

POLICY

For

Intervention, Restraint and Seclusion

December 2021	September 2022	March 2023
September 2023	September 2024	September 2025
April 2026		

Striving for excellence, caring for all
Within a loving and caring Christian environment.

We are a community in which everyone is offered the opportunity to fulfil their full potential, to understand themselves and be valued for who they are. Through a stimulating and challenging learning environment, we pursue academic excellence and seek the flourishing of all. This is because we know we are all God's children.

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can."
John Wesley

UNICEF - Article 19
Every child has the right to be protected from harm and to be kept safe.
Article 1: All children under 18 have rights.
Article 2: Everyone has equal rights no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, whatever their race, religion, culture, ability, or language.
Article 3: The best interests of the child must be as top priority in all actions concerning children.
Article 12: Every child has the right to say what they think should happen and have their views listened to.

'Let all that you do be done in love.' 1 Corinthians 16:14

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Bullying and Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.

Abbey Academies Trust (AAT) aims to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our pupils to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential. We take the safety of our pupils and staff very seriously. We believe that all pupils and staff have the right to be and feel safe whilst at our school or on a school-led activity. Our policy for Physical Intervention is based upon the premise that all life is from God and we are created in the image of God. Pupils' personal, social, health and emotional development are all promoted in the supportive Christian ethos of the school, where all are respected, valued and encouraged.

It is important for staff to bear in mind how they would feel in the child's position and to maintain a high degree of confidentiality and sensitivity.

The vast majority of adults who work with children in education settings act professionally. They seek to provide a safe and supportive environment, which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children and young people in their care. It is recognised that achieving these aims is not always straightforward. Much relies on pupil and staff interactions where tensions and misunderstandings can occur.

This document seeks to ensure that the duty of care towards pupils and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour. It is hoped that it will also assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice. This document is based upon guidelines set out in 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with Children in Education Settings' Feb 2022. It also follows guidance set out in

‘Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention’ June 2019 and ‘Restrictive Interventions, including Use of Reasonable Force, in Schools’ April 2026.

We are firmly committed to creating a calm and safe environment which minimises the risk of incidents arising that might require the use of reasonable force.

We will only use restrictive force, seclusion and non-force related restraint as a last resort and strongly believe in de-escalating any incidents as they arise to prevent them from reaching crisis point. Staff are skilled in promoting and rewarding positive behaviour and will utilise various appropriate techniques in the management of a class environment. This includes taking into account the knowledge that an individual approach may be needed to meet the needs of individual children.

Staff will only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks in not using force.

Who can use reasonable force?

As detailed in Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 all members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances.

To prevent or stop a pupil from:

1. Causing injury to themselves or others
2. Committing a criminal offence
3. Damaging property
4. Causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

Examples of situations that fall within one of the first three categories are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- pupils are fighting;
- a pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he or she might cause an accident likely to injure himself or others;
- A pupil absconds from class or tries to leave school (N.B. this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school). Please see the Children Leaving School Site Without Permission policy for guidance on appropriate responses for that particular scenario.

Examples of situations that fall into the fourth category are:

- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom;
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

The school will decide what training is required based upon the needs and context of the school. This training will focus upon preventative strategies and the safe and lawful use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions. Risk assessments will be carried out to ensure that staff who regularly work alongside pupils where the use of

reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions may be required can do so as safely as possible.

Use of reasonable force to search pupils

Section 550ZA (3) Education Act 1996 gives headteachers and authorised staff have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil may be carrying a prohibited item such as weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco, fireworks, and pornography. This also covers items reasonably suspected to cause injury, damage, or legal offenses. Force as is reasonable can be used to carry out searches for legally prohibited items.[2]

Action in self-defence or in an emergency

Section 550A does not cover all the situations in which it might be reasonable for someone to use a degree of force. For example, everyone has the right to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so. Similarly, in an emergency, for example, if a pupil was at immediate risk of injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff would be entitled to intervene.

Unacceptable uses of force

It is illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment. Pupils should not be restrained in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation e.g. by covering the mouth and/or nose or by applying pressure to the neck region or abdomen or by holding a pupil on the ground where there is an alternative. Where appropriate, pupils should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. Any form of restraint, seated or standing, carries a risk of psychological and physical harm and should be avoided wherever possible.

Other physical contact with pupils

Our schools do not have a ‘no contact’ policy. There are circumstances where it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with pupils which does not give rise to any question over the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions. Examples of occasions when physical contact is generally appropriate include:

- Administering first aid
- To guide or escort pupils, such as holding the hand of a pupil at the front or back of a line when going to Collective Worship, when walking together around the school or on a school visit, or when helping a pupil to a space they have chosen to self-regulate
- To comfort a distressed pupil
- To congratulate or praise a pupil e.g. a pat on the back or a handshake
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- To support or demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons

Staff should use their judgement to assess whether physical contact is appropriate and should have regard to:

- The Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

- Applicable circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present
- The pupil's age
- The background of the child and sensitivity with regards to culture or adverse childhood experiences and trauma
- Any other material factors which could include but which are not restricted to whether:
    - The pupil has SEND or other vulnerabilities
    - Any alternative strategies that do not include physical contact can be used

Seclusion

Seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention involved in keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from learning. This 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. School recognises that at this point, a pupil is not acting with intent. Seclusion should never be used as a threat or a punishment. If used the place to which a pupil is confined should not feel threatening or intimidating and the pupil should be supervised at all times. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil should be allowed to leave.

Disciplinary measures, as outlined in our Behaviour Policy, will continue to be used. This may include removing a child from the classroom for deliberate or wilful misbehaviour.

Non-force related restraint

Non-force related restraint is a form of restraint with may occur with or without direct physical contact. Restraint incidents which occur without direct physical contact include the removal of a walking aid.

Prevention and de-escalation

The school aims to minimise the use of restrictive interventions through a range of whole-school approaches as well as individual approaches.

Examples of whole school approaches include:

- Consideration or the school and classroom environment to support all pupils to achieve and thrive
- Consistency in expectations across the school
- The use of effective communication techniques such as tone or voice and empathy to aid de-escalation
- The ongoing development of staff-pupil relationships and trust
- Analysis and review of data on the use of restrictive interventions

Pupils with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to themselves and others. Triggers may include pain, sensory overload, unfamiliar situations or environments or feelings of fear and anxiety. Staff should seek to understand those triggers. Some pupils may express their needs, discomfort or confusion through actions. Where appropriate, individual approaches should be used.

Examples of individual approaches, where appropriate, include:

- Close partnership with parents/carers to support individual pupils
- Collaboration to develop approaches, based upon individual needs, such as behaviour support plans and risk assessments. These should identify potential triggers, adjustments and circumstances where it may be appropriate for staff to have increased physical contact with a pupil. These plans should be reviewed regularly
- The use of reasonable adjustments
- De-escalation plans

Practical Considerations

Before intervening physically a teacher should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving or behaving in an uncontrolled manner to stop, and what will happen if they do not. The teacher should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and teachers should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the pupil.

Sometimes a teacher should not intervene in an incident without help (unless it is an emergency). For example, when dealing with an older pupil, or a physically large pupil, or more than one pupil, or if the teacher believes they may be at risk of injury. In those circumstances the teacher should remove other pupils who might be at risk, and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or, where necessary, phone the police. The teacher should inform the pupil(s) that he or she has sent for help. Until assistance arrives the teacher should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

Reasonable Force

When considering whether reasonable force should be used, staff should consider:

- Is it necessary?
    - Are there other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage a situation
    - Will the use of a restrictive intervention escalate the situation further
    - Have you considered any broader risks in the environment?
- Is it proportionate?
    - Staff should use the least amount of force or least restrictive intervention necessary for the least amount of time
    - If the intervention is escalating the situation, staff should reconsider their approach and try a different strategy
    - Staff should consider pupil's individual needs e.g. medical conditions, SEND or other vulnerabilities, age and size
- Have you considered the pupil's welfare?
    - Staff should consider the impact on the pupil's overall welfare, balanced against any actions taken. Those pupils who have suffered adverse life experiences, trauma, medical conditions or sensory impairments or communication difficulties, may find the use of restrictive interventions particularly distressing

- Staff should seek to maintain a pupil's dignity
- Staff should communicate clearly and calmly what is happening, why and what the pupil needs to do
- Where needed, non-verbal communication cues should be used
- Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling and use this information to determine whether the intervention should be applied, reduced or stopped

Recording and reporting of the use of force and seclusion and non-force related restraint

Governors must ensure that a procedure is in place for the recording of each significant incident in which a member of staff uses force on a pupil (Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) and for the recording of seclusion and non-force related restraint (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No.2) (England) Regulations 2025).

All incidents involving force, seclusion and non-force related restraint should be recorded as soon as is practical after the event on the attached record sheet. This should be recorded by the staff members involved and, wherever possible, on the same day as the event. Records should be made even where there is an agreement with parents/carers that restrictive interventions form part of a behaviour support plan.

Parents/carers are always to be notified of the incident. This should be done in writing using the attached record.

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from a senior colleague or a representative of their professional association when compiling a report. They should also keep a copy of the report.

Reviewing

School will review all incidents involving the use of restrictive intervention, seclusion and non-force related restraint as soon as is practical after the event to understand why it was used, the impact on pupils and staff, any patterns or trends, and how restrictive interventions might be avoided in the future. Any behaviour support plans or risk assessments should be reviewed and amended, where appropriate.

If appropriate, the pupil and staff members should receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. Any injuries should be recorded and reported as appropriate to the Health and Safety Executive.

As part of the review, follow up conversations with staff and, where appropriate, with the pupil involved to look to understand what happened during the incident and why, as well as to repair and rebuild relationships.

A discussion should be held with parents/carers to review any behaviour support plans with a view to what was effective and what could be done differently in the future.

Pupil and staff wellbeing should continue to be monitored and additional support provided e.g further follow-up conversations or counselling. Consideration should also be given to pupils or staff who were witness to the event.

Governors should regularly review and interrogate data on restrictive interventions to ensure that reviews of incidents have been carried out by school leaders with a view to:

- Identifying and implementing improvements to policies and practices, particularly where approaches have been used for some time but have not proved to be effective
- Identifying areas of learning and development for school staff
- Understanding pupils' repeat patterns and triggers and, where appropriate, ensure behaviour support plans and risk assessments have been reviewed and amended
- Identifying any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions in related to pupils who share protected characteristics e.g. SEND, or other types of vulnerability

Governors should consider the limitations of data and what can be inferred from it. Analysis should be proportionate and avoid over-interpreting small subgroups.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. For further guidance see the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Complaints and allegations

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

All staff should be aware of the school's child protection procedures, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff.

This policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees and Local Governing Body.

Policy reviewed: April 2026
Next review: Autumn 2026

Abbey Academies Trust Use of Force Record

Name of Academy:

Name of Pupil:		Date of incident:	
Any relevant needs or circumstances e.g. SEND needs and SEN status code		Time of incident:	
Staff Involved:		Approximate duration of incident:	
Names of witnesses:		Location of incident:	

Details of what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers (if known). Where possible, include the pupil's words or description of the pupil's behaviour.	
Steps taken to diffuse the conflict without force e.g. Humour Verbal advice and support Firm clear directions Negotiation Limited choices Distraction Diversion Reassurance Swap adult Planned ignoring Contingent touch Calm Calm stance Patience	

Withdrawal offered Withdrawal directed Reminders about consequence Success reminders	
Why the measure was necessary (your dynamic assessment) e.g. risk to self risk to others risk to safe physical environment risk to safe psychological environment prevention of psychological distress prevention of physical harm prevention of criminal offence	
Type and degree of reasonable force applied	
Details of any injury sustained or damage to property	
Details of any post-incident support e.g. medical treatment or other adverse impacts	
Details of when and how parents/carers were notified	

Name of person(s) making this record		Signature of person(s) making this record	
Date		Time	

Name of person(s) checking this record		Signature of person(s) checking this record	
Date			

Abbey Academies Trust Use of Seclusion/Non-Force Related Restraint Record

Name of Academy:

Name of Pupil:		Date of incident:	
Any relevant needs or circumstances e.g. SEND needs and SEN status code		Time of incident:	
Staff Involved:		Approximate duration of incident:	
Names of witnesses:		Location of incident:	

Details of what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers (if known). Where possible, include the pupil's words or description of the pupil's behaviour.	
Steps taken to diffuse the conflict without force e.g. Humour Verbal advice and support Firm clear directions Negotiation Limited choices Distraction Diversion Reassurance Swap adult Planned ignoring Contingent touch Calm Calm stance Patience	

Withdrawal offered Withdrawal directed Reminders about consequence Success reminders	
Why the measure was necessary (your dynamic assessment) e.g. risk to self risk to others risk to safe physical environment risk to safe psychological environment prevention of psychological distress prevention of physical harm prevention of criminal offence	
Details of any injury sustained or damage to property	
Details of any post-incident support e.g. medical treatment or other adverse impacts	
Details of when and how parents/carers were notified	

Name of person(s) making this record		Signature of person(s) making this record	
Date		Time	

Name of person(s) checking this record		Signature of person(s) checking this record	
Date			

Abbey Academies Trust Use of Force Parental Notification

Name of Academy:

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Name of Pupil:		Date of incident:	
Time of incident		Approximate duration of incident:	
Location of incident:			

Account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary	
Details of any physical injury sustained	
Details of any post-incident support, including treatment for any injuries or other adverse impact	

Abbey Academies Trust Use of Seclusion/Non-Force Related Restraint Parental Notification

Name of Academy:

Name of Pupil:		Date of incident:	
Time of incident:		Approximate duration of incident:	
Location of incident:			

Account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary	
Details of any post-incident support, including treatment for any injuries or other adverse impact	