



ABBEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION AND USE OF REASONABLE FORCE POLICY

Introduction and aim

At Abbey Primary we look to provide a welcoming and secure place for children where the wellbeing of all is prioritised. This policy has been compiled to ensure that, should the situation arise, staff and parents are aware of the correct procedures in the use of restrictive intervention, including reasonable force and seclusion. It is designed to help staff to ensure that any actions they take are reasonable, proportionate and absolutely necessary. It should be considered alongside the school's SEN, Behaviour, Safeguarding & Child Protection and Health & Safety policies. It has been informed by the document 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools: Guidance for schools in England' April 2026.

Positive behaviour management

At our school everything we do is built on our core values: ready, respectful and safe. These values form our school rules, guide how we learn, how we treat one another and how we move through our day. We take a carefully considered approach to promoting positive behaviour in school, which is founded on mutually respectful relationships and high expectations. We look to encourage positive behaviour through praise and positive recognition and seek to know our children well so individual needs can be met. Our approach is one of early intervention and we have the tools to de-escalate incidents when they do arise. We only use restrictive interventions when the risks involved of doing so are outweighed by the risks of not doing so.

What are restrictive interventions?

- Restrictive intervention refers to a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. It refers to both physical and non-physical actions.
- Reasonable force refers to physical restrictive interventions.
- Restraint refers to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement.
- Seclusion refers to the act of keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving but should only be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. Should this take place, the place should be safe and not feel threatening to the pupil and the pupil should be supervised at all times.

When might restrictive interventions be required?

School staff have the legal power to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing any offence
- Causing, or being at risk of causing, injury or damage to themselves or others, whether by accident, rough behaviour or by misuse of materials or objects
- Committing deliberate serious damage or vandalism
- Preventing behaviour which causes disorder among pupils at the school
- The Head Teacher has the statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item.
- If staff need to vacate the room with the children for their safety, they must use their professional judgement and inform SLT.

Physical intervention would only be used as a last resort after all other attempts to intervene to calm and deescalate the situation have been employed. Any staff members who are likely to intervene in such a way will receive adequate and appropriate training in prevention, de-escalation and safe application. Strong and positive relationships are at the heart of our school culture and we know our children well. This enables staff to employ alternatives to restrictive interventions in the vast majority of cases.

At a whole school level, we will employ measures including:

- Ensuring the learning environment is orderly and promotes high expectation of behaviour, and that it supports pupils in remaining emotionally well regulated.
- Continuing to develop, support and train staff in behaviour management strategies.
- Training staff in effective communication strategies, such as using appropriate tone of voice, empathy and emotion coaching to aid de-escalation.
- Developing staff-pupil relationships
- Recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform improvement planning

At an individual level, approaches could include:

- Working closely with parents to support individual pupils
- Supporting pupils based on their individual needs including the development of behaviour support plans and SEN plans.
- Continuing to consult other professionals and parents about the best methods and strategies for intervention, de-escalation etc. If de-escalation strategies fail, there are two types of intervention, planned and unplanned.

There might be some situations in which the need for restrictive intervention is immediate and where there are no equal effective alternatives. Any physical intervention will be for the minimum time and consideration will be given to whether it is necessary, proportionate and whether the pupil's welfare has been considered.

At all times safety is our paramount concern. Staff should consider the following guidance when intervening physically:

- Are there more effective, less restrictive ways to manage the situation?
- Staff should assess whether a restrictive intervention is likely to successfully reduce the relevant risks, or whether its use would escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself.
- Staff should communicate with other staff to understand any broader risks.
- Staff should use the minimum force necessary
- Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive intervention should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped.
- Staff should consider the personal circumstances of the child
- Staff will seek to maintain respect for a pupil's dignity
- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why or employ non-verbal communication strategies where necessary

Considerations for SEND

At Abbey we seek to foster strong relationships with all pupils by getting to know them and their individual needs. We look to consider how our school culture and environment may be experienced differently by / pupils with SEND and seek to support pupils to cope with situations that they may find distressing. We always look to explore the underlying triggers for behaviour to pre-empt and prevent future episodes of behaviour that could lead to restrictive interventions. We prioritise strategies of de-escalation. Behaviour support plans will be compiled in conjunction with parents, and where appropriate, relevant professionals. Where it is determined that there is a greater likelihood of the need for restrictive interventions, a risk assessment will also be completed.

Reporting and Recording

As part of the school's duty under section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, following any restrictive intervention, including seclusion, school will undertake the following:

- Any restrictive intervention will be recorded as soon as practicable.
- The incident will be reported to parents as soon as practicable and in writing using My Concern and the Red Book.
- Medical support will be offered where required.
- We will hold a follow-up conversation(s) to facilitate reflection, learning and to support and monitor pupil and staff wellbeing.
- We will evaluate the situation with a view to preventing further situations escalating resulting in the need for restrictive interventions in the future

The following will be recorded:

- names of pupil and staff directly involved
- any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code

- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and (where relevant) what type of reasonable force was applied, the degree of force, and details of any physical injuries sustained
- brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance
- any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts.
- The above applies in the case of the non-restrictive intervention of seclusion also.
- Any data on restrictive interventions will be provided to the Governing body to ensure there is scrutiny and accountability.

Complaints

Any complaints regarding the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions should be dealt with in accordance with the school's normal complaints procedure.

Date: January 2026

Date of Review: **January 2027**