



From mountain to sea

# Best Practice in the use of Time Out or Seclusion

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December 2017



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This guidance had been written by the Education and Children's Services  
Additional Support Needs Team

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## 1 Introduction

It is important that schools clarify their practices around both time out and seclusion in order to ensure their use conforms to best practice guidance and is always in the best interests of the child.

This applies to any room/ space with the door closed that provides safety for the pupil, staff and other pupils.

A room/space should also be available for the pupil to opt out or de-stress.

Seclusion is defined as;

*“The supervised confinement of a person in a room in isolation. Its sole aim is to contain severely disturbed behaviour which is likely to cause harm to others which cannot be managed safely in any other way.”* (Department of Health, 2008)

Seclusion is a risk assessed personalised, reported, recorded and reviewed strategy. It must always be used in the child’s best interest and with the aim to prevent the risk of significant harm to themselves or others.

## 2 Planning for the use of a room/space

If the use of the room/space is considered to be appropriate the following must be addressed before use:

- Does the pupil access the space/room voluntarily?
- Is the pupil accompanied by a support worker/teacher?
- Can they leave the space/room independently?
- Is it used as part of a behaviour support plan?

**If the answer is yes to most of the above it is likely you are using a Time Out strategy.**

- Do support staff/teachers take an actively resisting pupil to the room/space?
- Is the pupil left in the room/space alone?
- Is the pupil unable to leave the room/space independently or cannot understand how to leave the room/space when they choose to?

**If the answer is yes to the above the practice is more likely to be Seclusion that can only be used when there is risk of serious harm that cannot be prevented by other means.**

## 3 Best Practice

- There is a room/ space for the pupil to opt out.
  - Never used as a form of discipline.
  - Used for shortest possible time.
  - Part of an agreed and planned approach.
  - Constantly supervised by direct observation of a member of staff.
  - Recorded, monitored and reviewed by school team.
  - Parents/ carers/pupil should be involved in the planning of the protocol.
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## **4 Recording and Reporting the Use of Seclusion**

All incidents must be:-

- Monitored and recorded on a Record of Seclusion Form (see Appendix 1)
- When a pupil uses a room/space and the door is closed they must be continually monitored by at least one member of staff, this should be recorded at 5 minute intervals (see Appendix 1).
- Reported to the teacher responsible and member of the Senior Management Team who must attend within 15 minutes and personally authorise the use of seclusion beyond that time
- Reported to the parents/carers.

## **5 Reviewing the use of a room/space**

The review should assess each use of the room and record whether:-

- Existing primary prevention strategies are effective and whether they need to be reviewed.
- The use of the room was an effective response in comparison with other strategies.
- It offers improved safety for the pupil and those around them.
- It helped the pupil to calm and return to normal behaviour.
- It decreases the probability of the same behaviour occurring in the future.

*Post incident debriefing should take place and new action points agreed*

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How did the incident end?
Post incident debriefing offered or provided:
New action points:
Additional information

Signature of member of Senior Management Team (After 15mins)

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Parental Notification

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Date

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