Restrictive Intervention Policy

Member(s) of staff responsible	Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour
Link Governor	Kellie Beale
The date agreed with the staff	30.09.26
The date discussed with the pupils	O6.10.26
Date agreed by Governors	19.10.26
Frequency of policy review	Annual
Date next review due	April 2027

Document Version Control

Issue Number	Issue Date	Summary of changes
1.0	April 2026	A new policy in line with guidance based the previous Appendix to our behaviour policy
1.1	September 2026	No changes

1. Policy Statement and Purpose

Warden Hill is committed to creating a safe, supportive environment where restrictive interventions are prevented wherever possible through early intervention, positive behaviour support and de-escalation. Where intervention is required, it must always be lawful, necessary, proportionate, time-limited, safe, and used only to prevent harm. All actions must protect pupils' dignity, wellbeing and safeguarding.

2. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy reflects:

- *Restrictive Interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools* (DfE, April 2026)
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025
- Equality Act 2010, Children Act 1989/2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

3. Key Definitions

Safe Handling

Safe Handling refers to the use of planned, risk-aware and non-harmful physical interventions undertaken by trained staff to keep pupils and others safe when all other de-escalation and preventative strategies have been exhausted. Safe Handling at Warden Hill is grounded in Headsight training principles and aligns with national guidance on restrictive interventions (2026). Staff must continually assess risk throughout any intervention and immediately reduce or cease the intervention when the risk of harm no longer justifies its use.

Staff must use the **PLAN** framework to support dynamic risk assessment when considering the use of restrictive intervention. Restrictive intervention is not a single decision but an ongoing process of professional evaluation. Staff must continually assess the level of risk, the effectiveness of de-escalation strategies and whether intervention remains necessary, reasonable and proportionate throughout the incident. Interventions must be reduced or ceased immediately once the risk of harm no longer justifies their use.

When making decisions, staff will consider whether the intervention is:

- **P – Proportionate:** Is the response appropriate to the level of risk presented?
- **L – Least Restrictive:** Is this the least restrictive option available to maintain safety?
- **A – Appropriate:** Is the intervention suitable for the individual, the context and the presenting behaviour?
- **N – Necessary:** Is intervention required to prevent harm to the pupil or others?

Staff are expected to use professional judgement alongside the PLAN framework, taking account of the pupil's age, stage of development, SEND needs, known triggers, individual support plans and the specific circumstances of the incident.

Safe Handling includes three related concepts:

3.1 Restrictive Intervention

A restrictive intervention is any action that limits a pupil's movement, liberty or ability to act freely.
In Safe Handling, restrictive intervention is used only as a last resort, when a pupil's behaviour presents an immediate risk of harm to themselves, others, serious property damage, or serious disorder. Interventions must always be the least restrictive option available. Restrictive interventions must never be used to secure compliance, enforce instructions, address low-level disruption or as a consequence for poor behaviour.

3.2 Reasonable Force

Reasonable force is the use of physical contact that is:

- Necessary to prevent harm or a dangerous situation
- Proportionate to the risk presented
- Used for the shortest possible time
- Never used as a punishment

In Safe Handling, reasonable force is based on calm, controlled actions that prioritise pupil welfare, communication, dignity and safety at all times.

3.3 Restraint

Restraint is a specific form of restrictive intervention involving the physical restriction of a pupil's movement. In Safe Handling:

- Restraint may involve holding, guiding, or blocking movement
- Only approved, non-harmful techniques are used
- Techniques that restrict breathing, circulation, or cause pain are strictly prohibited
- Staff monitor the pupil continuously and release as soon as it is safe to do so

Any member of staff may use restraint as long as it follows our Proportionate, lawful, Accountable, Necessary dynamic risk assessment and should only be used in situations where not intervening would lead to a significantly greater risk of harm. If possible then a Headsight trained member of staff should intervene.

3.4 Seclusion

Seclusion is the supervised separation of a pupil from others where they are prevented from leaving. Seclusion will only be used where necessary to prevent harm and never as a punishment.

4. Principles and Ethos

Warden Hill will always prioritise:

- Prevention, early help and de-escalation
- Safeguarding, dignity and emotional wellbeing
- Safe practice—never using force as punishment
- Building strong relationships that reduce crisis situations

5. When Restrictive Intervention May Be Used

Reasonable force may be used only when necessary to prevent:

- Injury to a pupil, staff member or others
- A criminal offence
- Serious damage to property
- Serious disorder or unsafe behaviour

Any intervention must be:

- Necessary in the circumstances
- Proportionate to the risk
- Used for the shortest possible time

6. Prohibited Practices

Staff must never use:

- Techniques restricting breathing or circulation
- Pressure on the neck, mouth, nose or abdomen
- Intentional holds that pin pupils to the ground
- Pain-compliance techniques
- Risky holds such as: seated double embrace, double basket hold, nose distraction technique

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- Governing Body: Ensure compliance, monitor trends, review policy.
- Senior Leaders: Ensure training, oversight of records, reporting, and analysis.
- All Staff: Follow this policy, use de-escalation first, record and report any incident.

8. Training Requirements

Warden Hill ensures that identified staff receive appropriate training in de-escalation, dynamic risk assessment and the safe use of restrictive interventions. The DSL contributes to safeguarding aspects of training, while physical intervention training is delivered by approved providers and reinforced through regular refreshers. Staff are trained to prevent crisis situations, use de-escalation as the first response and apply restrictive interventions only when they are necessary, proportionate and required to prevent harm, always maintaining the safety, dignity and wellbeing of the pupil.

Warden Hill will ensure that:

- All staff receive core training in:
    - Safeguarding and child protection, including how restrictive intervention relates to pupil welfare
    - Understanding SEND, communication needs and emotional regulation
    - Whole-school de-escalation approaches and behaviour strategies aimed at preventing escalation
- Specialist training is provided through Headsight, the school's approved provider for safe handling. This training includes:
    - Legal expectations and thresholds for reasonable force
    - Safe, non-harmful physical intervention methods
    - Avoidance of prohibited and high-risk practices
    - Risk-based decision-making
    - Recording and reporting duties under the 2025 regulations
- Any member of school staff may use physical intervention or reasonable force when it is:
    - Necessary to prevent injury, serious property damage or dangerous disorder
    - Proportionate to the level of risk
    - Used for the shortest possible time
    - Never used as punishment
      This applies to teachers, support staff and any adults temporarily put in charge of pupils
    - A current list of trained practitioners is maintained by school leaders.

Training is refreshed regularly to ensure competence, consistency and compliance with the 2026 Restrictive Intervention guidance.

9. Pupil-Centred Planning (including SEND)

Warden Hill will:

- Develop individual risk assessments and personalised regulation plans
- Work with parents and appropriate specialists
- Consider the specific needs of pupils with SEND before, during and after any intervention

10. Recording and Reporting Incidents

In line with 2025 regulations, the school will:

- Significant incidents include any occasion where restrictive intervention, reasonable forcem or restraint is used, where injury occurs, where a pupil experiences distress, or where senior leader involvement is required. These significant incidents should be recorded on CPOMS under the SHADEs category.
- Include: reasons, intervention type, duration, injuries, de-escalation attempted, SEND context, witnesses
- Complete records as soon as possible, ideally on the same day
- Inform parents promptly unless this risks harm to the pupil

11. Post-Incident Procedures

After any restrictive intervention:

- Pupils will receive support and medical checks where required
- Staff involved will be debriefed
- Triggers and strategies will be reviewed to prevent recurrence

12. Data Review and Governance Oversight

Senior leaders and governors will:

- Monitor patterns and frequency of incidents
- Analyse trends to improve proactive support
- Ensure secure storage and use of records to improve practice

13. Complaints and Allegations

Parents and pupils may raise concerns through the school's complaints procedure.
Any allegation against staff will be managed in line with safeguarding and statutory procedures.

14. Links to Other Policies

This policy aligns with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

15. Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- There are legal changes
- Incident data indicates the need
- New guidance or best practice emerges