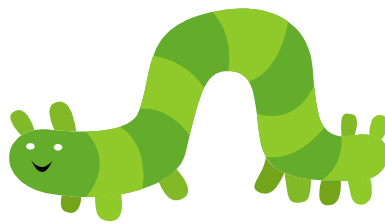




and



Abbots Farm Preschool

Physical Intervention Policy

April 2026

Review by April 2027

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Statement of intent

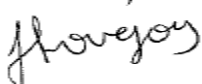
Abbots Farm Infant School and Abbots Farm Preschool are committed to providing a safe, nurturing and inclusive environment in which all pupils can learn and thrive. As an infant school, we recognise that our pupils are very young and may at times lack the emotional regulation or communication skills needed to manage strong feelings or distress.

The school recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to use a restrictive intervention, including the use of reasonable force to prevent a pupil from causing harm to themselves or others, damaging property, or causing serious disorder. Physical intervention will only ever be used as a last resort, after all appropriate de-escalation, distraction and supportive strategies have been attempted or where immediate action is required to keep people safe.

This policy uses the term *restrictive intervention* as defined in DfE statutory guidance to refer to any action that restricts a pupil's movement or behaviour for safety reasons.

Abbots Farm Infant School and Abbots Farm Preschool does not use Team Teach or any other formal restraint technique training. As such, staff will not use planned or complex restraint techniques. Any physical intervention used will be limited to simple, reasonable and proportionate actions appropriate to the age and size of infant pupils, in line with statutory guidance.

Signed by:



Headteacher

Date: 28/4/26



Chair of
governors

Date: 28/4/26

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2011
- Children Act 1989
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools' (2026)
- DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2026)
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'

HM Government (2019) 'Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention' (non-statutory guidance) This policy operates in conjunction with Abbotts Farm Infant School policies:

- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy
- Safeguarding and Child-Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is compliant with statutory requirements
- Monitoring and reviewing the use of physical intervention, receiving anonymised summary data relating to restrictive interventions to support oversight, safeguarding assurance and continuous improvement.
- Reviewing this policy annually
- Responding to complaints relating to the use of reasonable force

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring staff understand their legal powers and responsibilities regarding reasonable force
- Ensuring that physical intervention practices are appropriate for a non-Team Teach school
- Making sure physical intervention is recorded, reported and reviewed
- Managing any safeguarding concerns or allegations arising from incidents
- Ensuring staff receive suitable training in de-escalation, behaviour support and safe practice regularly, recognising that no accredited restraint training is in place. All training is recorded.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Supporting staff to understand how pupils with SEND may respond to distress
- Supporting the development of individual behaviour support plans and risk assessments
- Advising on reasonable adjustments and preventative strategies to reduce the need for physical intervention

All staff members will be responsible for:

- Using positive behaviour management and de-escalation strategies at all times
- Avoiding physical intervention wherever possible
- Using physical intervention only when necessary, reasonable and proportionate
- Never using physical intervention as a punishment or behaviour management tool
- Recording and reporting any incident involving physical intervention

3. Definitions

Reasonable force

Reasonable force refers to the minimum physical contact necessary, for the shortest possible time, to prevent harm or serious risk. In an infant school context this may include:

Reasonable force is a form of **physical restrictive intervention**. It refers to the minimum physical contact necessary, applied for the shortest possible time, to prevent a pupil from causing harm to themselves or others, damaging property or causing serious disorder. It may include:

- Standing between pupils to prevent injury

- Guiding a child away by the hand or shoulders
- Holding a child's hands to prevent hitting
- Blocking a child from leaving a safe space

Staff **will not** use:

- Floor restraints
- Holds that restrict breathing or movement
- Holds that require specialist training

Restrictive intervention

Any action that is intended to prevent, restrict, or subdue a pupil's movement or behaviour, including both physical and non-physical interventions, used to reduce immediate risk of harm.

4. Avoiding physical intervention and reducing risk

The school prioritises prevention. Staff will use:

- Clear routines and expectations
- Consistent behaviour strategies
- Distraction, redirection and calm language
- Visual supports and emotional regulation tools
- Early intervention when pupils show signs of distress

Before any physical intervention, staff should consider:

- Is there an immediate risk of harm?
- Are there safer, less intrusive alternatives?
- Is my response proportionate to the child's age, size and needs?

In emergencies (for example, a child attempting to run into danger), staff may act immediately to protect the child.

5. Seclusion (limited use)

Seclusion

Preventing a pupil from leaving a space, either physically or by creating a belief that leaving is not permitted, other than by normal supervision.

Seclusion is not routinely used at Abbots Farm Infant School or Abbots Farm Pre-school.

In exceptional circumstances, a child may be briefly supported in a quiet, safe space away from others with adult supervision, to help them calm and regain regulation. This will:

- Never be used as a punishment
- Never involve locking doors or isolating a child alone
- Last only as long as necessary to reduce immediate risk

Children are never left alone and they have access to water and toilets.

Any situation that meets the DfE definition of seclusion will be recorded and reported in line with statutory guidance. All such incidents will be recorded and parents will be informed.

6. Pupils with SEND

The school recognises that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to distress and restrictive interventions.

- Staff will aim to understand triggers and early warning signs
- Behaviour support plans will be used where appropriate
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to reduce escalation
- Physical intervention will be avoided wherever possible

Any use of physical intervention with children with SEND will be closely monitored and reviewed.

7. Post-incident support

Following any incident involving physical intervention:

- The child and staff member will be supported
- Medical attention will be sought if required
- A reflective discussion will take place to support learning
- Parents will be informed as soon as practicable

Patterns or repeated incidents will lead to a review of support strategies.

8. Recording and reporting incidents

In line with statutory guidance, all **significant incidents** involving the use of force, as well as any incident of seclusion or restraint, will be recorded in full. A significant incident is one where the level of force goes beyond normal physical contact associated with everyday care or guidance.

All incidents involving physical intervention must be:

- Recorded on the Physical Intervention Report Form

- Logged the same day where possible
- Reviewed by the headteacher

Parents will be informed unless doing so would place the child at further risk.

Where an incident involving physical intervention gives rise to concerns about a child's safety or welfare, or about the actions taken by staff, it will be considered in line with the school's safeguarding procedures; this may include seeking advice, consulting with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and making a referral to the Local Authority or LADO where the threshold for external involvement is met.

9. Complaints

Any concerns or complaints regarding physical intervention will be managed in line with the school's Complaints Procedure and safeguarding policies.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an **annual** basis by the headteacher, SENCO and governing body, who will consider any necessary changes and communicate the findings of the review to all members of staff.

The next scheduled review for this policy is **April 2027**.

Physical Intervention Report Form

We believe that reasonable force should only be used when absolutely necessary. With this in mind, this form has been created to ensure that all incidents of this type are recorded. Incidents must also be documented in the [Physical Intervention Log](#).

Name of staff member(s)	
Name of pupil(s)	
Date	
Time	
Location	
Name(s) of staff member(s) who witnessed the incident	
Informed parties (parents, social workers, police, etc.)	
Circumstances prior to the incident	

Brief account of the incident

Details of any negative impact on other pupils

Reason(s) for physical intervention (please tick)

To prevent a pupil from causing injury to themselves or others.

To prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence.

To prevent a pupil from damaging property.

To prevent a pupil from causing disorder among pupils at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Was it a planned intervention, e.g. in line with approved strategies for the behaviour of specific pupils? (Please circle)

Yes/No

Brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary

Any post-incident support required

Injuries (if any) to staff members, the pupil concerned or other pupils

Damage (if any) to property

Recommendation(s) to avoid future incidents

Headteacher's signature:

Date:

Signature of staff member concerned:

Date:

