



Physical and Restrictive Intervention Policy

Policy Owner:	
Reviewed:	
Next Review:	
Applies to:	All staff, learners, families, external professionals and stakeholders

1. Introduction and Safeguarding Context

At **IncludEd Independent School**, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child is at the heart of everything we do.

This policy forms part of IncludEd's wider safeguarding framework and must be read alongside our **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour and Relationships Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Risk Assessment procedures and Complaints Policy**.

IncludEd recognises that behaviour is often a form of communication. This is particularly important for children and young people with **SEMH and other special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)**, who may communicate anxiety, distress, sensory overload, fear, frustration, unmet needs or difficulties with communication through behaviour that presents a risk to themselves or others.

Our approach therefore prioritises:

- prevention;
- strong and trusting relationships;
- understanding;
- nurture;
- emotional regulation and co-regulation;
- reasonable adjustments;
- early intervention;
- positive communication; and
- de-escalation.

Our intention is always to reduce the likelihood of situations escalating to a point where physical or restrictive intervention is required.

Any use of physical or restrictive intervention is considered a **safeguarding matter** and must always be **lawful, necessary, reasonable, proportionate and for the shortest time necessary** to address the immediate risk.

Our approach is underpinned by our core values:

I – Integrity

N – Nurture

C – Courage

L – Learning
U – Understanding
D – Determination
E – Empathy

Our ultimate aim is to enable every child to:

Regulate. Reconnect. Rise.

The success of this policy is not measured simply by how safely we manage incidents. It is measured by how effectively we understand what happened, learn from it and reduce the likelihood of restrictive intervention being required in the future.

2. Statement of Intent

IncludEd Independent School is committed to providing a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment in which every pupil is treated with dignity, compassion and respect.

We recognise that restrictive intervention can be distressing for children and young people and can carry physical, emotional and safeguarding risks. It must therefore never become a routine part of behaviour management.

Our intention is to:

- prevent the need for restrictive intervention wherever possible;
- understand the individual needs and communication of each pupil;
- provide appropriate reasonable adjustments;
- use relational and trauma-informed approaches;
- prioritise regulation and co-regulation;
- use de-escalation before restrictive intervention wherever safely possible;
- use the **least restrictive response** necessary to manage an immediate risk;
- ensure interventions are proportionate and time-limited;
- protect pupil dignity and human rights;
- ensure staff are appropriately trained;
- maintain clear records;
- involve parents/carers appropriately;
- learn from every incident;
- identify patterns and potential disproportionality; and
- continually improve practice.

3. Policy Principles and Included Values

IncludEd is committed to ensuring that:

- pupils are treated with dignity, respect and compassion;
- behaviour is understood within the context of the individual child;
- restrictive intervention is used only when necessary and as a last resort;
- the least restrictive option is selected;
- intervention is proportionate to the level of risk;
- intervention lasts no longer than necessary;
- restrictive intervention is never used as punishment;
- restrictive intervention is never used simply to secure compliance;
- staff do not intervene because they are frustrated, angry or unable to manage a situation;
- practice is inclusive, trauma-informed and anti-discriminatory;
- reasonable adjustments are considered for pupils with SEND;
- all significant incidents are appropriately recorded and reviewed;
- parents/carers are appropriately informed;
- pupils are supported following incidents;
- staff are supported and given opportunities to reflect;
- incidents inform future planning and risk reduction; and
- practice is transparent and open to appropriate scrutiny.

Our INCLUDE values in practice

Integrity – We act lawfully, professionally and transparently.

Nurture – We prioritise safety, connection, emotional wellbeing and co-regulation.

Courage – We make difficult decisions when necessary to keep children and others safe and have the courage to reflect when practice could be improved.

Learning – Every incident provides an opportunity to learn and improve.

Understanding – We seek to understand the need or communication behind behaviour.

Determination – We remain committed to finding safer and less restrictive approaches.

Empathy – We consider the experience and feelings of the child, their family and staff.

4. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Restrictive intervention

A physical or non-physical intervention that prevents, restricts or subdues a pupil's movement, liberty or independence.

Reasonable force

Physical contact that is necessary and proportionate in the circumstances to prevent harm, serious damage to property or serious disorder, where lawful.

Restraint

A non-disciplinary restrictive intervention that immobilises or significantly restricts a pupil's movement, with or without direct physical contact.

Seclusion

A non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined away from others and preventing them from leaving.

Safe touch

Appropriate and proportionate physical contact used to comfort, guide, protect or support a pupil where such contact is appropriate and necessary.

Positive handling

A graduated approach that prioritises prevention, regulation, communication and de-escalation before restrictive intervention is considered.

De-escalation

Actions taken to reduce distress, agitation or risk and return the pupil to a state in which they are able to regulate safely.

5. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy reflects the school's duties and responsibilities under applicable legislation and guidance, including:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- Children Act 1989;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- Independent School Standards;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- relevant Department for Education guidance relating to restrictive intervention and reasonable force; and
- other statutory guidance applicable to independent schools.

This policy will be updated when legislation or statutory guidance changes.

6. Our Pupils and SEND Considerations

IncludEd is a specialist educational setting supporting children and young people with **SEMH and other SEND needs**.

We recognise that restrictive intervention can present heightened physical, emotional and safeguarding risks for pupils with SEND.

Staff will consider individual factors including:

- communication needs;
- sensory processing;
- emotional regulation;
- developmental level;
- physical health;
- medical needs;
- mobility;
- neurodiversity;
- known triggers;
- anxiety;
- previous experiences;
- trauma or adverse experiences where known; and

- individual vulnerabilities.

Staff will **never assume that an approach appropriate for one pupil is appropriate for another.**

Individual risk assessments and support plans will be:

- pupil-specific;
- proportionate;
- informed by the child's needs;
- reviewed regularly;
- reviewed following significant incidents;
- shared with relevant staff; and
- developed with parents/carers and professionals where appropriate.

7. Prevention, Regulation and De-escalation

Prevention is central to IncludEd's approach.

Staff will seek to understand:

What is happening?

What is the child communicating?

What has happened immediately before?

What does the child need?

What can we change?

Preventative strategies may include:

- strong and consistent relationships;
- predictable routines;
- clear and achievable expectations;
- visual support;
- appropriate communication systems;
- sensory adjustments;
- environmental changes;
- reduced demands;
- processing time;
- distraction and redirection;
- offering choices;

- access to regulation spaces;
- movement and outdoor opportunities;
- co-regulation;
- trusted adults;
- appropriate breaks;
- positive reinforcement; and
- adapting tasks or expectations.

When a pupil begins to escalate, staff should:

1. remain calm;
2. reduce unnecessary verbal interaction;
3. use clear and respectful language;
4. allow appropriate processing time;
5. reduce sensory demands;
6. consider environmental triggers;
7. offer appropriate choices;
8. use known regulation strategies;
9. create physical space where possible; and
10. seek assistance from another member of staff where appropriate.

Staff must continually reassess risk.

8. Circumstances Where Restrictive Intervention May Be Used

Restrictive intervention may only be used where it is necessary and proportionate to prevent or stop significant risk, including circumstances where a pupil may:

- cause serious injury to themselves;
- cause serious injury to another person;
- cause significant damage to property;
- cause serious disorder or disruption where there is a significant risk of harm; or
- require intervention to prevent an immediate and serious safeguarding risk.

The decision must be based on the circumstances at the time.

Staff should consider:

- the level of risk;
- whether there is an immediate danger;

- whether de-escalation has been attempted;
- whether a less restrictive response could safely manage the situation;
- the pupil's age and size;
- SEND and medical needs;
- known vulnerabilities; and
- the potential risks associated with the intervention itself.

9. Use of Reasonable Force and Restraint

Where reasonable force is necessary:

- it must be necessary in the circumstances;
- it must be proportionate;
- the least restrictive option should be used;
- it should last for the shortest possible time;
- staff should remain calm and professional;
- staff should continue to monitor the pupil; and
- the intervention must stop as soon as the immediate risk has reduced sufficiently.

Staff must never use physical intervention because they are angry, frustrated, embarrassed or seeking to assert authority.

If the risk can safely be managed without physical intervention, physical intervention should not be used.

Where an intervention becomes unsafe, ineffective or unnecessary, staff must reassess and modify or stop the intervention.

10. Safe Touch and Positive Handling

IncludEd recognises that appropriate physical contact is sometimes necessary and appropriate within a specialist educational environment.

Examples may include:

- first aid;
- comforting a distressed child where appropriate;
- guiding a pupil;

- supporting participation in activities;
- helping a pupil move safely; and
- preventing an immediate risk of injury.

Physical contact must always be:

- appropriate;
- proportionate;
- respectful;
- professionally justified; and
- consistent with the pupil's needs and individual plan.

Staff should consider whether non-contact alternatives are available.

11. Unacceptable Practices

The following are strictly prohibited:

- physical intervention used as punishment;
- physical intervention used to humiliate, frighten or degrade;
- intervention used simply to secure compliance;
- intervention used for convenience;
- pain-inducing techniques;
- techniques that deliberately restrict breathing;
- techniques that restrict circulation;
- pressure to the neck or throat;
- pressure to the chest or abdomen;
- interventions that place unnecessary pressure on a pupil's body;
- prolonged restraint;
- any technique not authorised by the school's approved training framework; and
- any intervention undertaken by a member of staff who has not been appropriately trained, except where an immediate emergency requires reasonable action to prevent serious harm.

Staff must never improvise unfamiliar restraint techniques.

12. Seclusion

IncludEd does not routinely use seclusion as a behaviour management strategy.

Seclusion must never be used as a punishment or consequence.

In exceptional circumstances, where a pupil presents an immediate and significant risk of harm, a restrictive intervention involving separation may only be considered where it is lawful, necessary and proportionate.

Where seclusion occurs:

- the pupil must be appropriately supervised;
- the environment must be safe and suitable;
- the intervention must be time-limited;
- the pupil must be released when the immediate risk has sufficiently reduced;
- a senior member of staff must be informed;
- the incident must be recorded;
- parents/carers must be informed in accordance with statutory requirements; and
- the incident must be reviewed.

Any statutory definition of seclusion must be recorded and reported in accordance with current requirements.

13. Individual Risk Assessments and Regulation Support Plans

Where there is an identified risk that restrictive intervention may be required, IncludEd will develop an appropriate individual risk assessment and/or Regulation / Behaviour Support Plan.

This may include:

- known triggers;
- early warning signs;
- communication preferences;
- sensory needs;
- proactive strategies;
- regulation strategies;
- reasonable adjustments;
- preferred adults;
- safe spaces;
- de-escalation approaches;
- interventions that should be avoided;

- relevant medical considerations; and
- post-incident support.

Where appropriate, pupils and parents/carers will contribute to the development and review of plans.

Following a significant incident, the plan must be reviewed to determine whether changes are necessary.

14. Training and Authorised Practice

IncludEd is committed to ensuring that all staff have the knowledge, skills, confidence and professional judgement required to prevent and respond safely to dysregulation and situations involving potential risk.

Our approach to training reflects the principle that **restrictive intervention should only ever be considered after preventative and de-escalation strategies have been explored, where it is safe and practicable to do so.**

14.1 Team Teach

Team Teach is IncludEd Independent School's approved training provider for positive handling, physical intervention and restrictive intervention.

Team Teach training supports staff to:

- understand behaviour as communication;
- recognise and respond to signs of dysregulation;
- use prevention and de-escalation strategies;
- make proportionate and defensible decisions;
- understand the legal and ethical context of restrictive intervention;
- use the least restrictive response appropriate to the circumstances;
- maintain pupil dignity and respect;
- reduce the risk of injury;
- understand safe physical intervention; and
- reflect and learn following incidents.

Team Teach training forms part of IncludEd's wider approach to **positive handling, regulation, relationship-based practice and safeguarding**. It does not replace the school's expectation that staff seek to prevent the need for restrictive intervention wherever possible.

14.2 Authorised Staff

Only staff who have received appropriate Team Teach training, or who are otherwise specifically authorised by the Headteacher in accordance with this policy, should use planned restrictive intervention techniques.

Staff must only use techniques for which they have received appropriate training and which remain within the scope of their current training and competence.

Staff must never improvise, adapt or introduce physical intervention techniques that they have not been trained and authorised to use.

In an unexpected emergency, staff retain their legal responsibilities to take reasonable and proportionate action to prevent serious harm, regardless of whether they have received practical restrictive intervention training.

14.3 Training Content

IncludEd's training programme will include, as appropriate:

- safeguarding;
- understanding behaviour as communication;
- SEND and individual needs;
- emotional regulation and co-regulation;
- trauma-informed and relational approaches;
- positive handling;
- prevention and early intervention;
- verbal and non-verbal de-escalation;
- professional communication;
- reasonable force;
- restrictive intervention;
- legal and ethical considerations;
- maintaining dignity and human rights;
- recording and reporting; and
- post-incident reflection and support.

14.4 Training and Competency

Staff who are required to undertake Team Teach training will complete training before being expected to undertake planned physical intervention responsibilities wherever reasonably practicable.

Training will be refreshed in line with:

- Team Teach requirements;
- the school's risk assessment;
- identified staff training needs;
- changes in legislation or statutory guidance;
- changes in the needs of the pupils Included supports; and
- learning from incidents or near misses.

Training records will be maintained by the school.

Where a member of staff has not maintained the required level of training or competency, they must not undertake planned physical intervention until appropriate training or authorisation has been confirmed.

14.5 Individualised Practice

Team Teach training provides staff with a framework for safe and lawful practice. However, **no physical intervention technique is automatically appropriate for every pupil.**

Included will consider each pupil's:

- age and developmental level;
- SEND;
- communication needs;
- sensory profile;
- physical and medical needs;
- individual risk factors;
- known triggers; and
- individual Regulation / Behaviour Support Plan.

Where appropriate, individual risk assessments will identify interventions, circumstances or approaches that should be avoided because of a pupil's specific needs.

14.6 Reflective Practice

Following significant restrictive intervention, staff will be supported to reflect on:

- what happened;
- what preceded the incident;
- what preventative strategies were used;
- what de-escalation strategies were attempted;
- why restrictive intervention became necessary;
- whether the intervention was proportionate;
- whether a less restrictive approach could have been used;
- whether the pupil's individual plan remains appropriate; and

- what could be changed to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

This reflects IncludEd's commitment to **Learning, Understanding, Determination and Empathy**.

Our aim is not simply to train staff to manage restrictive interventions safely, but to develop a skilled workforce that can **prevent, reduce and ultimately minimise the need for restrictive intervention wherever possible**.

15. Recording and Reporting

All significant incidents involving physical or restrictive intervention will be recorded as soon as practicable.

The school's recording system, which is on CPOMS and in the bound and numbered book, will provide a clear audit trail.

Records will include, where applicable:

- pupil name;
- date and time;
- location;
- duration;
- staff involved;
- other people present;
- circumstances leading to the incident;
- known or suspected triggers;
- de-escalation strategies attempted;
- reason intervention was considered necessary;
- nature of the intervention;
- level and duration of physical intervention;
- injuries or medical needs;
- action taken;
- pupil's response;
- parent/carers communication;
- post-incident support;
- follow-up actions; and
- changes required to risk assessment or support planning.

Where required, records will identify the pupil's SEND status and relevant individual circumstances.

Statutory recording and reporting requirements relating to restraint and seclusion will be followed.

Records will be stored securely and handled in accordance with safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection requirements.

16. Parent/Carer and Agency Communication

Parents/carers will be informed of significant restrictive intervention as soon as practicable and in accordance with statutory requirements.

If the child is working with any agencies, the key professional will also be informed.

Communication will be factual, respectful and proportionate.

Where appropriate, parents/carers will be invited to contribute to the post-incident review.

Information will only be withheld or delayed where there is a clear safeguarding or other lawful reason for doing so.

17. Post-Incident Support and Restorative Practice

Following an incident, the priority is to restore safety, regulation and relationships.

For the pupil

The pupil will be given:

- time and space to regulate;
- reassurance;
- appropriate emotional support;
- an opportunity to communicate their experience;
- appropriate restorative support; and
- support to return to learning when ready.

Staff will avoid unnecessary questioning while the pupil remains dysregulated.

For staff

Staff involved will be offered:

- immediate support;
- an opportunity to debrief;
- reflective discussion; and
- access to further support where required.

Review

The incident will be reviewed to consider:

- what happened;
- what preceded it;
- what worked;
- what did not work;
- whether the intervention was necessary and proportionate;
- whether the pupil's plan was appropriate;
- whether reasonable adjustments were sufficient;
- whether additional professional advice is required; and
- what can be changed to reduce future risk.

This process is focused on **learning and improvement rather than blame**.

18. Roles and Responsibilities

18.1 Proprietor / Governing Body

The Proprietor/Governing Body will:

- ensure an appropriate policy is in place;
- ensure statutory duties are met;
- provide appropriate oversight;
- monitor patterns and trends;
- consider disproportionality;
- ensure staff training is maintained;

- challenge unsafe or inappropriate practice; and
- review significant concerns.

18.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- implement this policy;
- ensure staff understand their responsibilities;
- oversee training;
- ensure incidents are recorded;
- ensure parents/carers are appropriately informed;
- monitor trends;
- ensure support plans and risk assessments are reviewed;
- ensure safeguarding procedures are followed; and
- report relevant information to the Proprietor/Governing Body.

18.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will:

- consider whether incidents raise safeguarding concerns;
- ensure safeguarding referrals are made where necessary;
- monitor concerns relating to staff conduct;
- ensure allegations are managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures; and
- contribute to monitoring and review.

18.4 Inclusion Lead

The SENCO/Inclusion Lead will:

- ensure SEND needs are appropriately considered;
- support reasonable adjustments;
- contribute to individual risk assessments;
- monitor potential disproportionality; and
- liaise with parents/carers and external professionals where appropriate.

18.5 All Staff

All staff must:

- follow this policy;

- prioritise prevention;
- use de-escalation;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- use restrictive intervention only where lawful, necessary and proportionate;
- protect pupil dignity;
- record incidents accurately;
- report concerns;
- attend required training; and
- participate in reflective practice.

19. Safeguarding, Allegations and Complaints

Any allegation concerning inappropriate, excessive, unnecessary or unlawful physical intervention will be taken seriously.

Where a concern relates to a member of staff, it will be managed under the school's safeguarding procedures and, where applicable, procedures for allegations against adults working with children.

Concerns may be raised by:

- pupils;
- parents/carers;
- staff;
- governors/proprietors;
- professionals; or
- visitors.

No member of staff should discourage a pupil or parent/carer from raising a concern.

Where an allegation reaches the safeguarding threshold, the DSL and appropriate external safeguarding professionals will be involved.

20. Monitoring, Governance and Oversight

IncludEd will monitor restrictive intervention at both **individual pupil and whole-school level**.

The Headteacher and senior leadership team will review data regularly and formally at least termly.

Monitoring will consider:

- number of incidents;
- individual pupils;
- frequency;
- duration;
- location;
- time of day;
- antecedents and triggers;
- types of intervention;
- injuries;
- staff involved;
- use of seclusion;
- SEND characteristics;
- patterns of disproportionality;
- effectiveness of preventative strategies;
- training needs; and
- changes to individual plans.

The Proprietor/Governing Body will receive appropriate information to enable effective oversight.

The key question will always be:

What can we change so that this is less likely to happen again?

Data will be used to identify:

- environmental changes;
- staffing or training needs;
- curriculum adaptations;
- communication approaches;
- sensory adjustments;
- additional professional support;
- changes to individual risk assessments; and
- wider school improvement priorities.

The school will actively seek to demonstrate a reduction in unnecessary restrictive intervention over time.

21. Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

IncludEd will use restrictive intervention data alongside:

- safeguarding information;
- behaviour data;
- attendance;
- pupil voice;
- parent/carers feedback;
- staff feedback;
- SEND information;
- individual support plans; and
- risk assessments.

This enables leaders to consider whether restrictive intervention is being used appropriately and whether there are wider systemic factors contributing to incidents.

Where patterns emerge, leaders will take action rather than treating incidents as isolated events.

22. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- at least annually;
- following changes to legislation or statutory guidance;
- following significant incidents;
- following safeguarding reviews;
- where monitoring identifies concerns; and
- where training or professional advice indicates that changes are required.

The review will consider:

- effectiveness;
- compliance;
- incident data;
- pupil voice;
- parent/carers feedback;
- staff feedback;

- safeguarding concerns;
- training;
- disproportionality; and
- emerging good practice.

Any significant amendments will be approved through the school's governance arrangements.

23. IncludEd's Commitment

At IncludEd, we recognise that the moments when a child is most dysregulated are often the moments when they need adults to demonstrate our values most clearly.

We will therefore respond with:

Integrity – doing what is right and lawful.

Nurture – creating safety and connection.

Courage – making difficult decisions when safety requires it.

Learning – reflecting and improving.

Understanding – looking beyond the behaviour.

Determination – continuing to seek better solutions.

Empathy – seeing the child behind the behaviour.

Our commitment is to create an environment where children are not defined by their behaviour, where distress is understood rather than simply managed, and where restrictive intervention is genuinely a **last resort**.

Regulate. Reconnect. Rise.

24. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Equality Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Complaints Policy;

- First Aid and Medical Needs Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- Risk Assessment procedures;
- Individual Regulation / Behaviour Support Plans; and
- Individual Risk Assessments.

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