



Physical Intervention & Seclusion Policy

2026/2027

Policy Issue and Updates

<i>Pages</i>	<i>Issue No.</i>	<i>Date</i>
Whole document – new policy	1	August 2026

The following policy has been approved by the Divisional CEO and Governing Board of Directors.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis unless circumstances arise requiring the policy to be reviewed earlier.

Approved by Executive Team: August 2026

Board signatory: 

Planned review: August 2027

This procedure should be read alongside:

- Relationship, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Belonging Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- DfE - Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and subsequent versions
- Education and Inspections Act 2006, s.93 and s.93A
- The Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025

1. Policy overview

1.1 This procedure sets out how staff at Progress Arc respond to incidents in which a restrictive intervention may be necessary to keep a student, staff member or other person safe. It applies to all staff, including supply staff, volunteers and contractors working with students on site or on school-led activities off site.

1.2 Progress Arc are specialist settings working with students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Our default position is that restrictive interventions are a last resort. Most incidents are prevented and resolved through relational practice, environmental design, individualised behaviour support planning and skilled de-escalation.

1.3 This procedure should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Management Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy, and the documents listed on the cover page.

2. Definitions

The following definitions are aligned with the DfE statutory guidance issued in April 2026.

2.1 Restrictive intervention

The umbrella term covering any intervention that limits a student's freedom of movement, contact with others, access to objects, or ability to leave a space. Includes both physical and non-physical forms.

2.2 Reasonable force

The use of physical contact to control or restrain a student. Reasonable means using no more force than is needed and only when necessary. Schools may only use reasonable force in the circumstances permitted by s.93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

2.3 Significant use of force

A use of reasonable force that is significant in the context of the student and the situation. Significant use of force triggers statutory recording and reporting duty under s.93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

2.4 Restraint with direct physical contact

Holding, guiding, blocking or otherwise physically containing a student through direct contact.

2.5 Restraint without direct physical contact

Restricting a student's freedom of movement without touching them for example, removing a mobility aid, locking a door, or using furniture to block a route. This form of restraint triggers the recording and reporting duty under the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025.

2.6 Seclusion

As defined in the April 2026 statutory guidance: the supervised containment and isolation of a student away from other students in an area from which the student is prevented from leaving. Seclusion is a last-resort safety response and is never a disciplinary measure.

2.7 Withdrawal / regulation support

A student voluntarily uses, or is supported to use, a calm space or sensory area to self-regulate. This is non-restrictive and is not seclusion, provided the student is free to leave.

2.8 Removal from the classroom

A disciplinary measure under the Behaviour Management Policy in which a student is required to spend a limited time outside the classroom under supervision. This is not seclusion.

3. Prohibited Practices

The following are never permitted at Progress Arc:

- Using force as a punishment.
- Any intervention that restricts a student's airway, breathing or circulation.
- Applying pressure to the neck, abdomen or chest.
- Covering the mouth or nose.
- Deliberately keeping a student on the ground for longer than necessary.

If a student is unintentionally held on the ground during an incident, staff must re-position the student or release holds as quickly as is safely possible.

(Reference: DfE statutory guidance, April 2026, page 7.)

4. Decision Framework Prior to Physical Intervention

Before using any restrictive intervention, staff must work through the following

four-part decision test. This test mirrors the April 2026 statutory guidance and provides staff with a defensible framework. Where time and safety allow, this thinking should be explicit and shared with another member of staff.

1. **Is it necessary?** Are there other effective, less restrictive ways to manage this situation? Has every appropriate de-escalation strategy been considered or attempted?
2. **Is it proportionate?** Am I using the least amount of force, or the least restrictive option, for the shortest possible time?
3. **Have I considered the student's welfare?** Does the student have SEND, a trauma history, communication needs, medical conditions or other vulnerabilities that affect how this intervention should or should not be used?
4. **Is my response consistent with the student's plan?** Is what I am about to do consistent with the student's behaviour support plan, crisis plan or positive handling plan, where one exists?

Where a planned use of restrictive intervention is documented in a behaviour support plan, the plan must have been agreed with parents/carers and approved through the Child Protection / SLT process before it is relied upon. Emergency use under the s.93 statutory power may occur without prior agreement, but the rationale must be explicit in the post-incident record.

5. Seclusion

Seclusion is not a disciplinary response to deliberate or willful misbehavior and must not be used as a punishment or to secure compliance. It is a last-resort safety response to an immediate risk of harm only. Seclusion must end as soon as immediate risk is reduced. The student's continued emotional dysregulation is not, on its own, sufficient justification for continued seclusion. During any period of

seclusion, the student must be continuously supervised by a named member of staff. The duration, supervising staff member, observed presentation of the student and the point at which seclusion ends must all be recorded.

6. Statutory Recording Requirements

The following must be recorded in writing as soon as practicable after any significant use of force, seclusion, or non-physical restraint, and no later than the same day. Recording is required even where the use of a restrictive

intervention is agreed in a student's behaviour support plan.

- Names of the student and all staff directly involved.
- The student's SEND/SEN status code (E for EHCP; K for SEN Support; N for No SEN).
- Time, date, location and duration of the intervention.
- A brief account of the incident, including what led up to it, identified or potential triggers, and the de-escalation strategies used.
- Why the intervention was assessed as necessary.
- What type of force or intervention was used and the degree.
- Details of any injuries to the student, any staff member or any other person.
- Post-incident support provided to the student, staff and any witnesses.

The Behaviour Incident Form (Restrictive Intervention and Behaviour Incident Record) is the school's mandatory record for these incidents and captures each of the fields above, logged on Arbor and linked to CPOMS.

Statutory basis: s.93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (significant use of force) and the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025 (seclusion and non-physical restraint).

7. Parent/Career Reporting

Parents and carers must be informed by the school's parent messaging system as soon as practicable after any significant use of force, seclusion or non-physical restraint. The school will endeavour to do this on the same day as the incident.

The written notification must include, as a minimum:

- Time, date, location and duration of the intervention.
- Why the intervention was assessed as necessary.
- The type and degree of force used.
- Details of any injuries.

This requirement applies even where the use of a restrictive intervention is agreed in the student's behaviour support plan. Verbal notification alone is not sufficient and is no longer compliant with the statutory framework.

Statutory basis: s.93A Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025.

8. SEND Specific-Provisions

As specialist SEND settings, Progress Arc takes specific account of the needs of students with SEND in the prevention and management of behaviours of concern.

For students with SEND, the school will:

- Ensure each student's behaviour support plan and, where appropriate, crisis plan identify sensory triggers, communication strategies and reasonable adjustments that reduce the likelihood of restrictive intervention.
- Co-produce these plans with the student (where developmentally appropriate) and with parents and carers.
- Ensure staff are trained on each student's specific needs before implementing any planned use of restrictive intervention.
- Review behaviour support and crisis plans following any significant incident and update them where the incident reveals gaps or new patterns.

The presence of SEND does not lower the threshold for the use of restrictive intervention. It raises the importance of robust prevention and individualised de-escalation planning.

This requirement applies even where the use of a restrictive intervention is agreed in the student's

behaviour support plan. Verbal notification alone is not sufficient and is no longer compliant with the statutory framework.

Statutory basis: s.93A Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025.

9. Post Incident Debrief

Following any restrictive intervention, the school will ensure that:

1. **Medical assessment is offered.** The student and any staff member involved should receive a medical assessment if there is any indication of injury or if either party requests one.
2. **A structured debrief takes place.** The debrief will be facilitated where possible by a member of staff who was not directly involved in the incident, and will cover what happened, the impact on the student and on staff, and relationship repair.

3. **Witnesses are supported.** Any student who witnessed the incident should receive appropriate support proportionate to what they saw and how it affected them.
4. **Plans are reviewed.** Behaviour support plans and crisis plans should be reviewed and updated if the incident reveals gaps or emerging patterns. The review and any plan changes should be recorded.

10. Governance/ Data Review

SLT, governors and proprietors will regularly review incident data on restrictive interventions to identify:

- Patterns and trends in incidents.
- Repeat incidents and students with repeated involvement.
- Disproportionality in relation to SEND status, year group, or protected characteristics.
- Safeguarding links and any concerns arising from incidents.
- Training implications for individual staff and for the wider team.
- The effectiveness of the school's prevention strategies.

This analysis will be recorded in the relevant SLT and governing body minutes. Where the data

indicates a concern, an action plan will be developed and progress monitored against it.

11. Complaints & Allegations

Any complaint regarding the use of restrictive interventions will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy.

Any allegation of inappropriate use of force or other restrictive intervention against a member of staff will be handled in accordance with:

- The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and subsequent versions.