Supportive Holding Policy			
Date	Review Date	Author	Nominated Governor
April 2026	April 2027	Jane Maclennan	Daniel Childerhouse

SUPPORTIVE HOLDING

On occasions it may be necessary to use restrictive physical intervention to keep young people safe. Some young people lack the capacity to self-regulate and may continue to escalate their behaviour if uncontained. Supportive holding RPI with a trusted calm adult can provide the opportunity to calm and regulate their high arousal and know that they can rely upon adults around them to be positively in control and keep them safe

Supportive holding is the positive application of reasonable, proportionate and necessary force with the intention of protecting a child from harming themselves or others or seriously damaging property. Our concern at Future Education School is the care and protection for everyone within our school community and restraint may be needed on very rare occasions. We will endeavour to handle every situation with care and responsibility. Staff are authorised to use reasonable physical intervention and have agreed to follow the principles of Norfolk Steps regarding handling children in school. The school will always follow our policy and parents are always fully informed about any situation that arises.

WHEN DO WE USE SUPPORTIVE HOLDING?

To prevent a pupil from hurting themselves or others.
To prevent a pupil from seriously damaging to property.

THE TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH

Future Education is trauma informed school where our approach supports students to feel safe and regulated.

- As part of our behaviour and relationships policy all staff understand that:
- Basic physiological and emotional needs must be met before a student feels safe enough to relax and learn.
- All staff need to consistently demonstrate that they care and can be trusted.
- All staff need to be well regulated as raised voices, angry faces and body language create fear and stress.
- All staff understand the components of trauma informed and mental health school through protect, relate, regulate and reflect.

The above informs our relationship with our students and also our response to situations where supportive holding may be required.

NORFOLK STEPS

School staff are trained in the 'Norfolk Steps' approach to managing supportive holding. This is refreshed annually. Norfolk Steps is an approach that aims to reduce and manage conflict and build a positive school ethos. The training covers a range of areas, including conflict de-escalation, calm body language, debriefing and supportive holding techniques.
In line with the approach, staff agreed on a number of principles:

- Staff should always speak to children respectfully and calmly – reducing conflict and leading by example.

- Staff must always act to help children and always try to reduce conflict, not do anything that may escalate it.
- Always remember the importance of using a calm stance and de-escalation script in a conflict situation.
- 'Recovery time' should be given for the child to calm down after an incident, after which time there should be a de-brief, carried out by a member of staff not involved in the incident.
- A risk plan should be completed for any child for whom there is a 'foreseeable risk' that they may behave in a way that will cause harm to themselves, others or property.
- The importance of handling children in a safe, positive and dignified way.
- The importance of being proactive in managing children's behaviour i.e. trying to avoid situations which may cause conflict.
- The importance of recording incidents and the harm caused.

NORFOLK STEPS APPROACH

De-escalation script can be used when a child is trying to engage adults or peers in conflict.

- Child's name
- I can see something has happened and you are angry/upset
- I'm here to help
- Talk and I'll listen
- Come with me and…

Where a student is regulated enough to hear, the above may be helpful, however, where the student has reached crisis point (the sympathetic nervous system or our danger system within the brain- fight) no words, a calm presence and affect attunement will have greater impact.

When we are consistently emotionally responsive to students, the top down inhibitory pathways develop in their frontal lobes which naturally calm the brains alarm systems, inhibiting primitive impulses of flight or flight.

GUIDING AND ESCORTING

Sometimes it may be necessary to guide children. All staff who have completed the Step On training have been trained how to do this in a way that does not harm the child or put anyone else at risk. Staff form a 'mitten' shape with the fingers and thumb and place just above the child's elbow. The elbow should not be held, so that the child is free to move away; any force exerted can only be by the child pushing back. This can be extended to a more assertive 'escorting' position by standing side by side with the child and placing the 'mittens' on both of the child's elbows. The adult's shoulder should be behind the child to guide them. This position will lessen the risk of the child turning and lashing out.

RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION (RPI)

Very occasionally incidents may occur where a child needs to be supportively handled to prevent themselves or others from serious harm. Staff are trained in these interventions on a needs-only basis, and it is only these staff who can perform such interventions. If a child presents a foreseeable risk, school should prepare a risk assessment (audit of need) that all staff are made aware of and have access to. (This is found on Teams in Risk Assessment file)

For staff who have not received this training, there may be occasions where they need to use restraint e.g. to stop a child running in front of a car, or other situations that involve immediate risk of harm. In all cases staff must use their best judgment (dynamic risk assessment) and ensure that all actions are reasonable, proportionate and necessary.

Following any incident, a written record is to be made in the bound and numbered RPI book (APPENDIX A) within 24 hours, the parents will be informed, a risk assessment needs to be carried out and further training given if

appropriate. The child will be given the opportunity to record their view and comments on the incident in the RPI book. This will be part of the de-brief and restorative process (APPENDIX B).

Following an RPI, the student and staff involved will be given time and a safe supportive space in or outside the school, to calm. The need to reduce toxic stress chemicals (cortisol) to pro-social chemicals, (oxytocin and opioids) is fundamental in order to subsequently reflect and repair.
It is crucial that all parties involved are given time and space for reflection to take place and restorative conversations to be offered.

Norfolk Steps

Championing Inclusion

The Norfolk Steps Team provides training and consultancy to schools and services to support early intervention and manage complex or challenging behaviour. Our specialist team has extensive SEN and inclusion experience and an established reputation for providing inspirational training and knowledgeable, supportive consultancy.

The Norfolk Steps team can provide training in your own setting or through centrally delivered professional development INSET.
Norfolk Steps programmes are available to local authorities and multi-academy trusts across the UK.
Norfolk Steps offers the following core programmes;
Step On is a 6-hour course which provides foundation knowledge in understanding and responding to behaviour within educational establishments and other settings and organisations.

- Step On is based on sound therapeutic principles which promote positive behaviour strategies such as; consistency, de-escalation, behaviour analysis and differentiated planning.
- This programme also provides guidance and practical advice to develop an understanding of the safe and effective use of everyday physical interventions.
- The Step On programme is designed to be delivered to all staff within a setting or organisation. This programme is certificated and needs to be refreshed bi-annually to maintain certification.

Step Up focuses on the safe and effective use of restrictive physical intervention and is provided to core staff within services who have completed Step On training and have maintained certification.

- Step Up advice and training is bespoke and is based on audited need to respond to foreseeable risk of, or actual harmful behaviours. This training takes a minimum of 2 hours and is refreshed annually.

Steps In-service Tutor training

- For services who wish to build capacity and have the in-house expertise to deliver the core Norfolk Steps programmes to their own staff, we offer Step On Service Tutor training and Step Up Service Tutor training.
- This extensive course will equip tutors with the skills and expertise to embed the Steps approaches and philosophy within the culture of their setting or organisation.

Steps Consultancy

The Steps team are experienced in supporting settings and organisations in a wide range of behaviour related issues. We offer bespoke consultancy to schools and services to support early intervention and to manage complex or challenging behaviour.

For further information please contact the Steps Team on 01603 303340.

Headteacher:	Debbie Edwards	Date:	April 2026
Chair of Governing Body:	Daniel Childerhouse	Date:	April 2026

APPENDIX A

Restrictive Physical Intervention Form – Recorded in bound book.

Name of student	
Name of Staff	

Date	
Year group	
Location of RPI	
Staff Witnesses	
Student witnesses	

Restrictive Physical intervention? **Yes/No** (circle)		Give details of predicted harm prevented by RPI (e.g. punching, scratching, cutting)
Justification for RPI if used (tick)		
To prevent harm to self		
To prevent harm to other young people		
To prevent harm to adults		
To prevent serious damage to property		
Other(specify)		

RPI techniques including sequence of techniques, time and staff involved.				
Start	Finish	Type of restraint	Shape (standing or seated)	Staff

Duration		
Duration of restraint (minutes)		Duration of Incident (minutes)

Allegation of harm from a pupil during RPI towards. . . . . .. .Name staff /NO			
Hold witnessed by (name)		Any visible marks	

Alternative member of staff checked hold is correct		Child confirms they are unhurt after RPI and NFA agreed with parents / carers	
Outcome of incident – LT actions to prevent reoccurrence			

Review/revise individual risk management plan		Fixed term exclusion	
Restorative meeting with young person		Educational consequence	
Call meeting with parents		Other(specify)	

Other actions		
Action	Name	Date /Time
Name of LT notified		
Injury? If so complete injury form		
Staff wellbeing verified by		
Student wellbeing verified by		
Parent/ Carer informed (by and how)		

Summary	
Response and view of young person	

LT Summary of Incident	

LT signature. . . . . Date. . . . . .

Additional Comments/ Minutes of Meetings

APPENDIX B

Restorative Proforma

1.

What happened? Write or draw what happened

2.

What were you thinking about at the time? Write your thoughts in the thinking bubble.

What have your thoughts been since the incident? Write them in the thinking bubble.

3.

How did it make you feel? Draw your facial expression

Who do you think has been affected by your actions? In what way have they been affected? Write down who was affected in the body outline and label how they were affected. You can also draw their facial expression.

4.

5.

What do you need to do now to make things right? Write in the speech bubble.

ELSA support
www.elsa-support.co.uk

Restorative Practice