



RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS, RESTRAINT, SECLUSION AND USE OF REASONABLE FORCE POLICY

Last reviewed:	April 2026
Next review due:	April 2027
Reviewed by:	Director of Safeguarding
Approved by the Board of Governors:	June 2026

1. Safeguarding commitment and values

Safeguarding is the organising principle of this policy. At d'Overbroeck's, the physical and emotional safety, dignity and rights of children are paramount.

Restrictive interventions are never neutral acts. They involve power, control and physical proximity. They can impact trust, psychological safety and relational security. For some students, particularly those with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), trauma histories, SEND, mental health needs or attachment vulnerabilities, restrictive intervention may re-traumatise and intensify distress.

d'Overbroeck's therefore adopts a trauma-informed, relational and safeguarding-led approach. Restrictive intervention, including restraint, seclusion or reasonable force, is a measure of last resort. It will only be used where necessary to prevent immediate risk of significant harm, serious disorder or serious damage to property.

All interventions must be lawful, necessary, proportionate, time-limited and the least restrictive option available.

2. Our non-negotiables

d'Overbroecks will always:

- prioritise prevention, de-escalation and co-regulation;
- use the least restrictive option for the shortest time necessary;
- preserve student dignity and emotional safety;
- record, scrutinise and review every significant incident;
- invite and respect student voice following incidents;
- protect staff safety and wellbeing.

d'Overbroeck's will never:

- use force as punishment;
- use restrictive intervention for compliance, convenience or silence;
- use techniques that restrict breathing, airway or circulation;
- expect staff to intervene beyond their training;
- treat misuse of force as anything other than a safeguarding concern.

3. Legal framework

This policy is informed by and operates in accordance with:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Sections 93 and 93A)
- Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No.2) (England) Regulations 2025
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Behaviour in Schools guidance
- Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention guidance

Nothing in this policy removes the statutory power of staff to use reasonable force where lawful and necessary.

4. Definitions

Restrictive Intervention: Action to prevent, restrict or subdue movement.

Reasonable Force: Lawful and proportionate force used to prevent injury, criminal offence, serious damage or serious disorder.

Restraint: Intervention that immobilises or significantly restricts movement.

Seclusion: Confinement away from others for safety purposes and never as punishment.

Planned Intervention: Identified within an individual risk or behaviour support plan as a last-resort measure.

Unplanned Intervention: Immediate response to unforeseen serious risk.

Misuse of Force: Excessive, disproportionate or unlawful intervention. Misuse of force is a safeguarding matter.

5. Prevention, trauma informed and relational practice

The school is committed to reducing reliance on restrictive interventions through prevention.

Staff are expected to:

- use calm tone, respectful language and co-regulation strategies;
- recognise behaviour as communication of need;
- identify triggers and early warning signs;
- make reasonable adjustments for students with SEND;
- review environmental and supervision arrangements where patterns emerge;
- seek early leadership support where risk escalates.

Restrictive intervention must never replace skilled relational practice.

6. Circumstances in which restrictive intervention may be used

Staff may use reasonable force to prevent a student from:

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

Before intervening, staff must assess necessity, proportionality, vulnerability, equality implications and likely impact.

7. Recording and reporting

All significant incidents must be recorded as soon as practicable and normally on the same day.

Records will be made on:

- CPOMS (Safeguarding system);
- Sphera (Health and Safety system) where injury or physical risk occurs.

Records must include:

- names of the student and staff involved;
- date, time, location and duration;
- antecedents and de-escalation attempts;
- type and degree of intervention used;
- justification for intervention;
- any injuries sustained;
- post-incident support provided.

Parents will be informed as soon as practicable and normally on the same day unless doing so would place the student at risk.

8. Post incident review and student voice

The DSL and Vice Principal (Pastoral) will review all significant incidents. Incidents will be reviewed within 24 hours.

Students will be offered restorative dialogue and opportunity to share their perspective. Their views will inform risk assessment updates.

Injuries will be recorded in line with Health and Safety procedures and reported to relevant authorities where required.

9. Safeguarding escalation and accountability

Where misuse of force is suspected, the DSL will consider LADO referral thresholds and managing allegations procedures.

Patterns of incidents will trigger safeguarding analysis including review of supervision, bullying, neglect, environmental factors and disproportionality.

10. Staff safety and wellbeing

Restrictive interventions carry physical and emotional risk for staff as well as students.

No staff member will be required to intervene beyond their training. Staff may withdraw where unsafe to intervene.

Following distressing incidents, staff will receive structured debrief, reflective supervision and access to wellbeing support.

11. Governance, monitoring and continuous improvement

Governors will receive termly oversight reports including:

- number and nature of incidents;
- repeat incidents;
- location patterns;
- boarding/day comparison;
- disproportionality by send and protected characteristics;
- training compliance.

Data analysis will inform further school improvements and targeted reduction strategies.

12. Training requirements

All staff will receive annual/biennial safeguarding training including awareness of restrictive intervention principles.

Identified staff will receive accredited physical intervention training with annual refresh cycles.

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner where statutory guidance changes or where data indicates need.

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