

Uplands Primary School

Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy



Date reviewed: June 2026

Date for review: June 2029

Background

This policy has been created to align with our legal duties, including our obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 and outlines the requirements for recording and reporting incidents where restrictive physical intervention or seclusion has been used. This policy is based on guidance from the Department for Education Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance (2026).

The following definitions inform this policy and how we might support pupils in our setting:

- **Restrictive physical intervention** - a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil.
- **Reasonable force:** a term used in legislation which includes restrictive physical interventions. All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.
- **Seclusion:** a non-disciplinary intervention involving keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others, and preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction, blocking, or making them believe they will be punished if they try to leave.
- **Restraint:** a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact. For example, holding a pupil's arms to their sides or removing a pupil's crutches would both be considered forms of restraint.

All staff within this setting aim to help children take responsibility for their own behaviour and behaviour is viewed as a communication. We do this through a combination of approaches, which include:

- Relational Practice
- positive role modelling
- Positive regard and trusting relationships
- teaching an interesting and challenging curriculum
- setting and enforcing appropriate boundaries and expectations
- providing supportive feedback.
- training staff in effective communication strategies

- considering how the school and classroom environment can support all pupils to achieve and thrive
 - Recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive physical intervention to inform future plans.
 - Working closely and collaboratively with parents of individual pupils
 - Develop strategies to support individual pupils based on their identified needs
 - Meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010 through provision of reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils can benefit from what our setting offers
 - Using preventative de-escalation techniques giving pupils time, space and taught strategies to be co-regulated or self-regulated.

More details about this and our general approach to promoting positive behaviour can be found in our behaviour policy which is on our website.

There are times when children's behaviour presents particular challenges that may require restrictive physical intervention and the use of reasonable force. These occasions will be rare and intervention will only be used when necessary, appropriate and in the best interests of the pupil following de-escalation strategies. This policy sets out our expectations for the use of such intervention. It is not intended to refer to the general use of physical contact which might be appropriate in a range of situations, such as:

- giving physical guidance to children (for example in practical activities and PE)
- providing physical care (such as first aid or toileting).
 - To guide or escort pupils, such as holding the hand of a pupil at the front/back of the line when going to assembly, when walking together around the school or on a school trip, or when helping a pupil to a space they have chosen to access to self-regulate
 - To comfort a distressed pupil
 - To congratulate or praise a pupil, for example a pat on the back or a handshake
 - To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument

This policy is consistent with our Child Protection and Equal Opportunities policies, and with national and local guidance for schools on safeguarding children.

We exercise appropriate care when using physical contact and acknowledge that for some pupils physical contact would be inappropriate. There are some children for whom physical contact would be inappropriate (such as those with a history of physical or sexual abuse, or those from certain cultural/religious groups) although it is acknowledged that in emergency situation physical contact may be required. We pay careful attention to issues of gender and privacy and to any specific requirements of certain cultural/religious groups.

3 When restrictive physical intervention may be used

The use of restrictive physical intervention may be justified where a pupil is:

- a. Prevent a pupil from committing or continuing to commit an offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil)
- b. causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- c. To prevent a pupil from causing disorder among pupils at the setting, whether during a teaching session or otherwise or continuing to cause disorder among pupils at the setting.

The decision to use restrictive physical intervention will be informed by the following questions as part of a dynamic, in the moment, risk assessment:

- Is it necessary?
- Is it proportionate?
- Has the pupil's welfare been considered?
- Is it a last resort?
- Is there an alternative less intrusive reasonably practicable action?

We never use restrictive physical intervention out of anger or as a punishment.

4. Who can use restrictive physical intervention?

All staff can use restrictive physical intervention including the use of reasonable force to maintain safety in an emergency.

All teachers and any other person, who by virtue of their contract, have control or charge of pupils are authorised to use restrictive physical intervention including reasonable force under the conditions listed above.

At times the Headteacher may authorise additional staff to have control or charge of pupils and therefore be able to use restrictive physical intervention including the use of reasonable force.

All staff in our school receive regular training in relation to managing behaviour including co regulation, de-escalation and planning for behaviour change. Records of this are maintained by the school.

Where it is likely that a member of staff may be required to support a pupil through the use of restrictive physical intervention they access training from an accredited provider and risk assessments are used to ensure that this can happen as safely as possible.

6 What type of restrictive physical intervention can be used

We all have a duty of care towards the pupils in our school. This applies as much to what we **don't** do as what we **do** do. We have a responsibility to intervene to keep pupils safe, taking control for the pupil, not control of them.

We do not use restrictive physical intervention for the purpose of punishment. We do not make use of any technique that could affect a pupil's breathing, risk positional asphyxia or affect circulation or apply pressure to their neck or abdomen. Pupils are not held on the ground. If a pupil goes to ground independently, they are immediately released.

Staff do not act in ways that might reasonably be expected to cause injury for example by:

- Holding a pupil around the neck or collar.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against the joint.
- Holding a pupil by the hair or ear.

Where staff require specific training in the use of restrictive physical intervention and reasonable force, we arrange that they receive training through Team Teach training courses.

Seclusion is only ever used as a safety measure to protect others from harm whilst a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation and is not acting with intent. This is an emergency response and seclusion does not form part of our wide range of planned interventions.

Where seclusion has been the only safe and practicable response in an emergency situation, we ensure that the pupil is confined in a safe and non-threatening or intimidating environment. We supervise the pupil at all times and as soon as the risk of immediate harm has reduced we enter the space to support the pupil to regulate.

As part of our duties all instances of restrictive physical intervention, reasonable force and seclusion are recorded and reported.

Consideration for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)

All staff are aware that some children and young people with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to themselves and others. We acknowledge the potential triggers that may include:

- Pain / medical needs
- sensory overload
- unfamiliar situations or environments
- feelings of fear and anxiety.

We seek to understand the underlying triggers of challenging behaviour so that we can provide proactive support, create an inclusive environment and consider the impact of school policies on pupils with SEND. We are aware that pupils with SEND may become disproportionately subject to the use of physical intervention and the use

of reasonable force. We seek ways to mitigate this risk through working with pupils, parents and other professionals to develop prevention and de-escalation strategies. Possible strategies would include:

- removing stimuli that may be causing distress
- changing body language, facial expression, and/or tone of voice
- supporting the pupil to express their emotions before getting overwhelmed
- engaging the pupil in an activity which can help them manage their feelings of anxiety
- distracting the pupil in something that interests them or by introducing familiar objects and activities to redirect their attention

Where there is an identified risk, such as increased likelihood in the need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions, we have risk assessments in place. We make use of behaviour support plans (IBMPlans) which outline adjustments to the school environment and ways for pupils to communicate their needs effectively. Our behaviour support plans detail circumstances where it may be appropriate for staff to have increased physical contact with a pupil. Support plans are reviewed periodically.

Where a pupil has a disability, we have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage so that the pupil can fully participate in the education provided by our school, and that they can enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services that the school provides for pupils.

Recording and Reporting

Our Governing Body ensure that all instances of the use of restrictive physical intervention, including the use of reasonable force and seclusion are recorded and reported in line with Section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act (2006).

We complete records as soon as possible after the incident and no later than the same day. We record incidents despite restrictive physical intervention being used in with prior agreement of the parents / carers.

Our records include:

- Name of pupil and all staff involved – participants and observers.
- Any relevant needs including the SEND status code (K, EHCP)
- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention or series of short interventions.
- What was happening before?
- What do you think triggered this behaviour?
- What de-escalating techniques were used prior to physical intervention?
 - Any other information relevant to include.
- Why was restrictive physical intervention used?
- Post incident support.

We report each incident of **restrictive physical intervention** to parents no later than

the same day verbally followed by a written report within 24 hours. If we believe that reporting the use of restrictive physical intervention to a parent will place a pupil at risk of significant harm we report the incident to either the other parent if there is no risk of significant harm or the local authority via pbs.teamteach@hants.gov.uk with the title RPI Report – Risk of Significant Harm.

We report to parents verbally and then follow up sharing a copy of the record form. Our report to parents will include:

- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention.
- Why intervention was deemed appropriate.
- What type of intervention was used including the amount of force.
- Details of any injuries sustained by the pupil.

As part of our commitment to working collaboratively with parents we offer follow up meetings to discuss potential triggers for behaviour, review the behaviour support plan in place, reflect on de-escalation strategies and what might be done differently moving forward. In addition, we review risk assessments, ensuring that all pupils where there is a risk of the need to use restrictive physical intervention have an individual risk assessment in place.

As per the school's duty under the schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No.2) (England) Regulations 2025 we record and report instances of **seclusion and non-force related restraint** to parents verbally and then follow with a written account by email including the details listed above.

Pupil and Staff Support

We acknowledge that any restrictive physical intervention, including the use of reasonable force may be distressing for both pupils and staff. We ensure that any necessary medical assessment and treatment is sought following an incident. Injuries to the pupil are recorded on the restrictive physical intervention record and the school's accident book, staff report injuries via the HCC online reporting system in addition to the restrictive physical intervention record. [HCC - Report an accident or incident](#)

To support the wellbeing of both pupils and staff we hold de-briefs to facilitate reflection as well as repairing and rebuilding relationships and inform future actions. Where possible a member of staff who was not involved in the incident supports the de-brief process.

Monitoring

Our named governor Mrs Fatimah Hameer supports our school to comply with this policy and the associated DfE guidance. School leaders and governors review incidents of restrictive physical intervention to:

- Identify and implement improvements to policy and practice paying particular attention to situations where the same intervention has been used over a period of time and remains ineffective.
- Identify areas of learning and development.
- Understand patterns of behaviour, triggers and the effectiveness of pupil plans.

- Identify any disproportionate use of restrictive physical intervention in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics, SEN or other vulnerabilities.

These reviews take place at least annually and more regularly if restrictive physical intervention is in frequent use.

Where data is collated we ensure that we do not over-interpret small sub-groups and appreciate the limitations of our data and what can be inferred from it.

Concerns and Complaints

The use of restrictive physical intervention including the use of reasonable force can be distressing for all involved which can lead to concerns, allegations or complaints of inappropriate or excessive use.

Our school's complaints policy outlines how to make a complaint as well as the timescales for responses.

Where an allegation of assault or abusive behaviour is made, our Headteacher is immediately informed. If the allegation relates to the Headteacher then the Chair of Governors is immediately informed. We follow our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies in these instances.

Safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff is our utmost priority, and we always seek to avoid injury. It is possible that as part of a restrictive physical intervention including the use of reasonable force a pupil may accidentally be scratched or bruised. This should not necessarily be seen as a failure of the professional technique but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of making sure the pupil remains safe.