FENLAND
SCHOOLS FEDERATION

**Executive Headteacher: Mrs Maria-Anne Higgins**
**Executive Assistant Headteacher: Mrs Shelley Steer**

| | |
|---|---|
| **POLICY DOCUMENT** | Physical Intervention Policy |
| **Policy Number** | 30 |
| **Type of Policy –** | School's own |
| **Governor Committee** | Full Governing Body |
| **Approval Date** | September 2026 |
| **Review Frequency** | Annual |
| **Date of next review** | October 2027 |
| **Publication Date** | September 2026 |
| **Publish on School Website** | Yes |
| **Purpose of Policy** | |
| **Supporting documents if applicable** | • Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 93)<br>• Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)<br>• Behaviour in Schools (current DfE guidance)<br>• Equality Act 2010<br>• SEND Code of Practice<br>• Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions guidance |
| **Chair of Governing Body signature** | |
| **Date** | |


**Townley School & Nursery**
Crown Road,
Christchurch, Wisbech,
PE14 9NA
office@townley.cambs.sch.uk
Tel: 01354 638229
www.townley.cambs.sch..uk

**Friday Bridge Primary School**
Maltmas Drove
Friday Bridge, Wisbech
PE14 0HW
office@fridaybridge.cambs.sch.uk
Tel: 01945 860220
www.fridaybridge.cambs.sch.uk

# Physical Intervention Policy

**1. Behaviour Expectations at Fenland Schools Federation**

Fenland Schools Federation is committed to providing a safe, respectful and inclusive learning environment for all pupils, staff and visitors.

The Federation believes that all children have the right to:

- Feel safe.
- Be treated with dignity and respect.
- Learn in an environment where positive behaviour is promoted.
- Receive support to regulate emotions and behaviour.
- Be protected from harm.

The Federation recognises that on rare occasions restrictive physical intervention or the use of reasonable force may be required to prevent immediate harm. Such interventions will always be:

- Lawful;
- Necessary;
- Reasonable;
- Proportionate;
- Used for the shortest possible time.

The Federation promotes preventative and relational approaches to behaviour management and views restrictive physical intervention as a last resort.

At Fenland Schools Federation, we believe that pupils need to be safe, know how to behave pro-socially and know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. The use of restrictive physical intervention (RPI) will only be needed for a very small minority of pupils who demonstrate dangerous behaviour. On such occasions, acceptable, planned and agreed forms of intervention may be used.

The majority of pupils display valued behaviour and conform to the expectations of our school. We have a responsibility to operate an effective behaviour policy* that encompasses preventative strategies for tackling difficult and dangerous behaviour in relation to the whole school, each class and individual pupils.

All school staff will receive training to feel that they are able to manage detrimental and dangerous behaviour and have an understanding of what anti-social behaviours might be communicating. They need to know what options are available to them for managing dangerous behaviour. Staff will receive regular training and refresher training appropriate to their role, the needs of pupils and identified risks within the school.

**Detrimental behaviour**: anything that creates a negative experience, leads to unhelpful feelings, and is in opposition to the school's values. Examples of detrimental behaviour and how adults should respond at Fenland Schools Federation can be found in Section 7.

**Dangerous behaviour**: a form of detrimental behaviour which will imminently result in injury to self or others, damage to property, or behaviour that would be considered criminal if the person was the age of criminal responsibility, such as racist abuse.

## 2. Acceptable Forms of Physical Intervention at Fenland Schools Federation

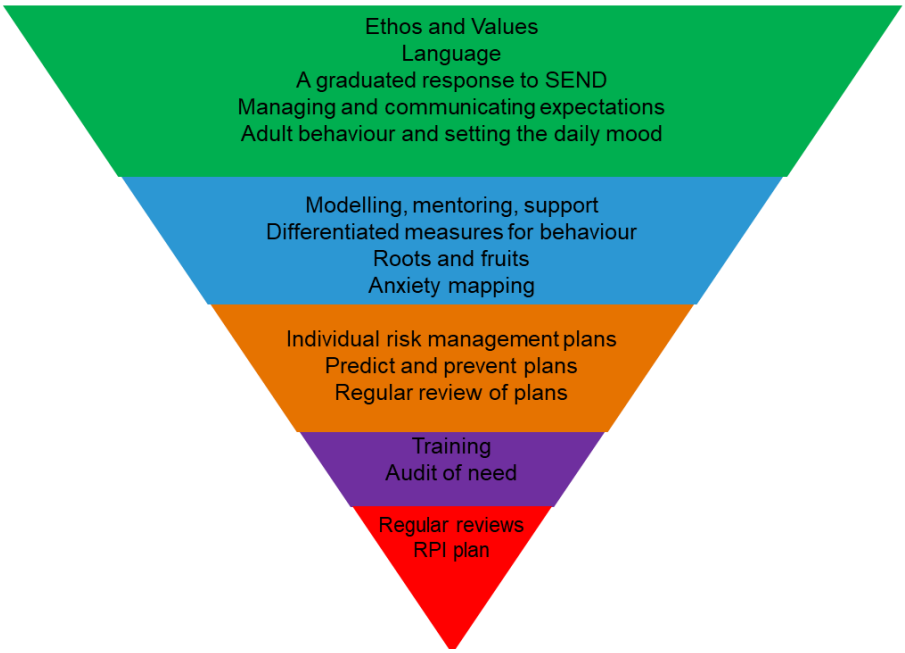
There are occasions when staff may have cause to have physical contact with pupils for a variety of reasons. Such as:

- Lap sitting (we discourage lap sitting, but recognise that very young children may try to lap sit, and as such staff should encourage children to sit next to them)
- Carrying a child in an emergency evacuation (this should be in a PEEP)
- Steering, guiding or escorting a child
- Comforting a pupil in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age) using a school hug
- Averting danger to pupil/s or staff in an emergency
- Praising a pupil (such as high 5, but ensure the child is the one who leads on this)
- For curricular reasons (for example in PE, drama etc.)
- In rare circumstances, restraining a child (RPI)

In all situations where physical contact between staff and pupils takes place, staff must consider:

- The pupil's age and level of understanding
- The pupil's individual characteristics and history
- The location where the contact takes place

The pyramid below represents a graduated process of intervention for behaviour. The majority of pupils in our school and other education provision will have their needs catered for at the lower end of the pyramid.




The Federation recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities or additional needs. Behaviour resulting from unmet SEND needs will be considered when assessing risk and determining appropriate responses.

## 3. Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) Definition

Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) is the term used to describe any intervention involving direct physical contact where reasonable force is used to prevent harm or serious damage. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorised by the Headteacher uses reasonable force to control or restrain a pupil.

Reasonable force may only be used in circumstances that meet one or more of the following legally defined criteria:

- To prevent a child from committing a criminal offence (this applies even if the child is below the age of criminal responsibility).
- To prevent a child from injuring themselves or others.
- To prevent or stop a child from causing serious damage to property, including their own property.
- To prevent behaviour that is seriously disrupting the good order and discipline of the school.

There is no legal definition of "reasonable force"; however, two key considerations apply:

- The use of force can only be regarded as reasonable if the circumstances of the incident warrant it.

- The degree of force used must be proportionate to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent.

The Federation does not use seclusion as a planned behaviour management strategy. Any restriction of a pupil's liberty would only occur where necessary, lawful, reasonable and proportionate in order to prevent an imminent risk of serious harm and would be reviewed immediately by a senior leader, recorded, and reported to parents in accordance with Federation procedures.

## 4. When The Use of RPI May Be Appropriate

Restrictive physical intervention may be used when all other strategies have been considered and therefore only as a last resort. However, there are other situations when physical handling may be necessary, for example in a situation of clear danger or extreme urgency (see Section 3. above). Certain pupils may become distressed, agitated and out of control, and need calming with a brief RPI that is un-resisted after a few seconds.

The safety and well-being of all staff and pupils are important considerations. Under certain conditions, such as preventing serious injury this duty must be an over-riding factor.

## 5. Who May Use Restrictive Physical Intervention and Reasonable Force

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force where it is necessary and proportionate to do so. Reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from:

1. Causing injury to themselves or others.
2. Committing a criminal offence.
3. Damaging property.
4. Causing serious disruption to the good order and discipline of the school.

The Federation is committed to reducing the need for restrictive interventions through positive relationships, de-escalation, co-regulation, environmental adaptations, and the principles of Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking. Restrictive interventions should only be used when other appropriate strategies have been ineffective, are unsafe, or are not appropriate in the circumstances.

Where the use of restrictive intervention is foreseeable as part of a pupil's individual therapeutic plan, the school will ensure that relevant staff receive appropriate training, supervision, and support. The Headteacher will consider the needs of pupils and staff when determining any training requirements.

All staff receive Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking training, including therapeutic approaches, behaviour analysis and de-escalation strategies. In addition, identified staff have received guided walk training through the Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking team. The Federation does not currently have staff trained in formal restrictive physical intervention techniques. Where individual risk assessments or therapeutic plans identify foreseeable risks

that may require restrictive intervention, the Federation will consider whether additional specialist training is necessary. The Executive Assistant Headteacher will monitor training needs, maintain training records, and advise the Headteacher where additional training or refresher training is required.

All teaching staff and other adults authorised by the Headteacher to have lawful control or charge of pupils must be familiar with this policy and understand their responsibilities in relation to restrictive interventions.

The absence of specific restrictive intervention training does not prevent a member of staff from using reasonable force where it is necessary to prevent injury, serious damage to property, the commission of a criminal offence, or serious disruption. Any intervention must be reasonable, necessary, proportionate to the risk presented, and applied for the shortest time necessary.

The Federation recognises that staff should not be expected to place themselves at unreasonable risk of injury. In some situations, the most appropriate response may be to move other pupils away from the area, seek assistance, implement agreed emergency procedures, or withdraw to a safe distance whilst maintaining supervision. Staff will be supported in exercising their professional judgement and duty of care during challenging situations. Any use of restrictive intervention, including significant use of force, restraint, or seclusion, must be recorded and reported in accordance with statutory requirements and Federation procedures.

**Unacceptable uses of force**

Use of force must never be used as a punishment. Any use of force must be lawful, necessary, reasonable, and proportionate to the risk presented.

Pupils must not be restrained in a way that restricts or compromises their airway, breathing, or circulation. This includes, but is not limited to:

- covering a pupil's mouth and/or nose;
- applying pressure to the neck, throat, chest, back, or abdomen;
- any hold that interferes with normal breathing or communication.

The use of force carries inherent risks and can be particularly dangerous when a pupil is on the ground. Planned ground restraint must not be used. If a pupil is unintentionally brought to the ground or falls during an intervention, staff must seek to release restrictive holds or reposition the pupil into a safer seated or standing position as soon as it is safe to do so.

Following any incident involving force, staff must consider whether the pupil requires a medical assessment and ensure that any injuries or welfare concerns are addressed without delay. Appropriate post-incident support should also be provided to the pupil and staff involved.

The Federation recognises that all forms of restraint, including standing and seated interventions, carry a risk of physical injury, emotional distress, and psychological harm. Restrictive interventions should therefore be avoided wherever possible and used only

when less restrictive alternatives have been ineffective, are judged to be unsafe, or are not appropriate in the circumstances

## 6. Seclusion

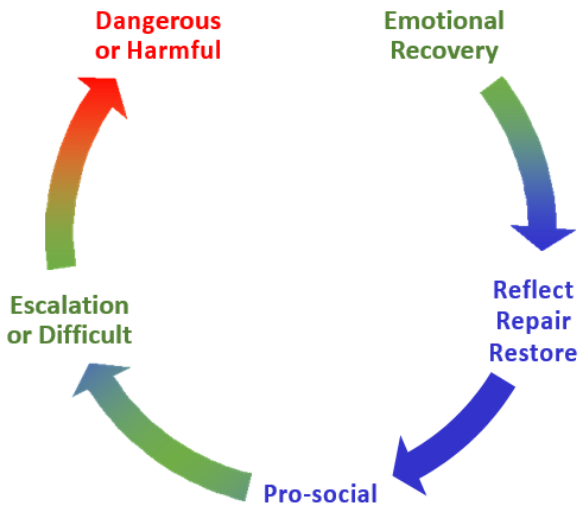
Fenland Schools Federation does not use seclusion as a planned behaviour management strategy. Any emergency restriction of liberty would occur only where necessary, lawful, proportionate and for the shortest possible time to prevent imminent serious harm, and would be subject to immediate senior leader review and parental notification.

## 7. Developing An Individual Risk Management Plan at Fenland Schools Federation

Our school behaviour policy plans for the majority of children. In addition, some children may require an individual risk management plan to formalise those strategies that differentiate from the whole-school policy.

When considering whether to complete a risk management plan for a pupil, we have completed a robust analysis of each pupil's behaviour, using a graduated response encompassing early prognosis and identification of what needs are being met through the behaviour (what is the function of the behaviour?), risk calculation to determine the seriousness and probability of behaviour, protective and educational consequences, conscious and subconscious behaviour analysis, anxiety mapping, predict and prevent planning and roots and fruits.

When writing a risk management plan, we take into account our planned responses for all the areas below:




We always ensure that the reflect, repair and restore stage:

- focuses on harm that has been done
- considers how the harm can be repaired
- looks at experiences, feelings and needs
- plans to ensure conflict is less likely to happen in the future.

The plan is regularly reviewed with staff, pupil (if appropriate) and parent/carers.

## 8. How Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) Is Recorded at Fenland Schools Federation

Any use of restrictive physical intervention, including planned or emergency interventions and any use of seclusion, must be recorded as soon as practicable after the incident and wherever possible on the same day. The written record should include the following details as a minimum:

- names of pupil and staff directly involved
- any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code
- time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention
- brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and (where relevant) what type of reasonable force was applied, the degree of force, and details of any physical injuries sustained
- brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance
- any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts

The member of staff who has used RPI must inform the Executive Headteacher or Executive Assistant Headteacher as soon as the situation is safe. The member of staff who has used RPI must inform the parent or carer before the child goes home for the day wherever this is practical, but always before leaving school for the day. This must be followed up in writing by the Executive Headteacher or Executive Assistant Headteacher on the same day.

All records should be open and transparent and enable consideration to be given to the appropriateness of the use of restraint.

Governing bodies must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must also have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in their schools or colleges are always effective and comply with the law.

Governing bodies and proprietors should have a senior board level (or equivalent) lead to take leadership responsibility for their schools or college's restraint arrangement.

The nominated governor is: Sue Rudge.

## 9. Definitions

**Behaviour**: anything that individuals say and do.

**Valued behaviour**: anything that provides a positive experience, creates helpful feelings, and is in line with the school's values. A more detailed description of the valued behaviours linked to school values can be found in Section 6a.

**Detrimental behaviour**: anything that creates a negative experience, leads to unhelpful feelings, and is in opposition to the school's values. Examples of detrimental behaviour and how adults should respond at Fenland Schools Federation can be found in Section 7.

**Dangerous behaviour**: a form of detrimental behaviour which will imminently result in injury to self or others, damage to property, or behaviour that would be considered criminal if the person was the age of criminal responsibility, such as racist abuse.

**Being Therapeutic**: An approach to behaviour that prioritises the helpful feelings of everyone within the dynamic. A school's policy establishes the methodology by which valued behaviour replaces detrimental behaviour through planned and sustained positive experiences.

**Consequence**: A logical, explainable response to a valued behaviour and detrimental or dangerous behaviour. A consequence is a logical or natural outcome of something occurring earlier; a conclusion reached via reasoning. Consequences are designed to help children learn and develop pro- social behaviour transferable to all contexts.

**Protective consequences**: necessary measures to reduce the risk of harm. Protective consequences may limit freedoms. More detail about protective consequences at Fenland Schools Federation can be found in Section 7.

**Educational consequences**: the essential learning, rehearsing or teaching that is required to enable behaviour change. Educational consequences progress the pupil's understanding and engagement, should allow the gradual removal of adaptations, and return freedoms.

**Dynamic Risk Assessment:** An assessment of risk based on all relevant factors available in the moment undertaken by an individual that needs to employ immediate and appropriate actions to manage the presented risk posed during an incident caused by dysregulation. This individual should be trained to employ appropriate actions (e.g. via Cambridgeshire Therapeutic Thinking).

**Restrictive physical intervention (RPI):** any intervention involving direct physical contact where reasonable force is used to prevent harm or serious damage, including circumstances where a member of staff controls or restrains a pupil in accordance with legal powers and this policy.

**Seclusion:** the confinement of a pupil to a place from which they are prevented from leaving. Fenland Schools Federation does not use seclusion as a planned behaviour management strategy.