

THE CREDO SCHOOL

Restrictive Interventions and the Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Version 1

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| Review Date: | | September 2027 |
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| Abbreviation /Acronym | Definition |
|-----------------------|--|
| DfE | Department for Education |
| SEMH | Social, Emotional and Mental Health |
| ASD | Autism Spectrum Disorder |
| SEND | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities |
| CPOMS / Cpoms | Child Protection Online Management System |

This Policy is for The Credo School.

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1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out how The Credo School (the collective name for our school “Designated and Exceptional Provisions, Meliora and Consilium)—uses **restrictive interventions**, including **reasonable force**, in line with the updated **DfE guidance effective from 1 April 2026** and underpinned by **Team Teach’s relational, trauma-informed, de-escalation-first approach**. [[gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)] [[teamteach.com](https://www.teamteach.com)]

It applies to **all staff**, including teaching assistants, pastoral staff, senior leaders, supply staff, and specialists working within the Credo provision.

2. Guiding Principles

The Credo School is committed to:

2.1 Safety, dignity and wellbeing

Restrictive interventions may be necessary at times to maintain safety, but always:

- As a last resort
- Proportionate, lawful and necessary
- Time-limited and used with the minimum level of force required [[edapt.org.uk](https://www.edapt.org.uk)]

2.2 Team Teach ethos

All staff follow Team Teach values:

- Emphasis on **prevention and de-escalation**
- Prioritising **rapport, relationship and emotional regulation**
- Using **graduated responses** tailored to each pupil’s needs
- Focusing on **positive behaviour support** and **reducing restrictive practice** over time [[teamteach.com](https://www.teamteach.com)]

2.3 Legal compliance

This policy aligns with:

- **Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (DfE, in force from 1 April 2026)** [[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk)]
- Statutory duties for **recording and reporting significant incidents** under Section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (updated requirements apply from April 2026) [[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk)]
- New **legal duties to record and report the use of seclusion** and to inform parents following any use of force or restraint (Forbes Solicitors summary, 2026) [[forbessoli...tors.co.uk](https://forbessolicitors.co.uk)]

3. Definitions

3.1 Reasonable Force

Defined as “actions involving a degree of physical contact with pupils to prevent harm, injury, crime, or serious disruption” (DfE).

Examples include: [\[edapt.org.uk\]](https://edapt.org.uk)

- Guiding a pupil by the arm to a safe space
- Blocking a pupil’s path
- Holding a pupil to prevent assault

3.2 Restrictive Interventions

Any action—physical or non-physical—that restricts a pupil’s:

- Movement
- Liberty
- Ability to act independently

This includes:

- Physical restraint
- Escorting holds
- Mechanical aids removal
- Seclusion (where a pupil is placed alone in a room and prevented from leaving) [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk)

3.3 Seclusion

Now explicitly covered under new 2026 duties:

- Must be **recorded, reported to parents**, and used only when strictly necessary to prevent harm.
- Must never be used as punishment.

[\[forbessoli...tors.co.uk\]](https://forbessoli.tors.co.uk)

4. When Restrictive Interventions May Be Used

Staff may use a restrictive intervention **only when necessary** to: **Prevent injury** to the pupil or others

1. **Stop a pupil committing a criminal offence**
2. **Prevent serious damage to property**
3. **Prevent significant disruption** to learning or school operations

[\[edapt.org.uk\]](https://edapt.org.uk)

5. Preventative and Proactive Approaches (Team Teach)

5.1 Individualised Support for SEMH and ASD

Given Credo pupils' needs, staff implement:

- Personalised behaviour support plans
- Sensory-regulation strategies
- Emotional coaching
- Predictable routines
- Low-arousal approaches

These reduce the likelihood of crisis events (Team Teach emphasis on understanding individual needs).

5.2 Early Intervention

Before resorting to any restrictive measures, staff will use:

- De-escalation scripts
- Distraction and diversion
- Time-in with trusted adults
- Regulated spaces and sensory breaks
- Positive phrasing and choices

5.3 Trauma-informed practice

Staff recognise that pupils with SEMH and ASD may:

- Experience sensory overload
- Misinterpret social cues
- Have delayed communication or emotional regulation
- Be triggered by touch or certain environments

Interventions therefore prioritise **empathy, clarity and low stimulus**.

6. Staff Competence and Training

6.1 Team Teach Training

All staff working within Credo:

- Receive accredited Team Teach training
- Undertake annual refreshers
- Are trained in safe, approved physical techniques consistent with the DfE guidance and Team Teach best practice [[teamteach.com](https://www.teamteach.com)]

6.2 Additional SEND expertise

Staff are trained in:

- Autism-specific communication
- Sensory needs
- Emotion regulation
- Safe withdrawal and supervision

7. Decision-Making and Application

7.1 Proportionality and minimal force

Force must be:

- **Reasonable** in the circumstances
- **Proportionate** to the risk
- **Used for the shortest possible time** [edapt.org.uk]

7.2 Continuous assessment

During any intervention staff must:

- Monitor the pupil's breathing, distress and wellbeing
- Constantly consider whether the intervention remains necessary
- Seek assistance if needed

7.3 Ending an Intervention

An intervention ends when:

- Immediate risk reduces
- A safer strategy becomes possible
- The pupil regains self-regulation

8. Recording, Reporting & Communication Requirements (Statutory from April 2026)

8.1 Recording

Under new DfE statutory requirements (effective 1 April 2026), staff **must record every significant use of force** including:

- Time, date, location, duration
- Reason why intervention was necessary
- Type and degree of force used
- Any injuries sustained [forbessoli...tors.co.uk]

Seclusion incidents must also be fully recorded, including written explanations provided to parents. [forbessoli...tors.co.uk]

In the Credo School, statutory recording of all incidents will be completed in the Team Teach Red numbered bound book and a brief incident account will be added to Cpom.

8.2 Reporting to Parents

A **written report** must be shared with parents:

- **As soon as practicable**, and
- **No later than the same day** following a use of force or seclusion [forbessoli...tors.co.uk]

For maintained schools (including Credo), copies of seclusion records **must** be provided.

8.3 Governing Body Oversight

Governing bodies must:

- Review incident data
 - Monitor patterns and pupil groups
 - Ensure training, policy and practice remain compliant
- [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

9. Support Following an Incident

9.1 Pupil Support

Following an incident pupils receive:

- Emotional check-ins
 - Opportunities to express their perspective
 - Restorative conversations (where appropriate)
 - Updated support plans if triggers or risks have changed
- [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

9.2 Staff Support

Staff involved in any intervention will have:

- A debrief
 - Access to supervision and emotional support
 - Opportunities for reflective practice
- [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

10. Complaints and Allegations

Parents may raise concerns through the school's complaints procedure.

Allegations involving misuse of force will be handled in line with national safeguarding guidance and DfE expectations.

[\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

11. Monitoring and Review

The Credo School will:

- Review this policy **annually** or after any major incident
- Align updates with future DfE guidance and local authority requirements
- Ensure regular audits of incident data and pupil impact

12. Appendices

- Appendix A: Parent Notification Template
- Appendix B: Team Teach Approved Physical Techniques Statement
- Appendix C: Staff Debrief Form

Appendix A – Parent Notification Template

Dear Parent/Carer,

This letter is to inform you that an incident occurred today involving the use of a restrictive intervention.

| Summary of Incident: |
|----------------------|
| |

| Reason Intervention Was Necessary: |
|------------------------------------|
| |

| Actions Taken and Duration: |
|-----------------------------|
| |

| Any Injuries: |
|---------------|
| |

| Support Provided: |
|-------------------|
| |

Please contact the school if you wish to discuss this further.

Kind regards,
The Credo School

Appendix B – Team Teach Approved Physical Techniques Statement

Team Teach promotes a holistic, relationship-focused approach to behaviour support, using a range of de-escalation and preventative strategies before any physical intervention is considered. Physical techniques are used only as a last resort, when all other strategies have been exhausted or would be ineffective, and when their use is necessary to prevent harm.

Any physical intervention used must:

- **Be reasonable, proportionate, and necessary** in the circumstances.
- Be **in line with current Team Teach training** received by staff.
- Be used **solely to reduce risk and maintain safety**, never as a punishment.
- Be the **least intrusive, least restrictive option available** at that time.
- Be **applied for the minimum time necessary** to bring the situation under safe control.
- Be **recorded and reported** in accordance with school policy and statutory guidance.
- Involve **post-incident repair and reflection** for both staff and the pupil, supporting emotional regulation and restoring relationships.

Only staff who hold **up-to-date Team Teach certification** are authorised to use Team Teach physical techniques, and all interventions must follow the principles of **care, control, and therapeutic intent**.

Appendix C – Staff Debrief Form

Staff Debrief Form

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------|--|
| Staff Member(s): | | Incident date/Time: | |
| Immediate Welfare Check Completed By: | | | |

Description of Incident from Staff Perspective:

Emotional Impact:

Reflections on What Worked:

Areas for Future Adjustment:

Support Required:

Debrief Completed By/When: