


Restrictive Intervention Policy March 2026

Policy lead	Hannah Ferris
Governor Approval	
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OUR ETHOS

The Lightyear Federation is committed to minimising the use of restrictive physical interventions by prioritising prevention and de-escalation strategies. We recognise that a calm, supportive environment and clear, consistent expectations are essential to fostering positive behaviour and ensuring the safety and well-being of all pupils.

To support this approach, we implement a range of whole-school strategies, including:

- Designing classroom and school environments to promote success, well-being and safety for all pupils.
- Sharing and engaging in training about best practises for managing and promoting positive behaviour both in classrooms and communal spaces such as corridors, the lunch hall and play areas.
- Providing staff with regular training in a range of communication techniques, including the use de-escalation strategies.
- Building strong, trusting relationships between staff and pupils.
- Systematically recording and analysing incidents involving restrictive interventions to inform ongoing improvements.
- Developing and using individualised support for identified pupils.

We tailor our strategies to meet the specific needs of individual pupils by:

- Working collaboratively with parents and carers to develop shared understanding and support.
- Creating personalised behaviour support approaches, risk assessments and plans based on identified needs.
- Making reasonable adjustments as required by the Equality Act 2010 to ensure all pupils can fully access the school's opportunities.
- Allowing pupils time and space to calm before behaviours escalate.
- Providing designated safe spaces with tools for co-regulation.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with our federation/school policies:

- Relational and Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Inclusion and SEND Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Exclusion Policy

This policy is based on the DFE Guidance [Restrictive Interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools Guidance for schools in England](#) (April 2026) which recognises that:

‘The use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion, can have a significant impact on the pupils, staff members and parents involved, as well as the wider classroom. However, there are times when the use of restrictive interventions will be lawful and necessary; for example, to keep individuals and the wider school community safe.’

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS

The Lightyear Federation recognises that there are a number of situations where physical contact with pupil is generally appropriate. We may use physical contact to:

- Provide first aid
- Guide or escort pupil
- Comfort a pupil that is distressed
- Congratulate or praise a pupil
- Demonstrate how to use a musical instrument or exercises/techniques in PE

When deciding whether physical contact is appropriate, staff will have due regard to:

- Our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Our Staff Code of Conduct
- The circumstance; such as whether other adults are present
- The pupil's age
- Any other factors including, but not limited to:
 - Whether the pupil has SEND or other vulnerabilities
 - Whether any other strategies that do not involve physical contact could be used.

THE USE OF RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION AND REASONABLE FORCE

All members of school staff have a legal power to be able to use reasonable force in certain circumstances. These circumstances are 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 the pupils at the school

Our staff who are most likely to need to use reasonable force and/or restrictive interventions have been trained in its safe and lawful use and in de-escalation and preventative strategies.

Our leadership teams and inclusion teams have all received training in one of the following:

- Team Teach Level 1 - <https://www.teamteach.com>
- PROACT-SCIPr - <https://www.loddonschool.org/>

Staff who have been trained will be called to assist in all situations where a physical/restrictive intervention may need to be used, e.g. when a pupil is dysregulated and beginning to display behaviours that are unsafe to themselves or others.

TYPES OF RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION:

Restrictive Intervention means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body. 'Restrictive intervention' is generally used as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways for the purpose of maintaining safety.

Restrictive Intervention can include:

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. Seclusion will only be used by staff as a safety measure to protect a pupil from harming

themselves or others if they are experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. A seclusion will, where possible, always take place in a space that is familiar to the pupil. The space used will be safe, or made safe by removal of items/furniture, and the pupil will be supervised at all times. The pupil will be verbally reassured throughout and as soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil will be allowed to leave. Any incidents of seclusion must be recorded and reported as outlined in the 'Recording and Reporting' section of this policy.

Reasonable Force: The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involves a degree of physical contact with pupils, including restrictive intervention. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to restrictive physical intervention. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is necessary for the least amount of time. Staff will always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

Restraint: a term used in legislation referring to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. Restraint will only be used as a last resort, where other measures have proved ineffective and in-line with the procedures as defined in this policy.

Any form of restrictive intervention must only be used;

- for the shortest period of time to enable a safe environment to be re-established
- after exhausting all other techniques (depending on environmental factors)
- after telling the child to stop the inappropriate behaviour
- after informing the child of what will happen if they do not stop
- after summoning assistance from other colleagues, if possible.

DETERMINING WHETHER RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION IS APPROPRIATE

We recognise that there may be times with staff need to use restrictive intervention to maintain a safe environment for all pupils and staff. The decision about whether to use restrictive intervention depends on the individual circumstance of each situation.

Before any use of restrictive intervention, staff will always consider:

- Whether the use of restrictive intervention is necessary.
- If there are other, more effective and less restrictive, ways to manage the situation
- Whether the use of restrictive intervention is likely to reduce the identified risks or whether it might escalate the situation further or cause more damage than the behaviour itself.
- If the use of restrictive intervention is proportionate (staff must use the least amount of force or least restrictive measure for the least amount of time)
- Whether the intervention itself is escalating the situation and needs to be reconsidered or an alternative strategy tried.
- Personal circumstances of the pupil such as; medical conditions, SEND, any other known vulnerabilities, their age and size and any relevant equality implications under the Equality Act 2010.
- Restrictive Intervention will never be used as a punishment for a child.

USE OF REASONABLE FORCE TO SEARCH

The Headteachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil and/or their possessions where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a

prohibited item A prohibited item refers to items as listed in [The Education Act 1996](#) and not those banned under the federation/school rules only. We will refer to the [Searching, Screening and Confiscation in Schools](#) guidance when considering searching a pupil.

CONSIDERATION OF PUPIL WELFARE IN RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS

The Lightyear Federation places the highest importance on the welfare and dignity of every pupil, especially when considering the use of restrictive interventions. Staff are expected to carefully weigh the potential impact on a pupil's overall well-being alongside any necessary actions. We recognise that pupils who have experienced adverse life events, have diagnosed or undiagnosed medical conditions, sensory impairments, past trauma or neglect, communication challenges, or other additional needs may find restrictive interventions particularly distressing.

To uphold respect for each pupil's dignity, staff will, whenever possible, choose an appropriate location and environment for any intervention, avoiding situations where the pupil may feel exposed or embarrassed in front of their peers.

Clear, calm communication is essential. Staff will ensure that they explain to the pupil what is happening, why the intervention is being used, and what is expected of them. For pupils with speech, language, communication difficulties, or those for whom English is an additional language, staff will use both verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, allowing sufficient time for understanding and response.

Understanding how a pupil is feeling is critical. Staff will continually assess the pupil's emotional state to determine whether the intervention should be continued, adjusted, or ceased. This responsive approach ensures that restrictive interventions are used only when absolutely necessary and are proportionate to the situation.

Training for staff equips them to make sound judgements about when restrictive interventions are appropriate, even in urgent situations, and to evaluate the reasonableness of their actions under pressure. When a decision is made to use such interventions, staff will receive the necessary support to ensure their decision-making aligns with our nurturing ethos and safeguarding responsibilities.

We recognise that any form of restraint or seclusion can risk physical and psychological harm and it should therefore be avoided wherever possible. Any child involved in a seclusion or restrictive intervention will be checked for injury and offered first aid as appropriate.

CONSIDERATION FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

We know that some pupils with SEND may display challenging behaviours as a response to distress, sensory overload, pain, or communication difficulties, which can lead to a higher likelihood of restrictive interventions. In particular, pupils who are non-verbal or find verbal communication challenging may express their needs, discomfort or confusion through actions. We will maintain an attitude that 'all behaviour is communication' and work to understand these underlying triggers to provide proactive, personalised support within an inclusive environment.

We will support pupils with SEND through:

- Staff who know the pupils helping to identify risk factors and develop strategies such as removing distressing stimuli, using calm body language and tone, supporting

emotional expression, and engaging pupils with familiar activities to prevent escalation.

- Using ABC charts to try to identify any triggers
- Working in collaboration with pupils, their parents/carers and other professionals to develop de-escalation strategies and plans.
- Using support plans, co-produced with pupils, parents, and professionals, to outline necessary adjustments, communication methods, and any appropriate physical contact, with clear parameters and risk assessments in place.
- Identifying risk and utilising risk assessments to mitigate identified risks through prevention strategies.
- Reviewing these plans regularly and after significant incidents to ensure they remain effective.
- Fulfilling our legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments, enabling pupils with SEND to fully access education and associated opportunities.

SUPPORT FOR PUPIL AND STAFF SUPPORT AFTER RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS

Any incidents involving restrictive interventions will be evaluated promptly to understand the reasons, impact on pupils and staff, and identify ways to prevent future occurrences.

- Appropriate first aid will be provided as soon as possible for any injuries sustained by pupils or staff.
- All incidents involving restrictive intervention, reasonable force or seclusion will be recorded using the restrictive intervention record sheets and logged on Arbor.
- Follow-up conversations will be held with both pupils and staff involved to reflect on the incident, understand what happened and why, and support wellbeing.
- These debriefs will be facilitated by an impartial staff member, possibly with additional support, to help repair relationships and promote learning.
- We will provide ongoing monitoring of pupil and staff wellbeing, with further support offered as needed.
- It will be considered whether any pupils who witnessed incidents that cause distress or injury to peers require appropriate support.
- Any support plans or risk assessments will be reviewed and updated if needed.

RECORDING AND REPORTING

- All physical intervention records must be reported verbally to the Headteacher or most senior member of staff on site, not involved in the intervention.
- Parents/carers will be informed on the same day of any incident of physical intervention. They will be made aware of the time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention, a brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance, what type of force was applied, and the degree of force and details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable. Information will likely be provided verbally to allow for further discussion about the incident, but this will always be followed up with written communication via email, confirming the above information. A template for this is provided (Appendix 2).
- All incidents of restrictive intervention, including seclusion, will be recorded in writing as soon as possible after the event, by the staff member(s) involved and always by the end of the same day of the incident.
- Incidents will be recorded electronically on the Physical Intervention Record Sheet (Appendix 1) A read-only template for this will be stored on Google Drive/One Drive.
- All completed forms will be saved as a PDF form and sent to Headteacher and DSL so that they can maintain oversight of any physical interventions being used.

- The DSL is responsible for checking forms are fully completed and adding a log of all physical intervention logs to Arbor. The log will include the names of pupil and staff directly involved, the time, date and location of the intervention, any relevant needs, a brief account of the incident including what led to the incident and any de-escalation strategies used, the type and duration of reasonable force used and why it was appropriate, and any post-incident support including any injuries or medical treatment required as a result.
- Where appropriate, the child will have the opportunity to comment and these views will be recorded.

GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT OF RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS

The governing body will ensure compliance with the procedures for recording and reporting all uses of force, seclusion, and restraint. The safeguarding governors will regularly review and analyse data on restrictive interventions as part of their safeguarding monitoring to report back to the governing body and ensure that school leaders:

- Identify and implement improvements in policies and practises, particularly where current approaches have been used for some time and have not been effective.
- Identify staff training and development needs, supporting targeted improvement in understanding and practice.
- Monitor pupils' repeat behaviours and triggers to evaluate and enhance support measures, sharing insights with staff and parents to develop or revise behaviour support plans.
- Detect any disproportionate use of restrictive interventions affecting pupils with protected characteristics, SEND, or other vulnerabilities.

Data analysis by leaders and governors will be proportionate, mindful of its limitations, and avoid over-interpreting small subgroups.

COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS

Any complaints regarding the use of restrictive interventions will be dealt with in accordance with our complaints procedure which is available on the school website.

If an allegation regarding inappropriate use of force and/or other restrictive interventions is made against a member of staff, the procedures in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE) and our Lightyear Federation Allegations Against Staff policy will be followed.

Appendix 1 – Physical Intervention Record

Physical Intervention Record No. : (Child’s DOB/Date of Intervention e.g. 01022005/1604)

Name of child:	Date of Birth:
Child in care: Yes / No	SEN: Yes / No Area of Need:
Full name of individual completing this report:	Date of writing this report:
Date and time of incident:	Location of incident:
Full names of any other individuals present:	

The following information is an account of what happened before, during, and after the incident. Please give a comprehensive and accurate account of the incident with specific, clear details.

<p>What was happening before the incident that led to the physical intervention being used? (What was the child/young person doing or saying? Any identified triggers?)</p>
<p>What de-escalating techniques were used prior to physical intervention? <i>(e.g. humour, verbal advice/support, firm directions, negotiation, limited choices, distraction, diversion, reassurance, planned ignoring, contingent touch, calm talking, calm stance, patience, withdrawal offered, withdrawal directed, swap adult, reminders about consequences, success reminders)</i></p>
<p>Please provide a description of the measure used e.g. What happened during the incident? What did you do and say?</p>
<p>Which physical intervention method was used? Detail the degree of force used:</p>
<p>Effectiveness of the measure: What happened after the incident? Any consequences of the use of the measure?</p>

Start time of any restrictive physical intervention:	Duration of any restrictive physical intervention and any time intervals between provision of active support:
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Why was Physical Intervention deemed necessary? *Please highlight and give a brief description.*

Risk to Self	
Risk to Others	
Risk to Safe Physical Environment	
Risk to Safe Psychological Environment	
Prevention of Psychological Distress	
Prevention of Physical Harm	
Prevention of Criminal Offence	
Temporary Loss of Competency or Capacity	

Describe any injuries and if medical treatment was offered and accepted.
Injuries should also be recorded in the organisation's accident book.

External agencies who have been informed of this incident (if applicable):

Other supporting records relevant to this incident (if applicable):

Wherever possible, the viewpoint of the individual should be gathered and recorded using appropriate communication support strategies.

Was a debriefing offered? Yes/ No	Was a debriefing accepted? Yes/ No
Viewpoint of the individual:	
Are there any risk assessment implications following this incident?	
Follow up actions required:	
Parent/Carer informed via: By (person who communicated): _____ On (date): _____	
Please save completed form as a PDF (File; Download; PDF) to Headteacher and DSL. The DSL will add information to Arbor.	

Appendix 2 – Template email for communicating a restrictive intervention to parents/carers

Subject: Report of Physical Intervention Involving Your Child

Dear [Parent/Carer's Name],

I am writing to inform you about an incident involving your child, [Pupil's Name], which required the use of a physical intervention at school. We understand the importance of keeping you fully informed and supporting your child's well-being.

Details of the Incident:

- **Date and Time:** [Insert date and time]
- **Location:** [Insert location]
- **Duration:** Approximately [Insert duration]

Reason for Intervention:

The intervention was deemed necessary because [briefly explain the circumstances and why the intervention was required, e.g., to prevent harm to your child or others].

Type and Degree of Intervention Used:

The physical intervention involved [briefly describe the type of force used, e.g., gentle restraint, guiding away], and the degree of force applied was [describe degree, e.g., minimal, reasonable, proportionate].

First Aid/Injury:

[Include details of any injuries sustained by your child or confirm that no injuries occurred.]

Please be assured that the safety and dignity of all pupils are our highest priorities, and such interventions are only used as a last resort and in accordance with our school policy.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Kind regards,
[Your Name]
[Your Position]
[School Name]
[Contact Information]