Positive Handling and Restraint Policy

Approved by: Governing Body	**Date:** September 2026
Last reviewed on: September 2026	
Next review due by: September 2027	

Broadmayne First School encourages pupils to make positive behaviour choices. However pupils sometimes do make the wrong choices. On rare occasions this may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff. This policy sets out the framework under which restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, may be used within the school, ensuring full alignment with statutory duties and child welfare standards.

Our policy is based upon the following core principles:

- Physical intervention is used only as a last resort when other appropriate non-physical de-escalation strategies have failed.
- Any physical contact used must be the minimum force required for the shortest possible duration.
- Physical intervention is used strictly in ways that maintain the safety, dignity, and psychological well-being of all concerned.
- Incidents are recorded comprehensively and reported immediately to the Headteacher.
- Parents/carers are informed of each incident and provided with written record documentation in accordance with statutory regulations.

1. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Section 93 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 allows teachers and other persons authorised by the Headteacher who have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Causing injury to themselves or others;
- Committing an offence;
- Damaging property;
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order & discipline.

This policy has been updated to comply fully with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance: *Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools* and *The Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) Regulations*.

2. DEFINITION OF REASONABLE FORCE AND RESTRAINT, AND SECLUSION.

The updated DfE guidance defines and explains key terms as follows:

- **Reasonable Force:** The broad range of physical interventions used to control or restrain pupils when necessary. "Reasonable in the circumstances" means using no more force than is needed to prevent harm or disturbance, applied for the minimum time necessary.
- **Control:** Either passive physical contact (such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path) or active physical contact (such as guiding a pupil by the arm out of a classroom).
- **Restraint:** Holding back physically or bringing a pupil under control to prevent harm or injury. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, such as stopping physical assaults or violent outbursts.
- **Seclusion & Safe Spaces:** Seclusion refers to forcing a pupil to spend time alone in a room or space from which they are physically prevented from leaving, or feel unable to leave. Unlawful or unrecorded seclusion is strictly prohibited. Where quiet rooms, sensory spaces, or "time away" areas are used to assist pupil regulation, they must be part of an agreed behaviour plan, supervised, and never used as a means of forced isolation or punishment. Any incident of forced isolation must be logged and reported as a restrictive intervention.
- **Duty of Care & Risk:** School staff should always attempt to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury. However, in extreme cases, avoiding injury to a pupil or staff member may not always be possible despite best efforts.

School staff can use reasonable force to:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow instructions and continue to cause significant disruption;
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event, trip, or visit;
- Prevent a pupil from leaving the classroom where allowing them to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts others;
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight;
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Unlawful Practice: Staff CANNOT use force as a punishment. It is strictly unlawful to use force, physical contact, or seclusion as a disciplinary penalty.

Conducting Searches: In addition to the general power to use reasonable force, the Headteacher and authorised staff may use reasonable force to conduct a search for prohibited items: knives/weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco/vapes, fireworks, pornographic images, or any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence or cause injury/damage. Force cannot be used to search for items that are merely banned under school rules.

3. OUR APPROACH, DE-ESCALUATION AND SPECIAL NEEDS (SEND)

We aim to eliminate the need for physical intervention wherever possible, regarding it as an exceptional last resort. De-escalation and positive behaviour supports are paramount. This policy must be read alongside our **Behaviour, Relationships and Ethos Policy**.

Staff act within our school's framework on behaviour regulation, particularly when addressing dysregulated behaviour. It is recognised that touching a pupil is not inherently illegal. Acceptable non-restrictive physical contact includes:

- Holding a child's hand when walking around the school or during trips;
- Comforting a distressed pupil;
- Congratulating or praising a pupil;
- Demonstrating the use of a musical instrument or PE technique;
- Administering first aid.

Proactive Planning for SEND and Trauma-Informed Needs

For pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), neurodivergent traits, or a history of trauma, staff must employ tailored de-escalation strategies. Risk assessments must explicitly document individual sensory triggers, preferred communication strategies, and personal calming methods. Restrictive practices must never be used due to a lack of understanding of a pupil's SEND or medical conditions.

Staff act in *loco parentis* and hold a duty of care to all pupils. While expected to safeguard children, staff are not required to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer significant physical injury.

4. USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OR INTERVENTION

Physical restraint is applied as an act of care and control with the prompt intention of re-establishing verbal communication and assisting the pupil to regain self-control. When restraint becomes necessary, staff must adhere to the following protocols:

DO:

- Summon assistance and involve another member of staff immediately.
- Maintain a calm tone and speak clearly to the pupil using simple language.
- Tell the pupil explicitly what they must do for the restraint to be relaxed/removed (repeating as needed).
- Use the minimum force necessary for the shortest possible time.
- Hold limbs above a major joint if necessary (e.g., above the elbow).
- Relax or remove restraint immediately as the pupil complies or calms down.
- Remain aware of emotional triggers and monitor the child's physical distress continuously.

DON'T:

- Try to manage severe physical incidents entirely on your own without calling for help.
- Stop communicating with the pupil during the intervention.
- Act out of temper, frustration, or anger.
- Involve other pupils in the restraint or physical hold.
- Use physical restraint, force, or isolation as a punishment or sanction.
- Touch or hold the pupil in any way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate.
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint, bend fingers, or pull hair.

- Hold the pupil around the neck or in any way that restricts airway, chest expansion, or blood flow.
- Slap, punch, kick, or trip up the pupil.

Ground Restraint Prohibition

Staff must strictly avoid floor/ground restraints or prone (face-down) holding. If a pupil unintentionally ends up on the floor during an incident, staff must immediately release pressure and assist or reposition the child into an upright, seated, or standing position to eliminate the risk of positional asphyxiation.

5. ACTIONS AFTER AN INCIDENT AND STATUTORY REPORTING.

Physical interventions are emotionally charged events requiring structured post-incident care for both pupils and staff.

Debriefing & Support:

- The Headteacher must be informed of any restrictive intervention as soon as possible.
- Once the situation is safe, a debriefing is conducted for the pupil by an appropriate member of teaching staff to review triggers and explore preventive measures for the future.
- Debriefing and emotional support are offered to all staff members and witnesses involved.

Statutory Recording & Written Reports:

In compliance with *The Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) Regulations*:

- All incidents of restraint, seclusion, or significant physical force must be recorded immediately on **My Concern** (or via the Restraint Recording Form if system access is delayed).
- The record must detail: triggers, non-physical de-escalation methods attempted, nature of force used, duration, injuries, and pupil response.
- **Parental Written Notification:** In addition to contacting parents/carers verbally on the same day, the school has a statutory duty to provide

parents/carers with a copy of the official written incident record as soon as reasonably practicable.

6. RISK ASSESSMENTS/RISK REDUCTION PLANS

Where a pupil's behavior patterns indicate that restrictive interventions may become necessary in the future, an individualised **Risk Reduction Plan** will be created in consultation with parents/carers. This plan must cover:

- Known triggers and primary de-escalation strategies;
- Environmental adaptations to reduce anxiety/triggers;
- Specific physical hold techniques permitted (if trained and necessary);
- Staff training requirements;
- Review dates and parental sign-off.

7. COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS

APPENDICES

A clear, transparent policy shared with parents and staff helps minimise disputes. However, if a dispute arises regarding the use of force, it will be investigated under the school's official **Complaints Procedure**.

If an allegation of inappropriate force or abuse is made against a member of staff, the Headteacher will immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in accordance with our **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**.

This policy will be formally reviewed by the Governing Body every two years, or sooner if required by statutory updates.

Associated Policies & Guidance:

- Behaviour, Relationships and Ethos Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- DfE Guidance: *Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools*
- *The Schools (Recording and Reporting of Seclusion and Restraint) Regulations*

- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in School Settings

Appendix 1:
Restraint Recording Form, when unable to access My Concern immediately
Appendix 2:
Use of Reasonable Force - Advice For Teachers, Staff And Governing Bodies (July 2013)

Appendix 1
Broadmayne First School Restraint Recording Form

Date	Time	Staff Member

Student	Year Group	Location

Adult witness	Student witness	Reason for force

Incident leading to restraint

Student's behaviour (what was said,strategies used to diffuse the situation, force used, how it was applied and for how long). Please continue on separate sheet if necessary

Student response

Details of any injury or damage to property

- ❏ Headteacher informed
- ❏ Class teacher informed
- ❏ Parents informed

Appendix 2

Use of Reasonable Force - Advice For Teachers, Staff And Governing Bodies (July 2026)