



THE GREETLAND ACADEMY

Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions Policy

Approved by:	LGB		
Responsible department:	SLT		
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1. Principles

All Great Heights Academy Trust (GHAT) schools follow the Department for Education (DfE) guidance “*Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools*” (effective 1 April 2026). The Greetland Academy is committed to minimising the use of restrictive interventions through a proactive, preventative and supportive approach to behaviour.

Restrictive interventions will only be used where necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of students, staff and others, and they will always be lawful, proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances.

The Greetland Academy recognise that restrictive interventions can have a significant impact on students and will always prioritise dignity, safety and respect. We are also aware of our duties under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school’s Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy and SEND Policy.

2. Definitions

- **Reasonable force:** a term which includes physical restrictive interventions. All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.
- **Restrictive interventions:** a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body. The guidance uses ‘restrictive interventions’ as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain students in different ways.
- **Restraint:** a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a student or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact. For example, holding a student’s arms to their sides or removing a student’s crutches would both be considered forms of restraint.
- **Seclusion:** a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a student confined to a place away from others, and preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction, blocking, or making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave. (Seclusion will only be used to prevent serious harm and never as a disciplinary measure. Students will be continuously supervised, and the duration will be kept to the minimum necessary. A reintegration discussion will take place following the incident.)

Restrictive interventions are never used as a punishment or to enforce compliance.

3. Prevention and De-escalation

The use of restrictive interventions and reasonable force is always a last resort. The Greetland Academy adopts a whole-school approach to the promotion of positive behaviour. We achieve this by having a clear approach to behaviour – both positive and negative in our school. We invest time in developing positive and productive relationships with students and their parents and carers. We also teach our students about how they can develop positive relationships with each other.

When children need additional support, we ensure that an agreed individual support plan is in place, communicated and reviewed.

The Greetland Academy has provided appropriate training to key staff to ensure the requirement to use restrictive interventions and reasonable force is minimised. The purpose of this training is to provide colleagues with the skills required to prevent physical interventions and de-escalate extreme emotions. These include distraction, withdrawal and calming techniques. On occasion, and where there is an immediate risk of harm, de-escalation may not always be possible or appropriate.

When and how to deescalate will be the decision of the intervening adult. It may be that an early use of minimal physicality – such as a hand on a child’s back to guide – may be an appropriate intervention to prevent escalation.

4. When Reasonable Force May Be Used

All school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force with students where it is necessary to:

- Prevent injury to themselves or another person
- Prevent serious damage to property
- Prevent a criminal offence
- Maintain good order and discipline.

We expect colleagues to use the lowest intervention likely to safely return students to safety and, if necessary, increase as required.

It is impossible for a policy to detail all scenarios where reasonable force and restrictive interventions may be used. However, all staff are expected to act in line with the following statement:

Any use of force must be proportionate, necessary and for the minimum duration required to be effective.

This means using the least amount of force and the least restrictive intervention for the least amount of time required.

It should be noted that the school will not operate a ‘no contact’ policy, as this could prevent staff from acting to keep students and staff safe.

5. Prohibited Practices

The following practices are not permitted:

- Use of force as a punishment
- Techniques that restrict breathing or circulation
- Holding a student on the ground – unless there is no safer alternative to prevent serious harm, and breathing must not be restricted.
- Applying pressure to the neck, chest, abdomen, nose or mouth.

6. Recording and Reporting

In line with statutory requirements from 1 April 2026, the school will:

- Record all significant incidents involving reasonable force, restraint (including non-force restraint) and seclusion
- Include details of what happened, why it was necessary, and actions taken
- Report incidents to parents/carers as soon as reasonably practicable – this should be no later than the same day
- Analyse records to identify patterns and reduce future use.

It is also good practice to meet with parents/carers to discuss the incident and to seek to understand how such incidents may be avoided in future.

Schools will record the following details:

- Names of student and staff directly involved
- Any relevant needs or circumstances of the student, including whether the student involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code
- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- Brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and (where relevant) what type of reasonable force was applied, the degree of force, and details of any physical injuries sustained
- Brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance
- Any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts.

In addition to the above, any witness accounts should also be preserved – both staff and student and a record of the communication shared with parents/carers will be retained.

The report of the incident which is communicated to parents/carers or other appropriate professionals will include the following details:

- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- Brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance
- Brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force
- Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable.

Both reports, the school and parent communication, will be stored on the child's CPOMS record.

Should the school consider that a report to the parents of such an incident would be likely to result in serious harm to the student. The DfE guidance provides the following advice *“In this instance, the staff member must report the incident to any parent(s) who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm or, if there are none, to the local authority within whose area the student is ordinarily resident.”* If you are in any doubt, please discuss with the GHAT Safeguarding Lead.

Following an incident, and if required, any student or staff member requiring medical assessment and treatment should do so without delay. Any injuries should be recorded in the usual way and, if appropriate, reported to the Health and Safety Executive in line with established protocols.

7. Training and Staff Support

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that:

- In accordance with the statutory guidance, staff likely to use reasonable force receive appropriate training
- All staff understand the legal framework and school procedures in relation to restrictive interventions including staff who are new to the school. Inclusion of the detail of this policy should be included in the staff handbook.
- Staff are supported following incidents of restrictive interventions.

This school has chosen the Team Teach approach to restrictive interventions and use of reasonable force. The training undertaken by this school emphasises safe, lawful and least restrictive approaches. The training is refreshed every two years. It should be noted that not having received such training is not a barrier from intervening.

8. Safeguarding and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The school recognises that some students, particularly those with certain forms of SEND, have experienced trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) are statistically more likely to experience restrictive interventions.

In order to ensure that all interventions undertaken through this policy are appropriate, the school will:

- Work collaboratively with parents/carers and professionals
- Develop individual support and risk management plans
- Ensure interventions are not used as a substitute for appropriate provision.

We will seek to ensure that, as far as is practical, colleagues who know individual students well help to identify trigger points for potentially disruptive incidents. We will work with parents/carers and other professionals to ensure these are understood, managed and minimised.

9. Reintegration planning

It should be noted that it is not expected that a student should leave the school's premises following the use of a restrictive intervention as a matter of course. Each circumstance must be treated on its own merits. A suspension may only be used by a Principal on disciplinary grounds and attention is drawn to the school's behaviour and suspension policies.

Extra consideration should be made in respect of any reintegration following a restrictive intervention. This should include a focus on preventing such an incident from occurring in the future.

10. Monitoring and Review

The Principal is responsible for this policy its implementation; they may be assisted by other senior leaders who will:

- Monitor the use of restrictive interventions
- Review data regularly to reduce reliance on such practices
- Ensure compliance with DfE guidance and legal duties
- Identify patterns of the use of restrictive interventions.

A review of restrictive interventions will form part of the school's annual safeguarding review by the Trust Safeguarding Lead.

The Trust Board will receive reports on the use of restrictive interventions to ensure oversight, identify patterns and monitor equality impacts.

11. Complaints Relating to Restrictive Interventions

The Greetland Academy recognises that the use of reasonable force and restrictive interventions can be distressing for students, parents/carers, and staff. The academy is committed to ensuring that any concerns or complaints are taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and addressed in a timely and transparent manner.

Where a parent/carer/responsible person or student has a concern about the use of restrictive interventions, they should in the first instance contact the academy directly to discuss the matter informally. This will usually be with the class teacher, pastoral lead, or a senior leader, depending on the nature of the concern.

The academy will seek to:

- clarify the circumstances of the incident
- provide factual information from records

- address any immediate misunderstandings or concerns
- consider any support required for the student or family

If concerns cannot be resolved informally, or if the complainant wishes to proceed formally, the matter will be handled under the academy's Complaints Policy.