Learning, Loving, Growing

Harbury

C of E Primary School

Restrictive Interventions Policy

Including the use of force

Adopted: July 2026 **Review: July 2027**

1. AIMS

1.1 Any citizen in an emergency may use reasonable force and self defence to prevent another person being injured or committing a criminal offence. Teachers have additional statutory powers to use force to control and to restrain pupils. The Headteacher authorises all other adult employees of the school to use force in accordance with section 93 of the Education and inspections Act 2006 and the Department for Education's statutory guidance on restrictive interventions. These powers include, where absolutely necessary, the use of restrictive interventions (such as physical restraint or seclusion) to prevent harm to the pupil or to others.

1.2 The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure the safety of pupils and staff at the School
- To prevent serious breaches of school discipline
- To prevent serious damage to school property
- To minimise the risk to staff and pupils by establishing clear guidelines concerning the use of force

2. CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION (Including the Use of Force) MAY BE USED

2.1 Staff may use restrictive intervention, including the use of reasonable force, to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil him/herself).
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

2.2 The degree of force must be in proportion to the consequence it is intended to prevent and should be the **minimum** needed to achieve the desired result.

2.3 Force must not be used to prevent trivial misbehaviour.

2.4 **It is unlawful to use force as a punishment**.

3. MINIMISING THE NEED TO USE RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION

3.1 We aim to create a calm and safe environment for pupils and staff to work in. Our Behaviour Policy sets out guidance for maintaining discipline at the school through a system of rewards and sanctions. (See Behaviour and Discipline Policy)

3.2 The creation of a calm environment minimises the risk of incidents that might require force arising.

3.3 Through our PSHE curriculum (including Protective Behaviours) we teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings.

3.4 Staff will communicate calmly with pupils using non-threatening verbal and body language in order to give the pupil a way out of the situation. Where appropriate, pupils will be given the opportunity to calm down away from other pupils, provided they are not prevented from leaving unless this is necessary to prevent harm (see Section 13: Seclusion).

3.5 Where possible, staff will warn the pupil that force may have to be used.

3.6 Force should only be used where the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force.

3.7 Individual pupils may need positive handling plans and risk assessments to minimise the need to use force to control them.

4. SAFE TOUCH – Part of the THRIVE approach

4.1 THRIVE is a dynamic, developmental approach to working with pupils that supports their emotional and social wellbeing. It is based on the latest research in neuroscience, attachment theory and child development, drawing on research into the role of creativity and play in developing emotional resilience.

4.2 If children are behaving in unacceptable, threatening, dangerous, aggressive or out of control ways, they have not yet learned how their strongest emotional reactions (Discharge Behaviours) can be contained, channelled and communicated safely. The THRIVE approach supports children with these behaviours. Safe touch is used to calm, soothe and regulate a child's emotions and is an important developmental experience. The brain does not develop neural pathways to initiate calming and self-soothing unless and until safe emotional regulation has been experienced within a positive relationship with a significant adult. Where children have had insufficient experience of safe touch, calming and support with regulation, this may be a priority to help their brains develop access to thinking, judging, evaluating and choosing mechanisms. Safe touch does not involve containment, restraint, or preventing a child from moving freely and must never be used as a means of control.

4.3 Safe touch may be used as one of several strategies to support emotional regulation. Wherever possible, this should take place in the presence of another adult, or be observable by others.

4.4 All examples of safe touch must be brief, proportionate, non-restrictive, and responsive to the child's verbal and non-verbal cues**.**

Examples of safe touch:

Holding the hand of the child for reassurance;
A hug when comforting a distressed pupil;
A reassuring hand placed on the shoulder or upper back
Using open hands to guide and encourage
Shaking a hand or placing a hand on a child's shoulder e.g. when a pupil is being congratulated or praised;

Other examples of acceptable physical contact:

To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;

To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching in order to keep them safe and prevent injury;
To give first aid.

If a child indicates discomfort, resistance, or withdrawal, the contact must stop immediately.

4.5 Alternate means of calming, soothing and containing children's strong emotions include:

Slowing one's pace
Lowering the voice
Breathing more deeply
Initially matching the pitch and volume of the child's emotional display and then regulating it down
Talking slowly, firmly and quietly in an unhurried unflustered way
Providing clear predictable consistently held boundaries

4.6 Safe touch, as described in this section, does not constitute a restrictive intervention. Any action that prevents a pupil from leaving a space, restricts their movement, or involves containment must be managed in accordance with this policy's sections on restrictive intervention and seclusion.

5. PUPILS WITH SEN OR DISABILITY (SEND)

5.1 Staff need to take appropriate account of individual pupils with special needs and/or disabilities. The SENCo should, through SEND files and discussion, make staff aware of the relevant characteristics of those pupils particularly situations that may provoke difficult behaviour, preventative strategies and what de-escalation techniques are most likely to work. This includes making reasonable adjustments to practice in order to reduce the likelihood of restrictive intervention being required.

5.2 The school will make individual risk assessments for pupils with SEND where their SEND and/or disability is associated with behaviours that may place the pupil or others at risk of harm.

5.3 Staff should know what is most likely to trigger a violent reaction, including relevant information relating to previous incidents. They should also know any specific techniques or strategies which have been agreed by staff, parents and the pupil concerned.

5.4 Positive handling plans or individual behaviour plans (sometimes referred to as Positive Behaviour Support plans) should be developed where appropriate in consultation with the pupil, staff, parents and any outside agencies involved with supporting the pupil.

5.5 Pupils who are at risk should be taught to communicate in times of crisis and be given strategies such as moving to a designated time out area provided the pupil is not prevented from leaving unless this is necessary to prevent harm and managed in accordance with this policy. Staff should be familiar with these strategies.

5.6 Additional guidance in relation to pupils with learning disabilities, autism spectrum conditions, and social, emotional and mental health needs is available from the Department for Education. https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-

needs

5.7 The school recognises that pupils with SEND are statistically more likely to be subject to restrictive interventions. Any use of restrictive intervention involving pupils with SEND will be carefully monitored to ensure it is proportionate, justified, and consistent with the pupil's assessed needs, risk assessments, and agreed plans.

6. STAFF AUTHORISED TO USE FORCE

6.1 The Headteacher has authorised that all teachers and teaching assistants who have control or charge of pupils automatically have the statutory power to use restrictive intervention, including the use of reasonable force, where necessary and proportionate.

6.2 The Headteacher may also give temporary authorisation to staff or volunteers whose roles do not normally involve supervising pupils (for example, volunteers on school trips or outings) to use restrictive intervention, including the use of reasonable force, where necessary.

7. DECIDING WHETHER TO USE RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION

7.1 Often there is little time to consider; however, where there is time to think, staff should consider the following: -

- Consider how serious the incident is- What is the likely effect of injury, damage or disorder if you don't use force?
- What other options are open to you and what are the chances of achieving the desired result without force?
- What are the risks to the pupil, you and others associated with the use of force?
- Staff should minimise the highest risks e.g. calling the police if you suspect a pupil of having a weapon.
- Staff with temporary authorisation should be made aware by the Headteacher of pupils likely to present particular risks, agreed strategies, and any relevant risk assessments.

8. USING RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION: TEAM TEACH

8.1 Staff have been trained in using Team Teach use restrictive physical intervention in situations where the use of force may be needed.

8.2 Staff trained in Team Teach should only use restrictive physical intervention in the following situations, where necessary and proportionate: -

- If the child is at risk of harming themselves or others.
- If the child is causing significant damage to property.
- If the child is disrupting the good order of the school.

8.3 If a member of staff or supervisor requires assistance, wherever possible, another team teach trained staff member of staff should be alerted immediately.

8.4 Staff should be aware of the risks of using restrictive physical intervention and that it

should only be used where there is no viable alternative.

8.5 Situations where restraint may be necessary can be stressful. Where a member of staff believes another staff member needs to step away from the situation because they are becoming frustrated or tired, a predetermined phrase will be used to enable them to with draw safely.

8.6 The use of restrictive physical intervention does not automatically mean a pupil should be suspended or excluded. Any such decision will be made by the Headteacher, taking account of safeguarding, proportionality, and the individual circumstances of the incident.

8.7 Staff should give a clear oral warning to the pupil that force may have to be used.

8.8 It is strongly advised that, where possible, help is sent for before using force to restrain a pupil. As far as possible, staff should not use force unless and until a responsible adult is available to observe, support or deal with other pupils who may be present.

8.9 An incident form must be completed, and parents/carers must be informed as soon as practicable. In all cases, parents/carers will be provided with a factual summary in writing, for example via email or the school's online messaging system (see section 11. Reporting Incidents).

9. STAFF TRAINING

9.1 Team Teach training has been provided as whole school training for teachers and teaching assistants and will be updated every three years.

9.2 Any staff member requiring training in the interim should inform the Headteacher so that they can take part in training at another school. Advice can be sought from the Trust CEO or COO.

10. RECORDING INCIDENTS

10.1 Incidents where physical restraint has been used must be recorded. This will normally be done using the Team Teach incident form, which should be completed as soon as practicable, signed by the staff member(s) involved and any witnesses, and submitted to the Headteacher. The record forms part of the child's safeguarding record and must be retained in line with statutory retention requirements. Completed forms will be securely stored and scanned and uploaded to CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System). Alternatively, where appropriate, incidents may be recorded directly into CPOMS, provided that all required information is included. Whether completed on paper or electronically, records must be accurate, factual, and retained securely for the required period.

11. REPORTING INCIDENTS

11.1 Any incident requiring the use of force must be recorded and reported to the Headteacher as soon as practicable.

11.2 The Headteacher will be notified automatically where staff record incidents using CPOMS. Where paper forms are used, the completed incident form must be provided to the Headteacher, who will ensure it is scanned and uploaded to CPOMS.

11.3 Parents/carers must be informed of any incident involving the use of force. Wherever possible, this should initially be done by telephone on the same day.

11.4 In all cases, parents/carers must be provided with a factual written summary of the incident, for example via email or the school's online messaging system, in line with statutory guidance.

11.5 The parents/carers should be told: -

- when and where the incident took place
- which members of staff were involved
- why force or restrictive intervention was used
- the type of restraint or restrictive intervention used (including seclusion)
- whether there were any injuries
- what follow up action will be taken to support their child

11.6 Where appropriate, and where the child is already supported by external services, the incident should also be shared with relevant agencies (for example, Local Authority Children's Services) in line with safeguarding and SEND procedures.

12. POST INCIDENT SUPPORT

12.1 Members of staff who have been assaulted may wish to consider reporting that to the police.

12.2 A serious incident may result in consideration of a suspension or permanent exclusion, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and statutory guidance.

12.3 It may be appropriate to involve multi-agency partners such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Pupils and staff may need the support of outside agencies to repair relationships and develop strategies to prevent incidents recurring.

12.4 The pupil may need opportunities to develop social and emotional skills through intervention groups which will be organised by the SENCo.

13. SECLUSION

13.1 The DfE defines seclusion as:

> "The supervised containment of a pupil in a room or area from which they are prevented from leaving. It may be used where allowing the pupil to leave would risk harm to themselves or others."

13.2 Seclusion includes any situation where a pupil is placed in a space and is not free to leave, whether through:

- Physical restraint

- Supervision at the door
- Verbal instruction not to exit.

13.3 Seclusion is only used as a last resort where there is a risk of harm to the pupil, to other children, or to adults, and where other de-escalation strategies have been exhausted.

13.4 When seclusion is used, the incident must be recorded on CPOMS in line with the school's recording and reporting procedures (see sections 10 and 11). The child's parents/carers must be informed as soon as possible on the same day.

13.5 Records of seclusion will be available for monitoring by the Local Governing Body, Trust leaders and Ofsted, in line with statutory requirements from April 2026.

14. COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS

14.1 With any use of force there is the risk of an allegation by the pupil that they have been assaulted by a member of staff. Such an allegation will be managed in line with the school's Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy and statutory safeguarding guidance. Staff should be aware that the report of the incident may be required by the Police or Crown Prosecution Service to decide whether a prosecution is warranted.

14.2 Pupils and parents/carers also have the right to raise concerns or complaints. Any complaint relating to the use of force or restrictive intervention will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy and Procedure.

15. MONITORING AND REVIEW

15.1 The Local Governing Body and Trust leadership will monitor the implementation and impact of this policy, including the use of force, restrictive interventions and seclusion, through the review of recorded incidents and wider behaviour monitoring. The Trust Board will maintain appropriate oversight in line with its governance responsibilities.