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| Approved by ELA Trust/Committee/CEO: | Date & min ref CEO |
| Publication Date: | September 2026 |
| Owner/Reviewer | CEO |
| To be reviewed: | July 2028 |
| Location: | Trust Website |
| Impact assessed: | Y |

# BEHAVIOUR POLICY

**(including Guidance on Use of Restrictive Interventions)**
**2026 - 2028**

**Mission Statement**

*To inspire our family of schools to provide opportunities for our pupils, staff and leaders to be the best they can be; to create a passion for lifelong learning; to enable our pupils to become kind, confident and impactful world citizens.*

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## 1. A Statement of Purpose

The Empower Learning Academy Trust's Behaviour Policy helps us to create a caring, stimulating and secure environment in which staff and pupils can study/work, engage with one another safely and encourage the involvement of parents/carers in the development of their child.

## 2. Aims of Policy

The overall aim of this policy is to create a clearly structured set of principles encompassing our expectations in terms of behaviour that is accessible to everyone, including visitors to the individual academies and the local community. Underpinning the policy is our philosophical view that behaviour needs to be managed positively, with the emphasis placed upon reward and general recognition of effort made. This, combined with a clear and fair system of sanctions for those who choose not to comply, forms the basis of this document.

## 3. Our ELAT Vision

To build a family of local primary and secondary schools with a shared ethos of continual improvement, where powerful teaching, challenge, support and accountability lie at the heart of creating environments that focus relentlessly on the needs of the learning community and deliver outstanding outcomes for all pupils.

## 4. Our ELAT Values

- Passion
- Respect
- Inclusion
- Challenge
- Openness

## 5. ELAT Behaviour Team Staffing/Contact Information

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hall Mead School | Kirsty Fanning | Deputy Headteacher | kfanning@elatschools.co.uk |
| The Brittons Academy | Laurie Cossey-Atkins | Vice Principal | lcossey@elatschools.co.uk |
| Bower Park Academy | Stuart Gander | Assistant Principal | sgander@elatschools.co.uk |
| Hacton Primary School | Emily Leslie/ Vicky Hornsby | Headteacher/ Deputy Headteacher | eleslie@elatschools.co.uk vhornsby@elatschools.co.uk |
| Ardleigh Green Infant School | Simon Harris | Assistant Headteacher | SHarris@elatschools.co.uk |
| Ardleigh Green Junior School | Simon Harris | Assistant Headteacher | SHarris@elatschools.co.uk |

Staff detailed above have overall responsibility for managing and promoting good pupil behaviour and supporting colleagues to implement their local academy policy.

## 6. ELAT Behaviour Guiding Principles

### a. All staff should:

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| 1 | Provide, and maintain, a disciplined, caring environment in which teachers can teach and pupils can learn. |
| 2 | Ensure that pupils understand that every teacher has the right to teach and every pupil has the right to learn, without disruption. |
| 3 | Be alert to signs of bullying and harassment and act in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy. |
| 4 | Through, or in liaison with, relevant members of the pastoral team communicate with parents/carers as soon as possible over a pupil's poor behaviour. |
| 5 | Promote/develop empathy and respect for self and others. |
| 6 | Develop in pupils a sense of self-discipline, regulation and an acceptance of responsibility for their own actions. |
| 7 | Be aware that different strategies may be required when teaching pupils which different needs. |
| 8 | Try to ensure that pupils are confident of their right to be treated fairly. |
| 9 | Empower all staff to determine and request appropriate behaviour from everyone. |
| 10 | Acknowledge that the maintaining of good behaviour within the academy is a shared responsibility. |
| 11 | Ensure that positive behaviour is recognised and celebrated. |
| 12 | Work within a positive, proactive reflective approach to behaviour management. |
| 13 | Build opportunities to raise pupils' self-esteem. |
| 14 | Encourage and promote regular attendance and good punctuality. |
| 15 | Ensure pupils and others are aware of the rights and responsibilities of all members of the academy community. |
| 16 | Model what you expect. |
| 17 | Treat others with kindness and dignity. |
| 18 | Fully understand this policy and ensure it is consistently implemented throughout the academy. |

### b. Teachers should:

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| 1 | Make clear the expectations of the learning environment and explain why they are necessary. |
| 2 | Effectively place and group pupils in their learning space to minimise misbehaviour. |
| 3 | Enforce and model expectations, dealing firmly, but fairly, with any pupil who does not abide by these, either immediately or soon after the lesson. |

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| 4 | Be a good role model for pupils by being punctual, well prepared and having specific objectives and outcomes for lessons. |
| 5 | Offer pupils challenging and engaging lessons that are differentiated to pupils' different needs. |
| 6 | Have high expectations of work, attendance, punctuality and behaviour. |
| 7 | Create a balance of firmness and friendliness based on mutual respect. |
| 8 | Measure and acknowledge progress throughout the lesson. |
| 9 | Use a variety of teaching and learning methods. |
| 10 | Set homework/remote learning/home learning and give effective formative feedback to promote progress. |
| 11 | Make effective use of praise and rewards for good behaviour, as well as good work. |
| 12 | Know the pupils as individuals - by name, as well as their personalities, strengths and weaknesses. |
| 13 | Recognise that classroom management skills can be learned and be willing to analyse their own performance and that of others and to share good practice. |
| 14 | Always treat pupils with dignity and kindness. |

**c. <u>Senior Leadership Team / Pastoral Team should:</u>**

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| 1 | Through assemblies, encourage and celebrate positive behaviour. |
| 2 | Facilitate efficient channels of communication between the academy, parents/carers, governors, the extended community and outside agencies. |
| 3 | Ensure that all staff accept responsibility for maintaining the highest standards of behaviour throughout the academy area and in the community, in keeping with those outlined in this policy. |
| 4 | Model what is expected at all times. |
| 5 | Foster a sense of community that encourages staff, pupils, parents and governors to take an active part in promoting good behaviour and learning. |
| 6 | Monitor and evaluate the school ethos/culture in the light of pupil behaviour. |
| 7 | Ensure effective pastoral care structures and support structures are available for all pupils. |
| 8 | As appropriate, ensure consistency of standards and expectations are applied. |

**d. <u>Pupils should:</u>**

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| 1 | Share responsibility for their learning. |
| 2 | Abide by the expectations in the 'Pupil Code of Conduct' – each secondary Academy will have its own local variation of this. |
| 3 | Be rewarded for all kinds of achievements and at all levels. |
| 4 | Not accept poor behaviour by their peers. |
| 5 | Support staff in their aim of achieving positive behaviour in all lessons. |
| 6 | Ensure they are punctual to school and to all lessons. |
| 7 | Attend school with the correct equipment for all lessons. |
| 8 | Resolve problems in a non-confrontational manner. |
| 9 | Be responsible for their own actions. |

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| 10 | Treat others with kindness and dignity whilst valuing and celebrating difference. |

## 7. Duties Under the Equality Act and Children and Families Act 2014

Under the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act) and the Equality Act 2010, schools must not discriminate against, harass, or victimise pupils because of: sex; race; disability; religion or belief; sexual orientation; pregnancy/maternity; or gender reassignment.

All academies within the Trust have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it

These duties are complied with when deciding whether to exclude a pupil. All academies will ensure that any provision, criterion or practice does not discriminate against pupils by unfairly increasing their risk of exclusion. Regular reporting of all sanction data across the trust and governing bodies will take into consideration protected characteristics.

The governing board must also comply with their statutory duties in relation to pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) when administering the exclusion process, including (in the case of the governing board of relevant settings) using their 'best endeavours' to ensure the appropriate special educational provision is made for pupils with SEND and (for all settings) having regard to the Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice. This guidance can be found at: SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

## 8. Good Behaviour

ELAT strongly believes that acknowledging good behaviour encourages repetition and communicates the school community's expectations and values to all pupils. Using positive recognition and rewards provides an opportunity for all staff to reinforce the school's culture and ethos.

Positive reinforcements and rewards will be applied clearly and fairly to reinforce the routines, expectations, and norms of the school's behaviour culture.

Each academy will have its own bespoke approach to celebrating good behaviour which can be found in their local behaviour policy.

Examples of how good behaviour is celebrated and promoted include:

- Rewarding of Achievement Points
- Phone-call / email home
- Certificate
- Voucher

- Assembly announcement

## 9. Staff Induction, Development and Support

All staff will receive appropriate regular training and understand the importance of good behaviour and the systems within their academy. Some training will be offered as a Trust and some at a local level. All academy staff have membership to The National College which offers a variety of training options which can be accessed at any time.

Examples of induction support for staff include:

- School Visit
- Induction Booklet
- Time in new department
- Observing lessons
- School Mentor
- Publishing key information regarding how to support individual pupils

## 10. Academy Behaviour Systems

Each academy will have its own bespoke approach to behaviour systems including rules, expectations, sanctions and routines. Please refer to the individual's academy behaviour policy for further information.

## 11. Pupil Transition

Each academy offers a bespoke induction transition programme to support pupils moving from primary school. ELAT staff responsible for each secondary academy transition programme include:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hall Mead School | Nicola Afteni | Deputy Headteacher | nafteni@elatschools.co.uk |
| The Brittons Academy | Rhys Shercliff | Assistant Principal | rshercliff@elatschools.co.uk |
| Bower Park Academy | Craig Deane | Assistant Principal | cdeane@elatschools.co.uk |

Examples of pupil transition activities include:

- Taster Days
- Induction Booklet
- Welcome letter / postcard
- Project Work
- School Prefect Mentor

Each academy's behaviour system will be communicated and shared with pupils via:

- Assemblies
- Weekly notices

- Conversations with staff
- Posters
- Online platforms such as TEAMS
- Form time programme
- Lessons
- Student Code of Conduct

## 12. Sanctions

Headteachers may use a range of sanctions when warranted as part of creating a calm, safe and supportive environment in which pupils can learn and thrive. These may include suspension and permanent exclusion and direction off-site. The Trust's Suspensions and Exclusions Policy outlines the processes and arrangements for these.

## 13. Reintegration After a Sanction

All academies will support pupils to reintegrate into school life and full-time education following a suspension or direction off-site

Examples of good practice for a reintegration include:

- A reintegration strategy should be identified by school staff which includes the views and ideas of the parent/carer and pupil.
- A pupil should be given a 'fresh start'.
- There should be a discussion focused on the impact of misbehaviour on themselves and others.
- Pupils should finish the meeting feeling a renewed sense of belonging within the school community.
- The reintegration strategy meeting should be communicated before, or, at the beginning of the pupil's return to school including the pupil's parents/carers. Other agencies (such as social care / SEND could be asked to attend if relevant).
- The pupil's voice should be heard.
- The meeting could be held online (via a platform such as TEAMS) or in person.

Additional information regarding reintegration strategy meetings is available in the Trust's Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Policy.

## 14. Managed Move

A managed move is a process which leads to the transfer of a pupil to another mainstream school permanently. Managed moves should be voluntary and agreed with all parties involved, including the parents and the admission authority of the new school. The process and arrangements for any managed move are outlined in the Trust's Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Policy.

All academies will actively liaise with Havering School Admissions, Attendance and Inclusion Team in the case of a managed move and will follow Havering protocol and procedures. For further information and support, please contact: inclusions@havering.gov.uk

## 15. Safeguarding

If there is an ongoing safeguarding investigation (whether that includes a criminal investigation or not) that may result in the permanent exclusion of a pupil or if a pupil has been reinstated following a governing board review, it is likely that there will be complex and difficult decisions that need to be made. It is important that these decisions are made alongside a school's duty to safeguard and support children and their duty to provide an education. All academies have a statutory duty to make arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of their pupils and will do so in regard to Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Section 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education sets out the safeguarding process for cases of reports that relate to rape or assault by penetration and those that lead to a conviction or caution. All academies will co-operate fully and transparently with safeguarding partners to support the pupil.

## 16. Behaviour Outside of School Premises

All schools have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside of the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable. Conduct outside the school premises, including online conduct, that the individual academies might sanction pupils for include misbehaviour:

- when taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity
- when travelling to or from school
- when wearing school uniform
- when in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school
- that could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- that poses a threat to another pupil
- that could adversely affect the reputation of the school

The decision to sanction a pupil will be lawful if it is made on the school premises or elsewhere at a time when the pupil is under the control or charge of a member of staff of the school. All academies will follow the guidance found at: Behaviour in Schools - Advice for headteachers and school staff (publishing.service.gov.uk)

## 17. Screening, Searching and Confiscation

All academies will follow the statutory guidance and advice on 'Screening, Searching and Confiscation'. This information can be found at: Searching, Screening and Confiscation (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Examples of items which are banned/prohibited from the site include:

• knives and weapons

• alcohol

• illegal drugs

• stolen item

• any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the pupil)

• tobacco, cigarette papers, vape/s

• fireworks

• pornographic images

## 18. The Use of Reasonable Force and Other Physical Contact

All academies will follow the statutory guidance and advice on Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance

Further, more detailed guidance on the Trust's approach to this can be found in 'Appendix One: **'Use of Restrictive Interventions in ELAT Academies'**

## 19. Prevention of Bullying / Child on Child Abuse

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)) requires a school behaviour policy to include measures to prevent bullying, including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying. ELAT 'Anti-Bullying and Procedures' can be found at Key Information – Empower Learning Academy Trust

## 20. Malicious Allegations / Reports

If an allegation / report by a pupil is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the designated safeguarding lead should consider whether the child and/or the person who has made the allegation needs help or may have been abused by someone else and this is a cry for help. In such circumstances, a referral to children's social care maybe appropriate.

If a report is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the school, should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual who made it (following the school behaviour policy).

## 21. Impact Assessment

The Trust recognises that there are longstanding national trends which show that particular groups of children are more likely to be excluded from school, both for a suspension or permanent exclusion.

Trust leaders will work together, within the local context to effectively plan and put in place additional and targeted action in response to such trends locally and within the Trust itself. If they identify any gaps, they will act to ensure those who work with children have the training, services and support they need to address these.

## 22. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed and approved annually by the CEO.

## 23. Links with other policies

This guidance links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Online Safety policy
- Complaints policy
- Health and safety policy
- SEND policy
- Suspensions and Exclusion Policy
- Anti-bullying policy

**'Appendix One: 'Use of Restrictive Interventions in ELAT Academies'**

## 24. Purpose of this Guidance

At Empower Learning Academy Trust we strive to create a safe, secure and supportive environment for all our pupils and staff.

There are times when the use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion, is lawful and necessary to keep people safe. However, we understand that the use of restrictive interventions can have a significant impact on pupils, staff and parents/carers. In our academies, they are only ever considered as a last resort, once all other prevention and de-escalation strategies have been exhausted.

This guidance aims to:

- Minimise the need to use restrictive interventions, through early support, prevention and de-escalation strategies
- Help school staff feel confident in knowing how to use restrictive interventions safely, appropriately and lawfully, when they are necessary
- Clearly set out the steps for recording and reporting incidents of reasonable force, seclusion and restraint
- Protect the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all pupils and staff, and help create a positive and safe place for everyone at school.

### 24.1 Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education (DfE) guidance on restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools. It also meets the requirements of:

- Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, inserted by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Section 550ZA and section 550ZB of the Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated regulations
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- The Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025
- Department for Education guidance on searching, screening and confiscation

- Paragraph 16A of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (inserted by The Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025)

**24.2 Definitions**

The terms we use in this guidance are defined as follows. These definitions are based on the Department for Education's guidance on restrictive interventions.

- **Restrictive interventions** are used to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of the body or part of the body. This policy uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

Examples of restrictive interventions could include:

  - Supervised seclusion of a pupil in an area away from others, where the pupil is prevented from leaving for their own safety and/or the safety of others
  - Passive physical contact, such as a staff member blocking a pupil's path if they're running towards danger (like a busy road), or staff standing between pupils to prevent a fight

- **Reasonable force** refers to the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to restrain children, using no more force than is needed for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.

Examples of the use of reasonable force could include:

  - A staff member guiding a pupil to safety by the arm
  - Staff breaking up a fight between pupils
  - A staff member restraining a pupil to prevent injury to the pupil, or others

- **Restraint** is a form of non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact.

  - A staff member holding a pupil's arms to their sides when the pupil is attempting to harm themselves or others
  - Removing a pupil's crutches

- **Seclusion** is a non-disciplinary intervention that keeps a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevents them from leaving, for the safety of that pupil and/or others. This could be through physical obstruction or by making the pupil believe that they will be punished if they leave. For example, putting a pupil into a 'holding' room until they calm down is a form of seclusion.

See section 1.4 of this guidance for more information on seclusion.

- A **significant incident** is any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between a member of staff and a pupil. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

See section 1.3 of this guidance for more information on appropriate physical contact.

**24.3 Appropriate physical contact with pupils**

Our academies do not have a 'no contact' policy. We do not grant any requests by parents/carers or staff members not to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions.

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with pupils which does not give rise to any question over the use of reasonable force or other restrictive interventions.

Examples include:

- Providing first aid to a pupil
- Guiding or escorting a pupil through the school building or on a school trip by holding their hand
- Comforting a pupil who is upset
- Offering congratulations or praise, such as with a pat on the back or handshake
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- When demonstrating exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

In assessing whether physical contact is appropriate in any given situation, staff should use their professional judgement, and have regard to:

- The Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- The specific circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present
- Factors including, but not limited to:
    - The pupil's age
    - Any known vulnerabilities, including whether the pupil has special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
    - Whether any alternative strategies that don't involve physical contact can be used

**24.4 Seclusion**

As defined above, seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention that keeps a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevents them from leaving, for the safety of that pupil and/or others. This could be through physical obstruction or by making the pupil believe that they will be punished if they leave. For example, putting a pupil into a 'holding' room until they calm down is a form of seclusion.

Our academies only use seclusion as a safety measure when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. Seclusion is not used as a threat or punishment. Seclusion is not a disciplinary response to deliberate or wilful misbehaviour.

During seclusion:

- The pupil will be secluded in a safe place that does not feel threatening or intimidating to them e.g. a wellbeing room (or similar)
- The pupil will be supervised at all times, by at least 1 member of staff suitably experienced, trained and/or qualified staff.

As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil will be allowed to leave.

Any incident involving the use of seclusion will be recorded and reported in accordance with the procedures set out in section 2.13 of this guidance.

**24.5 Roles and Responsibilities**

**The CEO and Trust Board**

The CEO and Trust Board are responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving this policy
- Ensuring that a procedure is in place for recording and reporting each:
    - Significant incident involving force
    - Seclusion incident
    - Restraint incident
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the procedures for recording and reporting the use of force, seclusion and restraint are followed
- Regularly reviewing and interrogating data on the use of restrictive interventions in our school
- Supporting and challenging school leaders to identify where changes may be needed to practice. For example:
    - If approaches have been used for some time but haven't been effective

- If there is any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions, including in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics or have SEND or other types of vulnerabilities

**The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Overall implementation and oversight of this policy
- Making sure that appropriate and high-quality training on preventative strategies and the safe and lawful use of restrictive interventions is provided for staff who need it, based on the Academy's individual context and needs
- Ensuring adequate staffing levels to support positive behaviour management
- Monitoring incidents involving restrictive interventions, including regular review of incidents to refine and improve processes
- Ensuring compliance with recording and reporting requirements
- Authorising staff to search a pupil or their belongings if they have good reason to think the pupil has a prohibited or banned item
- Following the procedures set out in our complaints policy to deal with any complaint about the use of restrictive interventions
- Following the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education if an allegation regarding inappropriate use of force and/or other restrictive intervention is made against a member of staff

**All Staff**

All members of staff are responsible for:

- Making sure they have read and understood the principles of this policy and any other linked policies
- Using de-escalation techniques and positive behaviour management strategies to try to minimise and prevent the need for restrictive interventions
- Accurately recording every seclusion incident, restraint incident and significant incident involving force that they are involved in
- Reporting these incidents to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Recording any injuries that occur as part of an incident involving restrictive intervention, and following the Trust's Health and Safety Policy to ensure these are reported to the Health and Safety Executive where necessary
- Taking part in training on preventative strategies and the safe and lawful use of restrictive interventions, if relevant to their role (this may include additional training appropriate to their responsibilities)

- Engaging in follow-up conversation(s) to debrief and reflect on incidents involving restrictive intervention that they were involved in, to help us understand what happened and why

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The DSL is responsible for:

- Reporting every seclusion incident, restraint incident and significant incident involving force to each parent/carer of the pupil involved
- Making sure records are kept securely and in accordance with safeguarding and data protection procedures
- Contacting the local authority in cases where informing a pupil's parent/carer of the use of reasonable force, seclusion or restraint on their child would put that child at risk of significant harm (see section 2.13 of this guidance)

**Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)**

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Working with pupils, parents/carers and relevant school staff to develop and review behaviour support plans and risk assessments for any pupils with SEND where it's been identified that there is an increased likelihood of the need to use restrictive interventions
- Ensuring staff are aware of individual pupil needs and associated behaviour support strategies
- Working with staff who know pupils well, to identify and manage risk (such as trigger points when challenging behaviour is more likely to occur)
- Working with pupils, parents/carers, staff and other relevant professionals to develop prevention and de-escalation strategies
- Advising on reasonable adjustments for any pupils with disabilities when considering prevention and de-escalation strategies
- Participating in the review of restrictive intervention incidents involving any pupil with SEND
- Providing advice and support on the application of this policy for pupils with SEND
- Contributing to staff training on SEND and behaviour management, including the use of restrictive interventions

**24.6 Acceptable uses of force**

All our school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain situations.

Staff can use reasonable force to prevent or stop a pupil from:

- Hurting themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Damaging property
- Causing disorder among pupils, in or out of lessons

While all staff have this power, some staff, especially those who work closely with pupils who might show challenging behaviour, are more likely to need to use it than others.

We will ensure staff are adequately trained and that risk assessments are carried out where necessary. See section 2.12 of this policy for information on training and risk assessments.

Any significant incident involving the use of force will be recorded and reported in accordance with the procedures set out in section 2.13 of this guidance.

**24.7 Unacceptable uses of force**

It is illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment. We never use force as a sanction, threat or deterrent.

Our staff understand that any form of force or restraint carries a risk of physical and psychological harm, so we always avoid using these measures where possible.

The following uses of force are **never acceptable**:

- Staff using force for the purpose of punishment
- Staff restraining a pupil in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example by covering their nose and/or mouth or applying pressure to their neck or abdomen
- Staff using force on the ground. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should release their hold or move into a safer position as quickly as possible

Section 1.6 of this guidance sets out the instances where staff may use reasonable force. Section 1.8 of this guidance provides advice for staff on what to consider before using it.

**24.8 Using reasonable force to search pupils**

The headteacher and any member of staff authorised by the headteacher have a statutory power to search a pupil or their belongings if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item (as listed in the DfE's searching, screening and confiscation guidance) or an item banned under our school rules.

They **can** use reasonable force to search for prohibited items (as listed in the DfE's searching, screening and confiscation guidance), such as knives, weapons, stolen items or illegal drugs. They **cannot** use reasonable force to search for items that are banned under our school rules only. See Section 17 Behaviour Policy (above)

The decision to use reasonable force to carry out a search should be made carefully, on a case-by-case basis and taking into consideration the level of risk to pupils and staff. Please see Section 17 Behaviour Policy (above) for more information on how we conduct searches.

**24.9 Prevention and de-escalation strategies**

Restrictive intervention is used only when necessary. We aim to minimise its use as much as possible, using both whole-school and individual approaches.

Our whole-school approach includes:

- Consideration of how our school and classroom environment can support all pupils to achieve and thrive
- Sharing best practice for whole-class behaviour management, and for managing communal spaces such as corridors and playgrounds
- Training staff in effective communication strategies, such as using appropriate tone of voice and empathy to aid de-escalation
- Development of working staff-pupil relationships and trust
- Recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform improvement planning

The individual approaches we use include:

- Consistent application of the 'ELAT Behaviour Guiding Principles', section 6 Behaviour Policy (above)
- Working closely with parents/carers to support individual pupils
- Strategies to support individual pupils based on their identified needs, including:
    - The development of behaviour support plans
    - Strategies to help pupils calm down before their behaviour escalates
    - Making 'reasonable adjustments' where a pupil has a disability, to help them participate in school life as fully as possible

**De-escalation when a situation arises**

When a staff member is faced with a situation where a restrictive intervention may need to be used, they should consider using de-escalation techniques first, wherever possible. Techniques that could be used in these situations include:

- Having open body language and being aware of a pupil's personal space

- Taking a pupil away from an 'audience' – speaking to them on their own rather than in front of a group of other pupils or staff
- Using empathy – asking the pupil to help you understand their feelings
- Distraction techniques
- Offering a calm space for the pupil to go to so they can self-regulate
- Verbal warnings – calmly reminding the pupil of the consequences of their behaviour

**24.10 Deciding when the use of restrictive interventions is appropriate**

The decision on whether to use restrictive interventions is down to the professional judgment of the staff member and will always depend on the individual circumstances of each situation.

Staff should always consider whether there are other ways to manage the situation, such as the de-escalation techniques outlined in section 1.8 of this guidance and/or seeking assistance from a colleague. However, there may be times when staff have no other choice but to use restrictive interventions, to reduce the risk of harm to the pupil and/or others.

When assessing whether a restrictive intervention is required, staff should always consider:

- **Is it necessary?**
    - Are there other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage the situation?
    - Is a restrictive intervention likely to successfully reduce the risks, or could its use escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself?
- **Is it proportionate?**
    - Staff should use the **least** amount of force or the **least** restrictive intervention for the **least** amount of time required to reduce the risks
    - If the intervention itself is escalating the situation, staff should reconsider their approach and attempt an alternative strategy
    - Staff should consider the individual circumstances of the pupil, such as their age, size and any medical conditions, SEND or other vulnerabilities

**24.11 Pupil and staff welfare**

**Pupil welfare**

The most important consideration when using a restrictive intervention is the safety and wellbeing of the pupil involved, as well as the safety of other pupils and staff. Staff should always consider the

potential impact on the pupil's welfare balanced against any actions taken. For example, staff should bear in mind that pupils who have experienced adverse life events, trauma or neglect, or who have diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions or sensory impairments, communication difficulties or other needs, may find the use of restrictive interventions particularly distressing.

If a restrictive intervention is needed, staff should always aim to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity. This includes consideration of the location and environment where any intervention is used, such as in front of their peers.

Staff should, wherever possible, clearly and calmly communicate to the pupil what is happening, why, and what the pupil needs to do, including using verbal and non-verbal strategies where needed, and giving time for the pupil to process information and respond where appropriate.

Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.

**Support following an incident**

As soon as possible after any use of restrictive intervention, the Headteacher will ensure that relevant staff evaluate the incident to understand why restrictive intervention was used, the impact on pupils and staff, any patterns and trends, and how another incident could be avoided in the future.

Our academies will make sure each pupil and staff member involved get the right support, including a medical assessment and treatment if needed, and an opportunity to reflect on and talk through the incident.

This follow-up conversation(s) will be part of the overall debriefing process to understand what happened during the incident and why, based on separate reflections from all parties involved. Conversations should also aim to repair and rebuild relationships through dialogue.

Wherever possible, this process will be facilitated by a staff member who was not involved in the incident. It may also include the presence of an additional person to ensure impartiality and support. The Academy will continue to monitor pupil and staff wellbeing and provide additional support if needed.

Depending on the circumstances, support may also be offered to those who witnessed the incident.

**24.12 Considerations for pupils with SEND**

We understand that pupils with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to themselves and others. Pupils who have difficulty communicating verbally might show their needs and discomfort through their actions.

Our academies are committed to understanding what might trigger challenging behaviour in pupils with SEND, and to providing the right support and an inclusive environment.

We will carry out risk assessments for pupils with SEND, where we identify that there is an increased likelihood of needing to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions. Our academies are aware of their duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities to avoid disadvantage and ensure they can take part in school life as fully as possible.

We will utilise staff who know individual pupils well to help identify and manage risk, such as trigger points when challenging behaviour is more likely to occur and develop proactive strategies to reduce

the likelihood of restrictive interventions being used. We will also work with the pupil, their parents/carers and other professionals to develop prevention and de-escalation strategies.

These strategies might include:

- Removing stimuli that may be causing distress to the pupil
- Staff members changing how they communicate with the pupil, such as being more mindful of body language, facial expressions and/or tone of voice
- Helping the pupil express their emotions before getting overwhelmed
- Engaging the pupil in activities to help them regulate their emotions
- Distracting the pupil with familiar objects or activities to redirect their attention

Where appropriate, we will create individual behaviour support plans for pupils with SEND. The plan will be reviewed regularly, and following any significant incident, with the pupil and parents/carers to make sure it's still working well. The plan will:

- Outline any adjustments, such as to address aspects of the school environment which the pupil finds challenging
- Explain the best ways to communicate with the pupil
- In some cases, specify when increased physical contact with staff might be appropriate. These situations will be discussed with everyone involved and clearly written down in the plan

**24.13 Training and Risk Assessments**

Our academies will make sure that all staff who are likely to need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions are adequately trained in their safe and lawful use and in preventative strategies.

We also have a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of our staff. Therefore, we carry out risk assessments to ensure that staff who regularly work alongside pupils where the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions may be required can do so as safely as possible.

**24.14 Recording and Reporting Arrangements**

We have a legal duty to record and report all:

- Significant incidents involving force (see section 3 of this policy for a definition of 'significant incident')
- Seclusion incidents
- Restraint incidents

**Recording incidents**

Our academies have clear processes in place for recording the incidents listed above.

Staff will complete the Trust's 'Restrictive Intervention Incident Report' (Appendix Two) and upload this to 'CPOMS' or 'MyConcern', according to which system is used.

Staff must record incidents in writing, as soon as possible after the event, and should endeavour to do this on the same day. Staff should do this even if the use of restrictive interventions is agreed as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan.

**For significant incidents involving force**, we will record:

- The names of the pupil and staff members directly involved
- Any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether they have an identified special educational need or disability, and their SEN status code
- The time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- A clear and brief description of what happened, including:
  - What led up to the incident
  - Any known or potential triggers for the behaviour
  - Any preventative or de-escalation strategies used
  - The type and degree of reasonable force used
  - Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable
- A brief explanation of why using force was assessed as necessary in that situation
- Details of any support given after the incident, such as medical help or emotional support
- Additional information as relevant, including but not limited to; the pupil's and/or witnesses' accounts, when and how parents/carers were notified, and any follow-up actions that were taken.

**For seclusion incidents and restraint incidents**, we will record:

- The names of the pupil and staff members directly involved
- Any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether they have an identified special educational need or disability, and their SEN status code
- The time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- A brief explanation of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that situation

- Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable
- Details of any support given after the incident, such as medical help or emotional support
- Additional information as relevant, including but not limited to; the pupil's and/or witnesses' accounts, when and how parents/carers were notified, and any follow-up actions that were taken.

**Note:** if a seclusion or restraint incident also constitutes a significant incident involving force, we will record it in line with our procedure for recording significant incidents involving force. It does not need to be recorded twice.

Completed reports will be kept securely and retained in line with our data protection procedures.

**Reporting incidents to parents/carers**

When reporting an incident to parents/carers, we will take the following steps:

The Headteacher and, if separate, the DSL, will receive the completed report and ensure the relevant person contacts the parent/carer (by telephone initially, if possible). The Headteacher will also ensure that the information is reviewed to ensure procedures were followed correctly and whether any additional paperwork is completed for monitoring purposes.

We will inform parents/carers about an incident as soon as we can after it happens and will endeavour to do this on the same day. We will do this even if the use of restrictive interventions is agreed as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan.

There is one exception to this:

- If a member of staff thinks that telling the pupil's parents/carers would likely result in significant harm to that pupil. In these cases, we will report the incident to any parent(s)/carer(s) who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm or, if there are none, to the local authority where the pupil ordinarily resides.

When we report **significant incidents involving force** to parents/carers, we will include the following details:

- The time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- A brief explanation of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that situation
- A short description of the type and degree of force that was used
- Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable

When we report **seclusion incidents and restraint incidents** to parents/carers, we will provide parents/carers with a written record of the incident.

**Note:** if a seclusion or restraint incident also constitutes a significant incident involving force, we will report it in line with our procedure for reporting significant incidents involving force. It does not need to be reported twice.

When reporting to parents/carers, we will have regard to data protection requirements when deciding what information to share. For example, we will not include any identifying details of any other pupil.

**Following up with parents/carers after an incident**

It's best practice to invite parents/carers to have a follow-up discussion about the incident, where appropriate. Insert details of your process/approach, if applicable. For example, the discussion might include:

- Any behavioural triggers or warning signs of an impending incident
- Whether any agreed behaviour support plans were followed
- What de-escalation strategies were used and how effective they were
- What might be done differently in the future

**Reporting incidents to the Local Authority**

In cases where we have assessed that an incident needs to be reported to the local authority where the pupil ordinarily resides (as outlined in section 12.2), this report will include all the information that we would normally share with the pupil's parents/carers, as well as the reasons why we thought it was unsafe to tell the pupil's parents/carers directly.

In cases where a pupil has parents/carers and is the subject of a care order under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 or is being accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989, we will report the incident to the relevant local authority in addition to the parents/carers (unless we deem it unsafe to inform the parents/carers, as set out above).

**2.5 Complaints and Allegations**

Any complaints about the use of restrictive interventions will be handled through our Complaints Policy, which you can find at Empower Learning Academy Trust – Inspiring Learners, Changing Lives

We take any allegation of inappropriate use of force and/or other restrictive interventions made against a member of staff very seriously. We will deal with allegations in line with the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## 25. 'Appendix Two: 'ELAT Restrictive Intervention Incident Report'

### 1. Pupil & Incident Overview

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Pupil name** | | **Year group / Tutor** | |
| **UPN / MIS ID** | | **SEN status (e.g., SEN Support / EHCP)** | |
| **Known needs / vulnerabilities (SEND, medical, safeguarding)** | | | |
| **Date of incident** | | **Start time – End time (duration)** | |
| **Location** | | **Staff directly involved** | |
| **Other staff / witnesses** | | | |
| **Trigger(s) (if known)** | | | |
| **De-escalation and preventative strategies used (what/when/effectiveness)** | | | |
| **Why intervention was necessary (risk of harm/disorder/property damage)** | | | |

**2. Type of Restrictive Intervention**

Tick all that apply and give details:

| Reasonable force (physical) | Details of hold/position/area of contact | Degree of force & duration |
|---|---|---|
| **Restraint (immobilising/limiting movement)** | | |
| **Seclusion (away from others, prevented from leaving)** | | |
| **Escort / guided move** | | |
| **Removal of aid/equipment (e.g., item posing risk)** | | |
| **Other (specify)** | | |

**3. Injuries / Adverse Impact & Immediate Support**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Pupil injuries observed** | | **Staff injuries observed** | |
| **First aid / medical treatment provided (by whom/when)** | | | |
| **Emotional impact / wellbeing checks (pupil and staff)** | | | |
| **Was the incident a safeguarding concern requiring referral (e.g., MASH/Prevent/Police)?** | Yes ☐ No ☐ | **If yes, details/date/time/reference** | |

**4. Parent/Carer Notification & Communication**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Parent/carer notified?** | Yes ☐ No ☐ | **Method (call/email/portal)** | |
| **Date & time of notification** | | **By whom** | |
| **Summary of information communicated to parents (as per guidance minimum)** | | | |
| **Follow-up discussion with parents offered?** | Yes ☐ No ☐ | **Scheduled meeting date/time (if arranged)** | |
| **Attendees for meeting (school & parent/carer)** | | | |
| **Parent/carer feedback or concerns raised** | | | |

**5. Post-incident Review & Next Steps**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Behaviour support plan in place? (CIP/IBP/Pastoral plan)** | Yes ☐ No ☐ To be created ☐ | **Date last reviewed** | |
| **Were agreed plans followed?** | Fully ☐ Partially ☐ Not applicable ☐ | Amendments required | |
| **Learning & adjustments (what will we do differently next time)** | | | |
| **Pupil voice recorded (how they felt/what helped)** | Yes ☐ No ☐ | **Summary/where filed** | |
| **Staff debrief completed** | Yes ☐ No ☐ | **By whom/date** | |
| **Training/CPD implications (e.g., positive handling refresher)** | | | |
| **Further actions (internal/external referrals, risk assessment, timetable tweaks)** | | | |
| **Responsible person(s) & deadlines** | | | |

**6. Recording, Sign-off & Governance**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Recorded on MC/ CPOMS/Safeguarding system** | Yes ☐ No ☐ | **Reference/ID** | |
| **Completed by (name/role)** | | **Date completed** | |
| **Reviewed by DSL/DDSL** | Name: | **Date** | |
| **Headteacher/SLT notified if significant incident** | Yes ☐ No ☐ | **Date/notified by** | |
| **Local authority / Trust reporting completed (if required)** | Yes ☐ No ☐ | **Details/date** | |

**Key definitions (for reference)**

**Restrictive intervention:** Actions that prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of a pupil (physical or non-physical).

**Reasonable force:** No more force than necessary for the least amount of time, used only in limited circumstances.

**Restraint:** Intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits movement; may or may not include direct physical contact.

**Seclusion:** Keeping a pupil away from others and preventing them from leaving (non-disciplinary).