Restrictive Intervention Policy

Policy Code:	
Policy Start Date:	April 2026
Policy Review Date:	April 2027

Overview

This policy is Trust-wide.

Part 1 provides the principles behind the use of Restrictive physical intervention in all our schools and provides key statutory guidance for all staff.
Part 2 will be contextualised by schools to show how these principles will be applied in each unique CIT setting.

Part 1
CIT Statutory Guidance for Restrictive Physical interventions (RPI)

Community Inclusive Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, dignity and human rights of all pupils. The Trust recognises that, on rare occasions, physical intervention (PI) and restrictive physical intervention (RPI) may be necessary within our schools to prevent serious harm or risk. We are fully aware that such interventions can have a significant physical and psychological impact on pupils, staff and families, and their use is therefore taken very seriously.

The Trust is committed to meeting the needs of all pupils through a systemic, positive and proactive approach to behaviour support, underpinned by strong relationships, prevention and de-escalation strategies. Restrictive physical intervention will only ever be used as a last resort, when all other strategies have been exhausted or are inappropriate, and only when it is necessary, proportionate and lawful. Any intervention will be used for the shortest possible time required to maintain safety.

Staff are appropriately trained to recognise risk, use preventative and de-escalation strategies effectively, and, where unavoidable, to apply physical intervention safely, confidently and in accordance with approved guidance and the Trust's policies.

1. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All academies within the Trust
- All staff, including teachers, support staff, agency staff, volunteers and contractors
- All pupils on our school rolls
- The policy should be applied consistently across the Trust, and school leaders will be expected to detail their own individual school context at the end of this policy.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by, and complies with, the following key legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006, section 93A (power to use reasonable force)
- Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (DfE, effective from 1 April 2026)
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998

3. Key Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the Trust adopts the definitions set out in the April 2026 DfE guidance:

Restrictive Intervention - Any action that limits a pupil's movement, liberty or independence, either physical or non-physical.

Restrictive Physical Intervention - Force intentionally used by a member of staff to restrict a pupil's movement against their will,

Reasonable Force where no more force is used than is reasonable and necessary in the circumstances.

Restraint -A non-disciplinary intervention that immobilises or restricts movement, with or without direct physical contact.

Seclusion - Keeping a pupil confined away from others and preventing them from leaving, through physical blocking or perceived coercion. Seclusion is not a disciplinary sanction and is subject to statutory recording and reporting duties.

Mechanical restraint – the use of mechanical aids (e.g. belt or cuff) to prevent or restrict or subdue movement of a person's body, or part of the body, for the primary purpose of behaviour control.

Significant RPI incident – any incident where a member of staff uses force intentionally to restrict a child's movement against their will. The use of force goes beyond everyday physical contact and includes the use of seclusion or restraint. Significant RPI incidents require reporting and recording as set out in Part 2 of this policy.

The Trust also has the following central definitions

Guide/Escort/Prompt – Supporting a child to move safely out of a risk situation. The guide is not done against the pupils will and does not restrict free movement.

The Trust adopts Team Teach definitions of touch and holds. These are detailed in Part 2 of this policy, contextualised to the TT level that the school will use.

4. Guiding Principles

CIT schools will continually strive to provide safe learning environments for all pupils and staff.

All members of staff who have been designated responsibility for charge or control of pupils by the Headteacher are lawfully permitted to use reasonable force when considered absolutely necessary.

This will mean that a pupil/pupils are at risk of causing serious disruption of learning, injury or of causing injury to others, at risk of committing an offence or of damaging property may need to have some form of restrictive physical intervention.

The power to use RPI extends to time where staff are lawfully in charge of pupils off the school site or outside of the school day – for example on a planned trip during the school day or out of school hours as part of a residential trip.

All restrictive physical interventions within the Trust must adhere to the following principles:

- Prevention first: proactive support, early help and de-escalation are prioritised
- Necessity: intervention is only used where there is a real and immediate risk
- Proportionality: the least restrictive option is used
- Time-limited: force is used for the minimum time required
- Safeguarding-led: pupil welfare and dignity are central at all times
- Transparency and accountability: all significant incidents are recorded and reported in line with statutory duties

When Restrictive Physical Intervention May Be Used

Staff may only use restrictive physical intervention to:

- Prevent injury to the pupil or others
- Prevent the commission of a criminal offence
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent serious disorder or disruption where safety is at risk

The decision to intervene is a professional judgement that assesses the risk and needs of the circumstances at the time.

The following interventions may only be used where staff have received appropriate and sufficient training, and where their use is clearly identified within a pupil's individual behaviour plan. Any such intervention may form part of a dynamic risk assessment and must be used in line with this policy.

Intentionally holding a pupil on the ground
This intervention may only be used where it is explicitly identified as an agreed and risk-assessed strategy within an individual behaviour plan. It must only be undertaken when the specific circumstances outlined in that plan are met and where it is necessary to prevent serious harm or risk.

Prone restraint
Prone restraint is not part of routine practice within Community Inclusive Trust schools and will only ever be used as a last resort to prevent serious harm. Where its use is permitted, it must be undertaken strictly in line with the policy guidance set out in Part 2 of this document and within the individual context of the school. Prone restraint may only be carried out by staff who are trained to an advanced level in Team Teach**,** and only where its use is necessary, proportionate and lawful.

Mechanical restraint
Mechanical restraint is not part of standard educational practice and must only be used in very specific and exceptional circumstances**,** as detailed in Part 2 of this policy, and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance.

Unacceptable Practice

The Trust prohibits:
- Physical intervention used as punishment or to enforce compliance
- Techniques that restrict breathing or circulation
- Pressure to the neck, chest, abdomen, mouth or nose
- Chemical restraint – for the purpose of behaviour control

These boundaries are explicitly reinforced in the April 2026 guidance on Restrictive Physical Intervention.

5. Pupils with SEND and Additional Vulnerabilities

The Trust recognises that pupils with SEND or trauma histories may be disproportionately affected by restrictive interventions. Many of our pupils fall into this category and their vulnerabilities require us to make sure they have protection from harm.

We expect our schools to:
- Consider individual risk factors
- Use proactive planning (e.g. behaviour plans and support plans)
- Integrate strategies into EHCPs, IEPs and behaviour plans
- Involve families and external professionals where appropriate

The detail of how the school will do this is contained in Part 2 of this document.

6. Planned Interventions

All pupils for whom RPI is a foreseeable risk because their individual need may require some form of intervention and will need to have a written, personalised 'behaviour plan' which is evidence-based.

The plan will identify the needs, triggers and likely presentation with suggested provision, adaptations and strategies to support; including physical and restrictive physical intervention strategies using Team Teach techniques.

These range of strategies should seek to reduce the risk of restraint and be founded in the Team Teach principle of 95% non-restrictive physical intervention and de-escalation.

The planned physical techniques used will range from Basic (Level 1), Intermediate (Level 2) or Advanced depending on the needs of the young person and the specific circumstance of any given situation. All forms of restrictive physical intervention should be deemed a last resort and never be used as threat or disciplinary measure.

7. Dynamic Risk assessment and Emergency Interventions

CIT expects that all staff will always act in the best interests of every pupil to keep them safe from harm.
There may be situations in our schools that arise where staff assess that pupils need some form of RPI because:

- a rapid response is required in an emergency situation (for example a child is running into a road, has a weapon, is in imminent danger of harm to self or others.
- All strategies to de-escalate have been exhausted and the child is putting self or others at risk

Staff are required to make an ongoing and dynamic risk assessment of the emerging situation comparing the risk of intervention against the risk of not intervening.

Any emergency RPI must be necessary and proportionate to the risk involved and must not be excessive i.e. be the least restrictive option available for the situation.

All emergency RPI interventions will need to be recorded and reported correctly as set out in the policy. The recording will need to include the detail of how the decision to intervene was made, and why it was considered reasonable and proportionate to do so.

School leaders must make sure that RPI training for staff enables them to understand how to undertake these emergency dynamic risk assessments and apply the correct and proportionate response.

8. Use of reasonable force to search pupils

Head teachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item.

A member of staff can use such force as is reasonable to search for legally prohibited items, but not to search for items banned under the school rules only. All leaders will refer to the Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools guidance document for detailed advice. Searching, screening and confiscation in schools - GOV.UK

A list of prohibited items will be detailed in Part 2 of this guidance.

9. Staff Training and Support

The Trust will ensure that in all our schools:

- Staff receive regular training in prevention, de-escalation and lawful intervention
- Training emphasises decision-making, safeguarding and pupil dignity
- Staff involved in incidents are supported and debriefed.

How each of our individual schools will achieve this is detailed in **Part 2** of this document.

All schools will use Team Teach as the agreed Trust behaviour support and physical intervention programme.

The level of training and the number of staff that need to be trained are set out for each school in **Part 2** of this document.

10. Recording and Reporting (Statutory)

From 1 April 2026, the Trust has a legal duty to ensure that all schools:

- Record every significant incident involving the use of restrictive intervention including seclusion.
- As a minimum, schools record:
    - Date, time and duration
    - Nature and reason for intervention

  - Type and degree of force used
  - Any injuries or medical concerns
  - Pupil's SEND status (where relevant)

- Report incidents of seclusion or significant physical intervention to parents in writing by the end of the day where possible. Details of how schools will do this are set out in Part 2 of this policy.
- When a pupil is in local authority care (LAC/CiC) the school will report significant physical intervention to the named person who has responsibility.

All applications of RPI as defined by the key principles section in this policy must be recorded on the school MIS system – on the same day that the incident occurred and ideally as soon after the event as possible.

School leaders responsible for safeguarding and behaviour must monitor and check these records, identifying patterns and trends particularly for vulnerable pupils and those with SEND.

Failure to meet these duties may constitute a safeguarding breach.
Details of how the school intends to meet these requirements are detailed in Part 2 of this policy.

11. Post-Incident Actions

After any incident of RPI staff should undertake the proportionate debrief to the incident that occurred. Proportionality will be set out in Part 2 of this document.

Where any physical contact has occurred as part of RPI schools must:
- Check for injuries and seek medical assessment if needed
- Offer emotional support to the pupil and staff
- Review whether preventative measures could be strengthened
- Consider whether safeguarding or SEND processes need escalation

Leaders responsible for safeguarding should ensure that a trusted adult goes back to the pupil later during the day and further check on the pupil's welfare especially if the pupil has refused to engage after a RPI incident. This is because they may be too dysregulated immediately after an event to be able to share their voice effectively.

All post incident actions must be recorded as part of the chronology. Leaders need to be able to check that all expected actions have been taken.

12. Governance, Monitoring and Data Use

The Trust Board is responsible for the governance of safeguarding and as such are responsible for ensuring that schools take all reasonable steps to be compliant in the recording and reporting the use of force and seclusion.

The Trust Board will ensure that the LSB regularly review and interrogate data on restrictive interventions. The information gathered will then be fed upwards to the board via the school SOAP and through the regular reports from the Director of Safeguarding.

The Trust Board delegate the assurance to the LSB for checking that school leaders:

- Identify and implement improvements to policies and practices, particularly where approaches have been used for some time but have not been effective.
- Identify areas of learning and development for school staff, supporting specific departments and teachers to improve understanding and practice.
- understand pupils' repeat patterns and triggers to interrogate the effectiveness of pupil support measures, share this information with teachers who work with those pupils to better support them and, where appropriate, their parents, to establish a behaviour support plan or revise an existing plan.

The Trust Board will be responsible for:

- Having an overview of RPI data in order to identify any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics, have SEN, or other types of vulnerability.

13. Complaints and Allegations

Any complaints or allegations arising from restrictive physical intervention will be managed in line with:

- The school and Trust complaints procedure
- The Trust-wide safeguarding statement and the individual school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Local County safeguarding arrangements
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

14. Review and Publication

Approved by: ELT
Date of approval: 27/04/2026
Effective from: April 2026

Review date: April 2027
Policy owner: Director of Safeguarding

This policy will:
Be reviewed annually by the Director of Safeguarding and ELT
Part 1 of this guidance will be made available to parents through school websites.
Part 2 of this guidance will be available to parents on request.