DSL

- Recorded in detail on CPOMS/ARBOR, including photographs of any visible injuries (with appropriate consent and safeguarding considerations)
- Investigated fully to determine whether the force used was reasonable and proportionate
- Reported to parents/carers the same day
- Reported to governors in the termly report
- Reported to the Health and Safety Executive if the injury meets RIDDOR reporting criteria
- Reviewed to identify lessons learned and prevent recurrence

Where an injury occurs, the school will consider whether:

- The force used was necessary and proportionate
- Alternative approaches could have been used
- Additional training or support is needed for staff
- The pupil's behaviour plan or risk assessment needs updating
- A referral to external agencies is necessary

7. Using force to search pupils

Authorised staff may use reasonable force to search for **prohibited items** only, in line with DfE guidance.

8. Prevention and de-escalation

Prevention and de-escalation are the main aims of support and Shefford Lower School prioritises:

- Calm, consistent adult responses
- Clear boundaries and expectations
- Positive framing and Relationships and unconditional positive regard
- PHSE and Values-led practice
- Individual behaviour plans and risk assessments

De-escalation strategies include distraction, empathy, environmental adjustments and time-out in safe spaces. These are regularly reviewed and updated in line with the needs of the child and voice of parent, staff and child.

9. Deciding whether intervention is appropriate

Staff must consider:

- **Necessity** – Is intervention required to prevent serious harm?
- **Proportionality** – Is this the least restrictive option?
- **Impact** – Could intervention escalate distress?

Professional judgement is essential, particularly for pupils with SEND or trauma histories.

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10. Vulnerable Pupils

10.1 Pupils with SEND

The school recognises that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may be more vulnerable in situations requiring restrictive intervention and may be more likely to require such interventions due to their individual needs.

The school will:

- Make reasonable adjustments to prevent the need for restrictive interventions wherever possible
- Use risk assessments and Consistent Approach Plans that are tailored to each pupil's individual needs, communication style, and triggers
- Work closely with parents/carers and external professionals (e.g., educational psychologists, occupational therapists, CAMHS) to understand the pupil's needs and develop appropriate strategies
- Avoid techniques that increase distress, such as:
    - Preventing stimming or self-regulation behaviours unless they pose an immediate risk of harm
    - Using restraint techniques that conflict with sensory needs
    - Applying techniques that may be particularly distressing for pupils with trauma histories or attachment difficulties
- Consider sensory needs, communication differences, and trauma responses when planning and implementing interventions
- Ensure interventions are proportionate and appropriate to the pupil's understanding and developmental stage
- Provide additional training for staff working with pupils with complex SEND
- Review and update plans regularly, involving the pupil (where appropriate), parents/carers, and external professionals

For pupils with autism spectrum condition (ASC):

- Staff will be aware that some pupils with ASC may not understand social cues or the impact of their behaviour on others
- De-escalation strategies will take account of communication differences and sensory sensitivities
- Visual supports, social stories, and clear, concrete language will be used
- Staff will avoid techniques that involve close physical proximity or face-to-face confrontation, which may be particularly distressing

For pupils with attachment difficulties or trauma histories:

- Staff will be aware that physical restraint may be particularly distressing and may trigger trauma responses
- De-escalation will prioritise maintaining relationships and providing reassurance
- Staff will use trauma-informed approaches, including calm, predictable responses
- Additional support will be provided after incidents to help the pupil process what happened

10.2 Looked-after children and previously looked-after children

Looked-after children and previously looked-after children are among the most vulnerable groups in our school. Many have experienced trauma, abuse, or neglect, and physical restraint may be particularly distressing for them.

The school will:

- Ensure the Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children **is** involved in planning and reviewing support for these pupils
- Inform the pupil's social worker of any significant incidents involving restrictive intervention
- Work closely with foster carers or residential care staff to ensure a consistent approach

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- Ensure Personal Education Plans (PEPs) include strategies for managing behaviour and preventing the need for restrictive interventions
- Prioritise trauma-informed approaches that maintain relationships and provide reassurance
- Ensure that any use of restrictive intervention is reported in line with local authority procedures
- Provide additional support and debriefing after incidents, recognising the potential impact on the pupil's sense of safety and trust

10.3 Young carers

The school recognises that young carers may face additional pressures and stress related to their caring responsibilities, which may impact their behaviour and emotional regulation.

The school will:

- Identify young carers and ensure they receive appropriate support
- Consider whether behaviour requiring intervention may be linked to stress, anxiety, or tiredness related to caring responsibilities
- Work with families and external agencies (e.g., young carers' services) to provide appropriate support
- Ensure behaviour plans and risk assessments take account of the pupil's caring responsibilities and any related stressors
- Provide opportunities for young carers to talk about their feelings and concerns
- Make reasonable adjustments to support young carers' wellbeing and attendance

Where restrictive intervention is used with a young carer, the school will:

- Consider whether the incident may be linked to stress or anxiety related to caring responsibilities
- Ensure the pupil receives appropriate emotional support
- Review whether additional support is needed for the pupil and their family
- Work with external agencies to address any underlying issues

10.4 Pupils with specific medical conditions

The school recognises that some pupils have medical conditions that may affect their behaviour or make physical intervention potentially dangerous.

The school will:

- Ensure all staff working with pupils with medical conditions are aware of their needs and any risks associated with restrictive intervention
- Include information about medical conditions in risk assessments and behaviour plans
- Consult with parents/carers and healthcare professionals to understand the implications of the pupil's condition
- Make reasonable adjustments to avoid the need for restrictive interventions
- Ensure staff know how to recognise and respond to medical emergencies
- Avoid techniques that could exacerbate medical conditions (e.g., restraint that restricts breathing for pupils with asthma)

Examples of medical conditions requiring particular consideration:

- Asthma or other respiratory conditions - avoid any restraint that restricts breathing
- Heart conditions - avoid restraint that causes extreme stress or exertion
- Epilepsy - be aware of triggers and ensure staff know how to respond to seizures
- Diabetes - be aware that behaviour changes may indicate blood sugar issues rather than defiance
- Tic disorders (e.g., Tourette's syndrome) **-** understand that tics are involuntary and should not be restrained
- Conditions affecting bone strength or joint flexibility - avoid techniques that apply pressure to joints or limbs

Where a pupil has a medical condition that may be relevant to restrictive interventions, the school will ensure:

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- A Care Plan is in place and reviewed regularly
- All staff working with the pupil are aware of the plan
- Emergency medication (if required) is readily available
- Parents/carers and healthcare professionals are consulted before any planned use of restrictive intervention
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10.5 Pupils known to children's social care

Pupils who are known to children's social care (or have been in the past) may be particularly vulnerable and may have experienced abuse, neglect, or other adverse childhood experiences.
The school will:

- Ensure the DSL is informed of all incidents involving these pupils
- Work closely with social workers and other professionals involved with the family
- Consider whether behaviour requiring intervention may be linked to safeguarding concerns
- Ensure that incidents are reported to social workers in line with agreed procedures
- Provide additional support and monitoring for these pupils
- Review whether additional safeguarding action is needed following incidents

10.6 Pupils experiencing mental health difficulties

The school recognises that pupils experiencing mental health difficulties may be more likely to require restrictive interventions and may be more vulnerable to the negative impacts of such interventions.
The school will:

- Work with parents/carers and other mental health professionals to understand the pupil's needs
- Ensure behaviour plans and risk assessments take account of mental health needs
- Use trauma-informed and mental health-aware approaches to de-escalation
- Provide additional support before and after incidents
- Consider whether behaviour may be linked to mental health difficulties rather than defiance
- Review whether additional mental health support is needed following incidents
- Avoid language or approaches that may increase feelings of shame, guilt, or distress

10.7 Pupils displaying child-to-parent or caregiver abuse

The school recognises that some pupils may display abusive or violent behaviour towards their parents or caregivers, which may also manifest in school settings. This is a safeguarding concern that requires sensitive handling.
Where staff are aware that a pupil engages in child-to-parent or caregiver abuse:

- This information will be included in behaviour plans and risk assessments
- Staff will work sensitively with families to provide appropriate support, recognising that parents/carers may feel ashamed or reluctant to seek help
- The **DSL** will be involved in planning and reviewing interventions
- External agencies (e.g., social care, CAMHS, specialist family support services) will be consulted as appropriate
- The school will recognise that parents/carers may need additional support and reassurance
- Staff will be alert to the possibility that behaviour in school may be part of a wider pattern of controlling or abusive behaviour

Staff will be alert to the possibility that behaviour requiring restrictive intervention may be part of a wider pattern of child-to-parent abuse and will report concerns to the DSL. The DSL will consider whether:

- A referral to children's social care is necessary
- The family would benefit from support from specialist services
- There are safeguarding concerns for the pupil or other family members
- Additional support is needed in school

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The school will ensure that any response to child-to-parent abuse is:

- Non-judgemental and supportive of the family
- Focused on the safety and wellbeing of all family members
- Coordinated with external agencies
- Based on an understanding that the pupil may also have unmet needs or be experiencing difficulties

10.8 General principles for working with vulnerable pupils

For all vulnerable pupils, the school will:

- Prioritise prevention and de-escalation over restrictive intervention
- Ensure individual risk assessments and behaviour plans are in place and regularly reviewed
- Involve pupils (where appropriate), parents/carers, and external professionals in planning
- Provide additional training and support for staff working with vulnerable pupils
- Ensure the DSL is consulted before and after any significant intervention
- Monitor patterns and trends to identify whether additional support is needed
- Ensure post-incident support is tailored to the pupil's individual needs
- Review whether reasonable adjustments need to be made to prevent future incidents
- Work in partnership with families and external agencies to provide holistic support

11. Post-incident support

Following any incident:

- First aid and emotional support are given
- Separate reflection conversations take place
- Parents/carers are informed the same day
- Plans and assessments are reviewed
- Staff wellbeing is checked and supported

12. Recording and reporting

12.1 What must be recorded

All **significant incidents, restraint, and seclusion** must be recorded on **CPOMS** the same day the incident occurs. A "significant incident" is any incident where physical force goes beyond normal physical contact, including force used to implement a non-physical restriction.

Records must include:

Basic information:

- Date, time, and location of the incident
- Names of all pupils involved
- Names of all staff involved
- Names of any witnesses (staff, pupils, or others)

Context and triggers:

- What happened immediately before the incident (antecedents)
- What triggered the behaviour
- Whether the incident was foreseeable or unexpected
- Environmental factors (e.g., time of day, activity, location)

The incident itself:

- Detailed description of the pupil's behaviour
- What the pupil said and did

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- Description of any harm or risk to the pupil, other pupils, staff, or property
- Steps taken to de-escalate the situation before using restrictive intervention
- Why restrictive intervention was necessary (i.e., what harm was being prevented)
- Type of restrictive intervention used (e.g., specific Team Teach technique, seclusion)
- Duration of the intervention (start and end time)
- How the intervention was ended
- The pupil's response during and after the intervention

Outcomes and follow-up:

- Any injuries to the pupil, staff, or others (with photographs if appropriate and with consent)
- First aid or medical attention provided
- Emotional support provided to the pupil and staff
- Whether the DSL was informed and any safeguarding action taken
- Details of parental notification (time, method, who was informed, their response)
- Post-incident reflection and review
- Any changes to behaviour plans, risk assessments, or other support
- Lessons learned and actions to prevent recurrence

Safeguarding considerations:

- Whether the incident may indicate a safeguarding concern
- Whether the incident involved child-on-child abuse or harmful behaviour
- Whether the pupil is a member of a vulnerable group (SEND, LAC, known to social care, etc.)
- Whether a referral to external agencies is necessary

Records must be:

- **Factual and objective** - describing what was seen and heard, not opinions or judgements
- **Detailed and specific** - including exact times, durations, and descriptions
- **Completed promptly** - ideally within 2 hours of the incident, and always the same day
- **Signed and dated** by the staff member completing the record
- **Reviewed and countersigned** by the Headteacher or DSL

12.2 Data protection and record retention

All records are stored securely on CPOMS in accordance with:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data (Use and Access) Act 2025

Access to records:

- Access to records is restricted to relevant staff members on a need-to-know basis
- Parents/carers have a right to request access to records relating to their child, subject to exemptions under data protection law
- Pupils have a right to request access to their own records, subject to age and capacity considerations

Record retention:

- Records are retained in line with our Data Retention Policy and Information and Records Management Society (IRMS) toolkit guidance
- As a general rule, records relating to restrictive interventions are retained until the pupil reaches age 25 (or longer if there are ongoing safeguarding concerns)
- Where incidents involve safeguarding concerns, records will be retained in accordance with child protection record retention requirements (until the pupil reaches age 25, or longer if concerns are ongoing)

Sharing information:

- Information about restrictive interventions may be shared with external agencies (e.g., social care, police, health services) where necessary for safeguarding purposes or with parental consent

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- When a pupil moves to a new school, relevant information about restrictive interventions will be shared as part of the transition process, in line with KCSIE 2026 requirements for sharing safeguarding information
- Information will be shared in line with data protection principles and our Information Sharing Policy

12.3 Reporting to parents and carers

Parents/carers must be informed of any significant incident involving their child **as soon as reasonably possible**, usually the same day.

Method of notification:

- For serious incidents, parents/carers should be contacted by telephone and invited to come into school to discuss the incident
- For less serious incidents, parents/carers may be informed by telephone, in person at pick-up time, or (if appropriate) in writing
- The method of notification should be appropriate to the seriousness of the incident and the needs of the family

Information to be shared:

- What happened and why restrictive intervention was necessary
- What type of intervention was used and for how long
- Any injuries or distress to the pupil
- Support provided to the pupil
- Next steps and any changes to plans or support
- Opportunity for parents/carers to discuss the incident and ask questions

Exceptions to immediate parental notification:

Parental notification may be delayed if doing so would:

- Place the child at risk of significant harm (e.g., if there are concerns about parental response)
- Prejudice a criminal investigation
- Lead to unjustified delay in making a child protection referral

In such cases, the **DSL** will determine the appropriate timing and method of parental notification, in consultation with external agencies (e.g., social care, police) if necessary.

12.4 Monitoring and analysis

Records are reviewed regularly by the Headteacher, DSL, and SLT to identify:

Patterns and trends:

- Pupils who are frequently involved in incidents (as subject or perpetrator)
- Staff who are frequently involved in incidents
- Times of day, locations, or activities where incidents are more common
- Types of behaviour that most commonly lead to restrictive intervention
- Effectiveness of different de-escalation strategies and interventions

Vulnerable groups:

- Whether certain groups of pupils (e.g., SEND, LAC, boys, particular ethnic groups) are disproportionately subject to restrictive interventions
- Whether there are disparities that need to be addressed

Training and support needs:

- Whether staff need additional training in de-escalation or specific techniques
- Whether particular pupils need additional support or changes to their plans
- Whether policies or procedures need to be updated

Safeguarding concerns:

- Whether incidents indicate safeguarding concerns that need to be addressed
- Whether patterns of behaviour suggest underlying issues (e.g., abuse, neglect, exploitation)

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This analysis informs:

- Staff training and development
- Updates to behaviour plans and risk assessments
- Whole-school behaviour strategies
- Policy and procedure reviews
- Resource allocation and support planning

12.5 Reporting to governors

An **anonymised summary report** is provided to the governing body **termly**, including:

- Total number of incidents involving restrictive intervention
- Breakdown by type of intervention (e.g., physical restraint, seclusion)
- Number of pupils and staff involved (anonymised)
- Any injuries or serious incidents
- Analysis of patterns and trends
- Actions taken to reduce future incidents (e.g., training, policy changes, additional support)
- Comparison with previous terms/years
- Any safeguarding concerns or themes identified
- Effectiveness of current approaches and any recommendations for change

The governing body will:

- Review the report and challenge the school's practice where appropriate
- Ensure that the use of restrictive interventions is lawful, necessary, and proportionate
- Ensure that vulnerable groups are not disproportionately affected
- Ensure that staff receive appropriate training and support
- Approve any changes to policy or practice

An **annual report** is provided to the full governing body, including more detailed analysis and recommendations for the year ahead.

12.6 Reporting to external bodies

Where required, the school will report incidents to:

Local Authority:

- For looked-after children - the child's social worker and the Virtual School must be informed of any significant incident
- For children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) - the local authority SEND team must be informed of any significant incident
- For children known to social care - the allocated social worker must be informed in line with agreed procedures

Ofsted:

- Serious incidents involving restrictive interventions must be reported to Ofsted in line with their notification requirements
- This includes incidents resulting in serious injury or where there are concerns about the appropriateness of the intervention

Health and Safety Executive (HSE):

- Incidents resulting in serious injuries to staff or pupils must be reported under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013)
- This includes injuries resulting in more than 7 days' absence from work/school

Police:

- Where a criminal offence may have been committed (by a pupil or staff member)
- Where there is a risk of serious harm and police assistance is needed

Other agencies:

- As required by specific circumstances (e.g., LADO for allegations against staff, CAMHS for mental health concerns)

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13. Staff training

13.1 *Whole-staff training*

All staff members receive training on behaviour management, de-escalation, and restrictive interventions as part of their induction and on an ongoing basis.

Induction training for all new staff includes:

- The school's approach to behaviour management and positive relationships
- Prevention and de-escalation strategies used at Shefford Lower School
- Understanding behaviour as communication
- This Restrictive Interventions Policy and when restrictive interventions may be used
- Safeguarding responsibilities, including reading Part One of KCSIE 2026

14. Complaints and allegations

Any raised complaints and allegations are to be submitted and handled in line with:

- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding procedures
- LADO guidance

Staff are not automatically suspended following an allegation.

15. Equality statement

Shefford Lower School is committed to equality, dignity and respect for all. No pupil will be treated less favourably due to disability or protected characteristics.

16. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed **annually** or sooner if guidance changes, and approved by the governing body.

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