

Abbots Hall Primary Academy



Restrictive Interventions Policy

Agreed by Governors: March 2026

Signed: _____

Next Review Date: March 2027

Version control

Date	Version no.	Key changes from previous version
6/18	V1	New policy
7/22	V2	Policy converted from Pdf to Word doc – no further changes made
7/24	V3	Some small changes: - Staff training changed from 'staff will be trained' to 'identified staff will be trained' - 'contemporaneous' changed to 'accurate'
3/26	V4	- Wholesale changes in line with 2026 legislation

Introduction

This policy is written in accordance with the Department for Education guidance 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (2026)' and Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. As a primary school, we recognise that young children may require additional emotional support, co-regulation and safeguarding. Our approach prioritises prevention, de-escalation and maintaining children's dignity. Restrictive intervention will only ever be used as a last resort, where it is necessary, reasonable, proportionate and for the shortest possible time.

This policy links to the following school policies:

- Behaviour policy
- SEND Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Core Principles

- Safety and dignity of pupils is paramount.
- Restrictive intervention is a last resort.
- It must be necessary, proportionate, reasonable and for the shortest possible time.
- It is never used as punishment or to secure routine compliance.

Authorisation to Use Reasonable Force

Under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, all teachers and other persons whom the Headteacher has authorised to have control or charge of pupils may use reasonable force in accordance with this policy.

The Headteacher formally authorises:

- All teaching staff.
- Support staff who have regular responsibility for pupils.
- Trained pastoral and SEND staff.
- Temporary staff where expressly authorised.
- Volunteers only where specifically authorised in writing.

The Headteacher retains the right to restrict or withdraw authorisation.

Staff who have not received accredited restrictive intervention training must not initiate planned restrictive holds, except in genuine emergency situations where immediate action is required to prevent serious harm.

Prevention and De-escalation

Primary-aged children may become dysregulated due to developmental stage, SEND, trauma or communication needs. Staff will use age-appropriate strategies including:

- Calm, consistent verbal reassurance
- Visual prompts and simplified instructions
- Time and space for regulation
- Sensory or safe-space support
- Individual risk assessments and Positive Behaviour Support plans where required

Lawful Use of restrictive intervention

Restrictive intervention may only be used where:

- A pupil is at immediate risk of harming themselves or others.

- There is a risk of serious damage to property.
- A pupil is attempting to leave the school site and this presents a significant safeguarding risk.

Restrictive intervention will not be used for low-level disruption, refusal to follow instructions, or behaviours that can be safely managed through other strategies.

Prohibited Practices

- Pain compliance techniques.
- Restriction of breathing or airway.
- Pressure to neck or chest.
- Prone restraint except extreme emergency.
- Seclusion.

SEND, Medical Needs and Vulnerability

We recognise that behaviour may be a manifestation of unmet need. Where restrictive intervention is used with a pupil with SEND or an EHCP, this will trigger a review of support strategies and reasonable adjustments.

The school will monitor data for patterns or disproportionality and ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

Recording Requirements

All restrictive interventions will be recorded and include:

- Antecedents and triggers
- De-escalation strategies attempted
- Type and duration of intervention
- Staff involved
- Any injuries or distress
- Pupil voice (age-appropriate)
- Parent communication and follow-up actions

Parents/carers will be informed on the same day if restrictive intervention has been used, unless there are exceptional safeguarding reasons not to do so. A discussion will be offered to review support strategies.

Records will be reviewed by the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead. Termly anonymised summaries will be reported to Governors.

Post-Incident Procedures

Following any restrictive intervention:

1. The pupil will be supported to regulate emotionally before any discussion takes place.
2. A restorative, age-appropriate debrief will be conducted to: reflect on triggers, reinforce safer alternative behaviours, repair relationships.
3. The incident record will be reviewed by the Headteacher.
4. Risk assessments and Positive Behaviour Support Plans will be reviewed and amended where necessary.
5. Consideration will be given to whether repeated incidents indicate unmet need requiring: SEND review, Early Help assessment, safeguarding referral
6. Staff wellbeing support will be offered where appropriate.

Removal and Regulation Spaces

Short-term supervised removal may be used to support regulation. This will always be time-limited, proportionate and supervised. Children will never be locked in a room.

Training

All staff will receive training in de-escalation and safeguarding responsibilities. Identified staff will receive accredited training in safe restrictive intervention techniques. Refresher training will take place annually.

Governance and Monitoring

The Governing Board will review anonymised termly data, monitor frequency and patterns, and ensure staff training remains appropriate. This policy will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1

For clarity, this policy will use the following definitions as outlined in 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools 2026':

Restrictive intervention: a means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. This policy uses 'restrictive interventions' as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

Reasonable force: A term used in legislation which includes physical restrictive 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.

Significant incident: Any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff as described in 'Other physical contact with pupils' within 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (2026)'. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

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.

Appendix 2: Restrictive Intervention Incident Log

Date						
Pupil name				Year group		
Time started		Time ended		Location		
Staff involved						
Witnesses						
Antecedents/triggers identified						
De-escalation strategies attempted						
Reason for restrictive intervention						
Type of intervention used						
Duration in minutes						
Any injuries suffered				Yes	No	
Medical attention required				Yes	No	
Pupil voice if appropriate						
Behaviour plan reviewed				Yes	No	
Parent informed	Time:			Email	In person	Phone call Message
DSL reviewed				Yes	No	
Safeguarding threshold considered				Yes	No	
Police/external agency involved				Yes	No	
Staff debrief completed				Yes	No	
Reintegration discussed				Yes	No	
Recorded by				Date		
Position				Signed		