ST LUKE'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Physical Intervention Policy

Summer 2026

1. Background

1.1 This policy has been created to align with our legal duties, including our obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 and outlines the requirements for recording and reporting incidents where restrictive physical intervention or seclusion has been used. This policy is based on guidance from the Department for Education Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance (2026).

1.2 The following definitions inform this policy and how we might support pupils in our setting:

- **Restrictive Intervention** – a means to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. The guidance above 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 restrictive physical 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 section 1.4 below within this policy.
- **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 or blocking. It 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. Seclusion will not be implemented by staff through threat of punishment.
- **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 would be considered a form of restraint.

1.3 All staff within this setting aim to help children take responsibility for their own behaviour and all behaviour is viewed as a communication. We do this through a combination of approaches, which include

- Relational practice
- Trauma informed practice
- Positive role modelling
- Unconditional positive regard and trusting relationships.
- Teaching an interesting and balanced curriculum that is well matched to the needs of pupils.
- Setting appropriate boundaries and holding high expectations for all
- Providing supportive feedback.
- Consideration of how the school and classroom environment can support all pupils to achieve and thrive.

- Sharing best practice for whole class behaviour management, and for managing communal spaces.
- Training staff in effective communication strategies
- Recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive physical intervention to inform future plans.
- Working closely and collaboratively with parents of individual pupils
- Develop strategies to support individual pupils based on their identified needs
- Meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010 through provision of reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils can benefit from what our setting offers
- Using preventative de-escalation techniques giving pupils time, space and taught strategies to be co-regulated or self-regulated.

More details about this and our general approach to promoting positive behaviour can be found in our Behaviour and Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy.

1.4 There are times when pupil's behaviour presents particular challenges that may require restrictive physical intervention and the use of reasonable force. These occasions will be rare and intervention will only be used when necessary, appropriate and in the best interests of the pupil following the use of de-escalation strategies. This policy sets out our expectations for the use of such intervention. It is not intended to refer to the general use of physical contact which might be appropriate in a range of situations listed below

- To give first aid
- To support physical care
- To guide or escort pupils, such as holding the hand of a pupil at the front/back of the line when going to assembly, when walking together around the school or on a school trip, or when helping a pupil to a space they have chosen to access to self-regulate
- To comfort a distressed pupil
- To congratulate or praise a pupil, for example a pat on the back or a handshake
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

This policy is consistent with our Child Protection, Safeguarding and Equal Opportunities policies and with national and local guidance for schools on safeguarding pupils.

We exercise appropriate care when using physical contact and acknowledge that for some pupils, physical contact would be inappropriate. For example, those with a history of physical or sexual abuse or those from certain cultural or religious groups. We pay careful attention to issues of sex and privacy, and to any specific requirements of certain cultural or religious groups. Although, it is acknowledged that in an emergency situation physical contact may be required.

1.5 Who can use reasonable force?

All members of staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. All staff can use restrictive physical intervention including the use of reasonable force to maintain safety in an emergency. All teachers and any other person, who by virtue of their contract, have control or charge of pupils are authorised to use restrictive physical intervention including reasonable force under the conditions listed above. At times the Headteacher may authorise additional staff to have control or charge of pupils and therefore be able to use restrictive physical intervention including the use of reasonable force.

All staff in our school receive regular training in relation to managing behaviour including co-regulation, de-escalation and planning for behaviour change. Records of this are maintained by the school and monitored by the Governing body. Where it is likely that a member of staff may be required to support a pupil through the use of restrictive physical intervention they will access training from an accredited provider and risk assessments are used to ensure that this can happen as safely as possible.

At St Luke's School, specific training in the use of restrictive physical intervention/ positive handling, is accredited through the national accreditation system set up by BILD (British Institute of Learning Disabilities) and provided by School Staff Safety Training. We ensure that staff have access to appropriate refresher training.

1.6 When can reasonable force be used?

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,** (We would not consider restrictive physical intervention or the use of reasonable force to be appropriate unless there was a direct risk of harm to a pupil, their peers, or the staff involved as a result of the disorder.)

The decision to use restrictive physical intervention will be informed by the following questions as part of a dynamic, in the moment, risk assessment.

- Is it necessary?
- Is it proportionate?
- Has the pupil's welfare been considered?
- Is it a last resort?
- Is there an alternative less intrusive reasonably practicable action?

1.7 What type of physical intervention can be used?
We all have a duty of care towards the pupils in our setting. This applies as much to what we **don't** do as what we **do** do. We have a responsibility to intervene to keep pupils safe, taking control for the pupil, not control of them.

We do not use restrictive physical intervention for the purpose of punishment. We do not make use of any technique that could affect a pupil's breathing, risk positional asphyxia or affect circulation or apply pressure to their neck or abdomen. Pupils are not held on the ground. If a pupil goes to ground independently, they are immediately released.

Staff do not act in ways that might reasonably be expected to cause injury for example by:

- Holding a pupil around the neck or collar.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against the joint.
- Holding a pupil by the hair or ear.

Seclusion is only ever used as a safety measure to protect others from harm whilst a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation and is not acting with intent. This is an emergency response and seclusion does not form part of our wide range of planned interventions.

Where seclusion has been the only safe and practicable response in an emergency situation, we ensure that the pupil is confined in a safe and non-threatening or intimidating environment. We supervise the pupil at all times and as soon as the risk of immediate harm has reduced we enter the space to support the pupil to regulate.

As part of our duties all instances of restrictive physical intervention, reasonable force and seclusion are recorded and reported.

1.8 Consideration for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
All staff are aware that some children and young people with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to themselves and others. We acknowledge the potential triggers that may include:

- Pain / medical needs
- sensory overload
- unfamiliar situations or environments
- feelings of fear and anxiety.

We seek to understand the underlying triggers of challenging behaviour so that we can provide proactive support, create an inclusive environment and consider the impact of school policies on pupils with SEND. We are aware that pupils with SEND may become disproportionately subject to the use of physical intervention and the use of reasonable force. We seek ways to mitigate this risk through working with pupils, parents and other professionals to develop prevention and de-escalation strategies. Possible strategies would include:

- removing stimuli that may be causing distress
- changing body language, facial expression, and/or tone of voice
- supporting the pupil to express their emotions before getting overwhelmed
- engaging the pupil in an activity which can help them manage their feelings of anxiety
- distracting the pupil in something that interests them or by introducing familiar objects and activities to redirect their attention

Where there is an identified risk, such as increased likelihood in the need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions, we have risk assessments in place. We make use of co-produced behaviour support plans which outline adjustments to the school environment and ways for pupils to communicate their needs effectively.

Our behaviour support plans detail circumstances where it may be appropriate for staff to have increased physical contact with a pupil. Support plans are reviewed periodically with the pupil and their parents/carers.

Where a pupil has a disability, we have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage so that the pupil can fully participate in the education provided by our school, and that they can enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services that the school provides for pupils.

1.9 Recording and Reporting

Our Governing Body ensure that all instances of the use of restrictive physical intervention, including the use of reasonable force and seclusion are recorded and reported in line with Section 93A of the Education and Inspections Act (2006).

We complete records as soon as possible after the incident and no later than the same day. We record incidents despite restrictive physical intervention being use in with prior agreement of the parents / carers.

Our records include:

- Name of pupil and all staff involved – participants and observers.
- Any relevant needs including the SEND status code (K, EHCP)
- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention or series of short interventions.
- What was happening before?
- What do you think triggered this behaviour?
- What de-escalating techniques were used prior to physical intervention?
- Any other information relevant to include.
- Why was restrictive physical intervention used?
- Post incident support.

We report each incident of restrictive physical intervention to parents no later than the same day. If we believe that reporting the use of restrictive physical intervention to a parent will place a pupil at risk of significant harm we report the incident to either the other

parent if there is no risk of significant harm or the local authority via pbs.teamteach@hants.gov.uk with the title RPI Report – Risk of Significant Harm.

We report to parents verbally and then follow up in writing sharing a copy of the record form. Our report to parents will include:

- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention.
- Why intervention was deemed appropriate.
- What type of intervention was used including the amount of force.
- Details of any injuries sustained by the pupil.

As part of our commitment to working collaboratively with parents we arrange follow up meetings to discuss potential tiggers for behaviour, review the behaviour support plan in place, reflect on de-escalation strategies and what might be done differently moving forward. In addition, we review risk assessments, ensuring that all pupils where there is a risk of the need to use restrictive physical intervention have an individual risk assessment in place.

As per the school's duty under the schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) (No.2) (England) Regulations 2025 we record and report instances of seclusion and non-force related restraint as per the procedure above.

1.10 Pupil and Staff Support

We acknowledge that any restrictive physical intervention, including the use of reasonable force may be distressing for both pupils and staff. We ensure that any necessary medical assessment and treatment is sought following an incident. Injuries to the pupil are recorded on the restrictive physical intervention record and the school's accident book, staff report injuries via the HCC online reporting system in addition to the restrictive physical intervention record. HCC - Report an accident or incident

To support the wellbeing of both pupils and staff we hold de-briefs to facilitate reflection as well as repairing and rebuilding relationships and inform future actions. Where possible a member of staff who was not involved in the incident supports the de-brief process.

1.11 Monitoring

Our named governor Simon Barnes .supports our school to comply with this policy and the associated DfE guidance. School leaders and governors review incidents of restrictive physical intervention to:

- Identify and implement improvements to policy and practice paying particular attention to situations where the same intervention has been used over a period of time and remains ineffective.
- Identify areas of learning and development.
- Understand patterns of behaviour, triggers and the effectiveness of pupil plans.
- Identify any disproportionate use of restrictive physical intervention in relation to pupils who share protected characteristics, SEN or other vulnerabilities.

These reviews take place at least annually and more regularly if restrictive physical intervention is in frequent use.

Where data is collated we ensure that we do not over-interpret small sub-groups and appreciate the limitations of our data and what can be inferred from it.

1.12 Concerns and Complaints

The use of restrictive physical intervention including the use of reasonable force can be distressing for all involved which can lead to concerns, allegations or complaints of inappropriate or excessive use.

Our school's complaints policy outlines how to make a complaint as well as the timescales for responses.
Where an allegation of assault or abusive behaviour is made, our Headteacher is immediately informed. If the allegation relates to the Headteacher then the Chair of Governors is immediately informed. We follow our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies in these instances.
Safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff is our upmost priority, and we always seek to avoid injury. It is possible that as part of a restrictive physical intervention including the use of reasonable force a pupil may accidently be scratched or bruised. This should not necessarily be seen as a failure of the professional technique but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of making sure the pupil remains safe.

Reviewing

We adopted this policy in Summer 2026. The policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

Appendix 1 – Physical Intervention Record

Hampshire County Council
Primary Behaviour Service

Form Number:

Physical Intervention Record Form

School ..... DFE No.....

Name of child/young person .....

Year Group ..... Child in care: Yes / No SEN Register: Yes / No

When did the incident occur?

Date	Day of week	Time	Where?

Staff involved:

Name	Designation	Trained in an accredited physical intervention package (e.g., Team Teach)	Involved: physically? (P) observer? (O)	Staff signature

Please describe the incident using additional pages if required:

1. What was happening before?
2. What do you think triggered this behaviour?
3. What de-escalating techniques were used prior to physical intervention?
4. Any other information relevant to include.

Why was Physical Intervention deemed necessary? Please circle the reason and give a brief description

Reason	**Descriptions of risk**
Prevent harm to self	
Prevent harm to others	
Prevent damage to property	
Maintain safety	
Other – specify and describe	

Which physical intervention technique/s were used? Tick as applicable and record **duration of technique**.

	Breakaway	Standing/escorting	Seated (chairs, beanbag, floor)	Lying prone (face down) or supine (face up) *
One person				
Two person				
More than two people (specify)				
OTHER (please specify)				

*Due to the increased risk to breathing, holding the child/young person in either of these positions requires an advanced level of training from an accredited provider.

Please give details about the above technique/s .....

.....

.....

Has the child/young person been held before? Yes / No

If no:
An individual plan and risk assessment for the child/young person must be put in place, clearly detailing proactive, reactive, and physical intervention approaches.

If yes:
Does the individual support plan need to be reviewed as a result of this incident? Yes / No

Does the risk assessment need to be reviewed as a result of this incident? Yes / No

Who will action these reviews and when? (less than four weeks) .....

Who was the incident reported to and when? .....

.....

Was there any medical intervention Yes / No

Include names of any injured person and brief details of injuries .....

.....

.....

Please specify any related record form:

Accident Book ☐ Anti Bullying and Racist Incident Record Form ☐

Skin map for child/young person and/or adult ☐ Violent Incident Record ☐

Complaints recorded ☐

Others (please specify) .....

Was the pupil debriefed? Yes / No

Were staff offered a debrief? Yes / No

Was it taken up? Yes / No

Parents/carers were informed:

Date	Time	By whom?	How?

Form completed by:	Name	Designation	Date and time

Good practice dictates that schools should review what happened and consider what lessons can be learned, which may have implications for the future management of the pupil. These need not be added to this form but should be incorporated in the individual plans for the child.

If further advice is required around any issues related to physical intervention or the completion of this form, please contact : pbs.teamteach@hants.gov.uk