



**OXFORD
International
College**

A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS POLICY (INCLUDING USE OF REASONABLE FORCE)

POLICY INTENDED FOR:	Staff
CATEGORY:	Boarding
POLICY IMPLEMENTED BY:	Principal
POLICY MONITORED BY:	Principal
REVIEWED BY:	Director of Boarding
CONSULTATION WITH:	Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
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FUTURE REVIEW:	March 2027

The Three Pillars

The three pillars of Oxford International College (OIC) are:

- Academic Excellence
- Personal Development
- Career and University Pathways

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KEY POINTS

1. Restrictive interventions, including reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder. However, the College advises that this should only be used as a last resort, when verbal instruction has failed.
2. In the College, restrictive interventions may be used for the below main purposes:
 - To prevent imminent harm
 - To prevent significant disorder or serious property damage
 - To maintain immediate safety when no less restrictive option is viable
3. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.
4. Classroom teachers, boarding staff and support staff will very rarely be in a situation where they may need to use restrictive interventions.
5. Physical intervention may occur for classroom teachers, boarding staff and support staff is to prevent a student causing significant harm to themselves or others, for example a confrontation or fight between students; a student putting themselves in immediate danger; or a student doing something that is illegal. In these circumstances, physical intervention is legal but should be reasonable, i.e., no more force is used than required.
6. All staff should be clear that they do not have to physically intervene unless they feel comfortable doing so, and equally do not consider themselves to be at risk.
7. If a student refuses to leave the classroom, is obstructive or verbally abusive the college's advice is to contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team by email or phone.
8. If a student wishes to leave the classroom, the College building, or boarding house, the college advises that staff should not prevent the student from doing so unless they are judged to be a significant risk to others or themselves.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

All students have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be protected from their own dangerous behaviour and that of others.

For the purposes of this policy, Oxford International College will use the updated (April 2026) DoE definition of 'Restrictive Interventions':

Restrictive interventions include any action—physical or non-physical—that restricts a pupil’s movement, liberty, or ability to act freely, used solely to prevent harm or serious disruption. Reasonable force is one category of restrictive intervention.

Key principles:

- 1. The term “reasonable force” falls under the definition of restrictive interventions and refers to physical contact used to prevent injury, prevent a criminal offence, stop serious damage to property, or prevent serious disorder.*
- 2. Force must be necessary, proportionate, and used for the minimum time possible.*
- 3. Staff must NEVER restrain a pupil using techniques that impact breathing, circulation, airway, neck, nose, mouth, or abdomen.*
- 4. Grounding a pupil (holding them on the floor) is prohibited unless there is no alternative to prevent immediate and serious harm.*
- 5. Staff must consider the pupil’s dignity, welfare, SEND profile, and known triggers.*

College staff have a legal power to use force as defined above, and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.

Senior College Leaders should support their staff when they use this power. However, they will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and seek advice about the appropriate course of action.

1. In most situations, reasonable restrictive interventions will only be used after all other strategies are exhausted. In exceptional circumstances, immediate physical intervention may be needed. Reasonable means using no more force than is needed.
2. It is unnecessary and unrealistic to suggest that staff should only touch students in emergencies. Recent guidance clearly states that “schools should not have a ‘no contact policy’”.
3. However, staff must bear in mind that even innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. The procedures outlined in this document are intended to clarify what constitutes appropriate behaviour so that we can minimise the risk of allegations made against staff.
4. The level and type of physical contact reflects the educational and social needs of the student, e.g., physical contact is likely to occur in some PE activities. It may, in a minority of circumstances, be used to provide comfort to a student in distress.
5. In all instances where physical contact may occur in non-emergency circumstances, clear communication and consent where appropriate should be sought.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, Oxford International College adopts the definitions in the DfE guidance:

Restrictive intervention: a means to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil, including physical and non-physical actions aimed at restraining pupils.

Reasonable force: physical restrictive intervention used in limited circumstances, using no more force than

is necessary for the least amount of time, depending on the specific situation.

Significant incident: any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate everyday physical contact (for example guiding or comforting) and includes any use of physical force to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

Seclusion: a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and preventing them from leaving, whether by physical obstruction, blocking, or by making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave.

Restraint: a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement, with or without direct physical contact (for example holding a pupil's arms or removing a walking aid).

Oxford International College does not operate a "no contact" policy and will not agree to any request from parents or staff never to use reasonable force or other restrictive interventions where these are lawful and necessary.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has regard to:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006, sections 93 and 93A (powers to use reasonable force and duties to record and report significant incidents).
- 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, including the public sector equality duty where applicable.

Oxford International College also has regard to associated DfE guidance, including Behaviour in Schools, Searching, Screening and Confiscation, Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion.

WHO CAN USE RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS?

1. All members of college staff have the legal power to use restrictive interventions, including reasonable force, but only within the limits defined by the April 2026 DfE guidance and this policy.
2. However, the college advises that staff contact the relevant leadership member or supervisory body who have adequate training to carry out physical interventions with students where possible. Staff should always, where feasible, seek assistance from trained personnel. Untrained staff may only intervene when necessary to prevent immediate risk of harm.
3. This power applies to any member of staff and individuals temporarily put in charge of pupils (e.g., volunteers) *only when necessary to prevent harm*. These individuals must still comply with safety restrictions and prohibited techniques outlined in this policy.
4. No member of staff may use any method of restraint that:
 - Restricts breathing or circulation
 - Applies pressure to the neck, mouth, nose, or abdomen
 - Intentionally forces the pupil to the ground
 - Carries undue risk given a pupil's SEND profile or known vulnerabilities

WHEN CAN RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS BE USED AT OIC?

All members of Oxford International College staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. Staff may use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

- causing injury to themselves or others
- committing a criminal offence
- damaging property
- causing disorder among pupils at the College, whether during a lesson or otherwise.

When deciding whether to use a restrictive intervention, staff must consider:

Necessity: whether there are other, more effective, less restrictive ways to manage the situation and whether intervention is likely to reduce risk rather than escalate it.

Proportionality: using the least restrictive intervention and the minimum force necessary for the shortest time required to reduce the risk.

Pupil welfare: the pupil's age, size, medical conditions, SEND, any trauma or vulnerabilities, and equality implications, and the impact on the pupil's dignity and wellbeing.

Where possible, staff should clearly and calmly explain to the pupil what is happening, why it is happening, and what the pupil needs to do to bring the intervention to an end.

Examples of When They May Be Used

- Prevent a student behaving in a way that disrupts a College event or a college trip or visit
- Prevent a student leaving a classroom **only when leaving creates an immediate safety risk**
- Prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student
- Stop a fight
- Use restrictive intervention to stop a significant incident involving risk of harm, where de-escalation has not succeeded or could not be attempted safely

As per April 2026 new guidance, **all restrictive interventions must be used for the *minimum time necessary* to reduce immediate risk.**

Seclusion (NEW 2026 STATUTORY REQUIREMENT)

Seclusion may only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation and is not acting with intent. Seclusion must never be used as, or threatened as, a disciplinary response to deliberate misbehaviour.

Any seclusion used must:

- take place in a location that is safe and not threatening or intimidating;
- be supervised at all times;
- end as soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, at which point the pupil must be allowed to leave.

Seclusion may only be used as a non-disciplinary safety measure when a pupil is dysregulated and poses imminent harm to others. It must NEVER be used as punishment or routine behaviour management.

Every use of seclusion must be:

- Recorded on the same day to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and SLT as well as on CPOMS.
- Reported to parents in writing the same day.
- Documented with full details of duration, reason, and attempts at de-escalation.
- Reviewed by senior leadership to ensure proportionality and legality.

OIC support in full, that it is a **legal requirement** to record and report every **significant incident** involving the use of force, restraint, or seclusion. Parents must receive written notification as soon as practicable and no later than the same day.

All incidents must be logged using the Physical Intervention & Seclusion Form included in this policy. The Director of Boarding or Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for keeping the Physical intervention and seclusion log up to date and ensure all steps are taken.

The principal reviews and signs off all incidents of restrictive intervention (including reasonable force, physical intervention and seclusion).

MINIMISING THE USE OF RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS

OIC is committed to reducing reliance on restrictive interventions through whole-College and individual measures.

Whole-College measures include:

- designing and reviewing the College and boarding environment to support pupils to feel safe, regulate and succeed, including in communal spaces such as corridors, social areas and boarding houses;
- consistent, evidence-informed classroom and behaviour management strategies, including clear routines and expectations;
- staff training in effective communication, de-escalation, and the safe and lawful use of restrictive interventions;
- building strong, trusting staff–pupil relationships;
- systematic recording and analysis of restrictive intervention data to inform improvement planning.

Individual approaches include:

- working closely with parents, carers and where appropriate external professionals to understand needs and plan support;
- developing and regularly reviewing behaviour support plans for pupils who present heightened risk, including agreed de-escalation strategies and any planned physical interventions;
- providing pupils with agreed strategies, spaces and opportunities to calm before behaviour escalates.

PUPILS WITH SEND AND OTHER VULNERABILITIES

OIC recognises that some pupils with SEND or other vulnerabilities may display behaviours that are harmful

to themselves or others in response to pain, sensory overload, unfamiliar situations or anxiety, and that they may be disproportionately subject to restrictive interventions. Staff must seek to understand underlying triggers, including how the College environment and routines may be experienced by these pupils, and to adjust practice accordingly.

- Where appropriate, behaviour support plans will be co-produced with the pupil, parents and relevant staff and professionals, and will:
- identify triggers and early warning signs;
- set out prevention and de-escalation strategies;
- specify circumstances in which increased physical contact may be appropriate, and parameters for any planned interventions.

Risk assessments must be in place where there is an identified increased likelihood of restrictive interventions, and risks should be mitigated as far as reasonably practicable through training and prevention strategies. The use of any restrictive intervention must still be judged reasonable and necessary in the specific circumstances, regardless of what is set out in a plan.

STAFF TRAINING, SUPPORT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Proprietor and Principal will ensure that:

- risk assessments identify roles where staff are more likely to need to use restrictive interventions, and those staff receive appropriate, regularly updated training that reflects the principles in the DfE guidance;
- all staff understand this policy, the legal powers and limits regarding reasonable force, seclusion and restraint, and the recording and reporting requirements.

All staff are responsible for:

- using preventative and de-escalation strategies wherever possible;
- assessing necessity, proportionality and pupil welfare before, during and after any intervention;
- recording and reporting incidents in line with this policy.

Following any incident involving restrictive intervention, Oxford International College will provide appropriate support for staff, including debriefing, opportunities to reflect and access to additional supervision or counselling where needed.

RECORDING AND REPORTING DUTIES

Recording significant use of force (a statutory requirement)

The Proprietor must ensure that there is a written procedure for recording each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil, in line with section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Staff must complete a written record as soon as practicable and no later than the same day where possible. All incidents at OIC will be recorded on CPOMS and on the Restrictive Interventions log (part of the complaints log). They must also complete the relevant form (Annex 1)

As a minimum, records of significant use of force must include:

- names of the pupil and staff directly involved;
- any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including identified SEND and SEN status code;
- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention;
- brief account of the incident, including antecedents, known or suspected triggers, de-escalation strategies used, type and degree of force applied (where relevant), and any physical injuries sustained;
- brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary;
- any post-incident support, including medical treatment and other follow-up actions.

Reporting significant use of force to parents (a statutory requirement)

The Proprietor must ensure a procedure is in place to report each significant use of force to the parents of the pupil as soon as practicable, and staff should endeavour to do this no later than the same day. At Oxford International College we telephone, where possible the parents or guardian to give a verbal account of the incident before sending the report. Reports must, as a minimum, include:

- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention;
- brief explanation of why the intervention was necessary;
- brief account of the type and degree of force used;
- details of any physical injuries sustained.

Exceptions apply [*include if relevant: where the pupil is aged 20 or over, or*] where reporting to a particular parent is likely to result in serious harm to the pupil, in which case the incident must be reported to any other parent for whom this risk does not apply or, if none, to the local authority where the pupil is ordinarily resident.

Recording and reporting seclusion and non-force restraint (statutory)

The Proprietor must ensure a procedure is in place for recording each incident of seclusion or restraint (with or without physical contact) under the Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2025. Records must be completed as soon as practicable and no later than the same day where possible, and must include, as a minimum:

- names of the pupil and staff directly involved;
- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention;
- any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including SEND and SEN status code;
- brief account of why the intervention was necessary;
- details of any physical injuries sustained;
- any post-incident support, including medical treatment.

Independent schools must ensure there is a procedure for providing information about seclusion and restraint incidents in writing to parents as soon as practicable, and staff should endeavour to do this no later than the same day. The same exceptions relating to serious *harm* [*include the following if relevant: and pupils aged 20 or over apply as above*].

Where an incident of restraint also constitutes a significant use of force, Oxford international College will follow the reporting procedure for significant use of force; the same information does not need to be reported

twice.

POST-INCIDENT REVIEW, PUPIL AND WITNESS SUPPORT

All incidents involving restrictive interventions will be evaluated as soon as practicable to understand why they occurred, the impact on pupils and staff, any patterns or trends, and how the use of restrictive interventions might be avoided in future. This may include revising behaviour support plans, risk assessments or environmental arrangements.

Where appropriate, pupils and staff involved should receive medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible, and injuries must be recorded and reported in line with health and safety procedures, including to the Health and Safety Executive where required. Oxford International College will facilitate follow-up conversations and restorative dialogue with pupils and staff, led by a member of staff not involved in the incident, and will provide ongoing wellbeing support for those directly involved and for any pupils who witnessed distressing incidents.

GOVERNANCE, MONITORING AND DATA USE

The proprietor will take all reasonable steps to ensure that OIC's procedures for recording and reporting use of force, seclusion and restraint are complied with. Data on restrictive interventions will be regularly reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and the Proprietor to:

- identify and implement improvements to policies and practice;
- identify staff training and development needs;
- understand repeat patterns and triggers for individual pupils and review support plans;
- identify any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions in relation to protected characteristics, SEND or other vulnerabilities.
- Analysis will be proportionate and sensitive to the limitations of small datasets.

COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS

Complaints about the use of restrictive interventions will be managed under the College's complaints procedure which can be found on our website [Policies Useful Information | Oxford International College](#) Allegations that a member of staff has used force or other restrictive interventions inappropriately will be managed in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education and OIC's safeguarding and managing allegations procedures, including consideration of suspension where appropriate.



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ANNEX 1: RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION (PHYSICAL INTERVENTION AND SECLUSION) FORM

This form must be completed for **ANY** significant incident involving restrictive intervention, restraint, physical intervention, or seclusion. It must be submitted the **same day** and parents must be notified **in writing the same day**. The Director of Boarding OR Designated Safeguarding lead will also add any incidents to the Restrictive Interventions Log.

NAME OF STUDENT	
FORM COMPLETED BY	
NAME(S) OF MEMBER(S) OF STAFF INVOLVED	

DATE & Time	
LOCATION	
WITNESS(ES)	
DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT	DETAIL BEHAVIOUR, RISK, TRIGGER, SEND CONSIDERATIONS
DE-ESCALATION ATTEMPTS	LIST ALL ATTEMPTS OR EXPLAIN WHY NOT POSSIBLE
TYPE OF INTERVENTION USED	SPECIFY PHYSICAL, NON-PHYSICAL, SECLUSION
DURATION OF INTERVENTION	REQUIRED BY LAW
INJURIES OR MEDICAL NEEDS	MUST BE ASSESSED IMMEDIATELY
PARENT NOTIFICATION	TIME, METHOD, AND COPY OF WRITTEN NOTIFICATION TO BE ATTACHED
FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS	SUPPORT PLAN, UPDATES, SEND REVIEW, SLT OVERSIGHT.