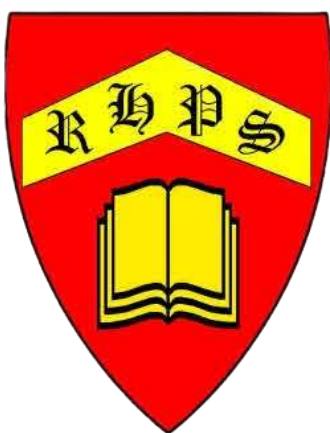




RUSSELLS HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Key Policy 2026-2027

Restrictive Interventions Policy (Including Use of Reasonable Force, Restraint and Seclusion)

September 2026

Document to be read in conjunction with ***other key school policies (listed within document)***

Introduction and Background to the Policy: The Legal Position

Russells Hall Primary School recognises that, on rare occasions, staff may need to use **restrictive interventions**, including **reasonable force, restraint or seclusion**, to keep a child and others safe.

All staff have a legal power under the **Education and Inspections Act 2006** to use reasonable force to prevent a child from:

- committing a criminal offence
- causing injury to themselves or others
- causing serious damage to property
- causing serious disorder

Restrictive interventions are **never used as punishment** and are only applied when **necessary, proportionate and for the minimum time possible**.

This policy reflects statutory guidance effective from **April 2026** and replaces previous references to earlier DfE guidance.

Principles at Russells Hall

At Russells Hall Primary School we believe:

- De-escalation is at the heart of good behaviour management
- Childs should be supported to regulate emotions before behaviour escalates
- Relationships, trust and calm communication reduce risk
- Restrictive interventions are a **last resort**
- The dignity, welfare and rights of the child must always be respected

Definitions

Restrictive Intervention:

Any action taken to prevent, restrict or subdue a child's movement or behaviour. This includes physical and non-physical interventions.

Reasonable Force:

Physical intervention used only to prevent harm, crime, serious damage or serious disorder, using the **least force necessary** for the **shortest time possible**.

Restraint:

A non-disciplinary intervention that restricts a child's movement. This may include physical contact or non-physical actions such as blocking movement.

Seclusion:

A non-disciplinary intervention where a child is kept away from others and prevented from leaving a space, either physically or through the belief they will be punished if they leave.

The approach prior to any Restrictive Intervention

Before intervening physically, staff should, wherever practical:

- Use calm, non-confrontational language
- Acknowledge the child's feelings
- Offer support and choices
- Provide time, space or a quiet area to self-regulate
- Use trusted adults (Learning Mentors/SLT)
- Remove other children from risk

At Russells Hall, giving children an early opportunity to repair behaviour is a key strategy.

When Restrictive Interventions may be used

Restrictive interventions may be used **only when necessary** to prevent:

- injury to the child or others
- a criminal offence
- serious damage to property
- serious disorder

Staff must always consider:

- Is this intervention **necessary**?
- Is it **proportionate**?
- Is it the **least restrictive option**?
- What is the impact on the child's welfare and dignity?

Unacceptable use of Restrictive Interventions

The following are **not permitted**:

- Any restraint affecting breathing, airway or circulation
- Pressure to the neck, chest or abdomen
- Holding a child on the ground (unless unavoidable and exited immediately)
- Use of force as punishment or to gain compliance
- Threatening seclusion as a sanction

Seclusion

Seclusion may be used **only as a safety measure** when a child is experiencing high emotional or behavioural dysregulation and presents a risk to others.

When seclusion is used:

- It must never be punitive
- The space must be safe, calm and non-threatening
- The child must be supervised at all times
- The child must be allowed to leave as soon as risk reduces

All incidents of seclusion **must be recorded and reported** in line with statutory requirements.

Restraint Approach used at Russells Hall

At Russells Hall:

- All staff receive de-escalation training
- Selected staff are trained in **Team Teach positive handling techniques**
- Physical intervention is used only by trained staff where possible
- The aim is always to help the child calm and regain control

Physical techniques follow a **gradual, graded system of response**, allowing staff to phase up or down as required.

From the Team Teach website:

www.teachteach.co.uk



About Team-Teach

Our aim: through the promotion of de-escalation strategies and the reduction of risk and restraint, to support teaching, learning and caring, by increasing staff confidence and competence, in responding to behaviours that challenge, whilst promoting and protecting positive relationships. Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) approaches are entirely compatible with Team-Teach. For more information, see links: "Keypoints About Training" and "Training Options".

Our results: Team - Teach training has received the highest level of award in the U.K - a National Training Award - This government supported award is presented to entries who have demonstrated exceptional achievement through training and development. Judges were impressed by the support infrastructure and the robust quality control and assurance processes. They observed that it was a clearly needed service and its innovative approaches have delivered significant benefits to schools/services and local authorities/employers. See the NTA document: "Helping Teachers Manage Challenging Behaviour" within the Case Study/Research area of the web site.



Team Teach training aids staff to develop their understanding of:

- Positive Handling Strategies have sufficient range and flexibility to be appropriate across the age and development range, for both the intentional and non-intentionally "challenging" individual.
- The physical techniques provide a gradual, graded system of response commensurate with the situation, task and individuals involved, allowing for phasing up or down as dictated to by the circumstances at the time.
- The use of force must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary.
- How to employ positive handling strategies safely.
- There is an emphasis on appropriate and targeted verbal and non-verbal communication. During a restraint, what you say and how you communicate it is vital to continue to de-escalate the situation.
- The aim is for the person to calm down sufficiently so that staff can return the physical control and help find a better way.
- A calm approach with staff using (Communication, Awareness /Assessment Listening/Looking and Making Safe skills) is expected at all times when managing such situations.
- Staff are encouraged to make a risk assessment, both before, during and after any serious incident involving positive handling. Running parallel with this risk assessment is the "duty of care" question they have both to the service user and themselves.

Trained Team Teach Staff at Russells Hall

- Mrs Sarah Parkes - Executive Headteacher
- Miss Melissa Wyer - Acting Head of School
- Mrs Sarah Abbiss - Acting Head of School
- Mrs Caroline Tams - Assistant Head for Inclusion
- Mrs Ali Gray - Assistant Head for Curriculum and Assessment
- Mrs Helen Houlston - Family Support Worker
- Mrs Rachel Bytheway - Senior Learning Mentor
- Miss Aimee McCaffery - Learning Mentor
- Mrs Hannah Smith - WN supporting staff
- Mrs Gemma Donaghue - WN supporting staff

There are other members of staff who have been previously Team Teach trained and have an understanding of the techniques used.

Specific Guidelines for trained Team Teach Staff

- ✓ Always try to use other strategies before using physical intervention. Russells Hall always tries to de-escalate situations as part of our embedded strategy and provision.
- ✓ Follow the guidance on appropriate restraint listed above
- ✓ Always use the minimum force necessary for the circumstance - use your professional judgement.
- ✓ Seek assistance as soon as possible.
- ✓ Hold the child for the minimum time necessary
- ✓ Try to have another adult who can act as a witness to the incident.
- ✓ Do not put yourself at risk by being alone with one or two children in a situation where physical intervention may be necessary.
- ✓ Report the incident to the Headteacher (or Deputy in HT absence) and complete an recording with DHT/HT.
- ✓ Inform parent of behaviour incident and preventative measures implemented to prevent child from being unsafe/hurting self or others.

KEY things to remember:

- The member of staff involved with holding a child should continue to talk to them during the incident, trying to distract and de-escalate the situation with other conversation and also making it clear to the child that restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
 - e.g. "I will take my hand from your shoulder when I can see you are starting to calm down. You will have stopped throwing the cushions. I will know you are beginning to calm down then and are ready to talk."
- A calm measured approach must be used. Teachers should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or acting out of anger or to punish the child.
- Sometimes a member of staff should not intervene in an incident without help - if you are at risk from injury yourself. In these circumstances, remove the other children who may be at risk and summon assistance. The member of staff should inform the others that she/he has sent for help and until assistance arrives, the teacher should continue to try and defuse the situation by talking and try to prevent the incident escalating.

SEND and Equality Considerations

The school recognises that a child with SEND may be disproportionately affected by restrictive interventions.

Russells Hall will:

- Identify triggers and unmet needs
- Make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010
- Co-produce behaviour support with parents and child
- Review plans following any significant incident
- Monitor patterns to ensure equitable practice

Recording of Incidents (Statutory Requirement)

All significant uses of force, restraint or seclusion **must be recorded in writing** as soon as practicable and no later than the same day.

Records will include:

- Names of child and staff involved
- Date, time, location and duration
- SEN status and relevant needs
- Triggers and events leading to the incident
- De-escalation strategies attempted
- Type and degree of intervention used
- Injuries or medical support required
- Post-incident actions and support

See example as appendix 1 and 2

Reporting to Parents (Statutory Requirement)

Parents will be informed **via telephone in the first instance** and **as soon as practicable**, and wherever possible on the same day, of:

- Any significant use of force
- Any incident of restraint or seclusion. Information will be provided **in writing via email**.

See example in appendix 3

Post-Incident Support and Review

Following an incident:

- Child and staff will be offered appropriate support
- Medical assessment will be sought if or where required
- A restorative conversation will take place
- Behaviour or risk reduction plans will be reviewed
- Learning will inform future practice

Other Related Policies

Other relevant information that should be read in conjunction with this policy are:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Restrictive Intervention Guidance (Including Use of Reasonable Force, Restraint and Seclusion) April 2026

Governance, Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure compliance with statutory duties
- Review data on restrictive interventions
- Monitor trends and disproportionality
- Use findings to inform training and policy review

The whole policy is available for all parents from the school office and published on the school website. www.russellshall.org.uk

The Headteacher and the Full Governors will review the policy annually.

Date: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

See Russells Hall Restrictive Intervention Incident pack for appendices and examples.