



Sheringham Woodfields School

Holt Road | Sheringham | Norfolk | NR26 8ND

Tel: 01263 820520

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Email: office@sheringhamwoodfields.norfolk.sch.uk

Registered Charity: Friends of Sheringham Woodfields School - 1127142

Friday 27th March 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

DfE Guidance for Schools:

'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools' - April 2026

The Department for Education has issued new guidance on the use of reasonable force in schools, which comes into effect from 1st April 2026.

This guidance explains when reasonable force can be used, for example, to support positive behaviour and keep children safe, and when it cannot be used, such as for punishment.

This new guidance does not change how we support pupils. We will continue to use physical interventions only as a last resort, when they are reasonable, proportionate and necessary. Where this is used as a planned approach, it will continue to be detailed in your child's support and intervention plan.

What will be different?

The main change is that **you will now receive an email if your child is involved in an incident where reasonable force has been used.** This applies even if these approaches are already agreed as part of your child's support and intervention plan.

This means you may be informed more often than before. This is not because our practice has changed, but because the new guidance requires us to report incidents in writing.

We may still contact you by phone where appropriate, but you will also receive written confirmation to meet the new requirements.

Seclusion (Withdrawal)

The guidance also requires us to report instances of seclusion, which we have previously referred to as withdrawal. This is when a pupil is confined to a space and prevented from leaving. This is only used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural distress. In these circumstances, pupils are always supervised.



Head Teacher: Annette Maconochie | Chair of Governors: Steve Thurlow



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Some examples of seclusion at our school may include:

- A pupil withdrawn to the playground whilst others remain inside
- A pupil withdrawn to another space within school
- Other pupils removed from a classroom, leaving one pupil in the room

We also sometimes use compliant withdrawal, where a pupil chooses or agrees to move to another space, for example, walking around the corridor or going outside to regulate. This is not seclusion, as the pupil has chosen or agreed to go there.

Appropriate Physical Contact

There are also times when appropriate physical contact is needed and does not count as reasonable force, and therefore would not be reported. The guidance allows us to use professional judgement, considering a pupil's age, special educational needs and disabilities, and any vulnerabilities.

Some examples of appropriate physical contact at our school may include:

- Guiding or escorting pupils
- Redirecting pupils for learning
- Delivering physical therapies
- Sensory regulation input
- Supporting intimate care
- Moving and handling support
- Supporting safe use of equipment
- Comforting or praising a pupil
- Administering first aid

Please be assured that **nothing is changing for your child in terms of how they are supported in school.**

If you have any questions, please contact Michael Smith, Deputy Head and Behaviour Lead, via the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Annette Maconochie
Headteacher



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