

May Blossom Farm CIC

Alternative Provision

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Searching Students & Physical Restraint by Staff Policy

Approved by:	Gill Press
Last reviewed on:	01/09/2025
Next review due by:	31/08/2026
Head of Alternative Provision	Gill Press
Deputy Head of Alternative Provision	Hannah Priest
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Gill Press
Deputy DSL (DDSL)	Hannah Priest
Designated Safeguarding Trustee	Russell Breyer

This policy was ratified in Sept 2025 and will be reviewed in September 2026

1. Purpose and Scope

At May Blossom Farm, the safety, dignity, and welfare of pupils and staff are our priority. The use of reasonable force and searching pupils will always be a **last resort**. This policy sets out when and how these powers may be used, in line with legislation and our ethos of care, respect, and positive relationships.

2. Legal Context

Section 93 of the **Education and Inspections Act 2006** permits staff to use reasonable force where necessary to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence.
- Causing harm to themselves or others.
- Damaging property.
- Seriously disrupting the good order and discipline of May Blossom Farm.

This policy also reflects guidance from the **DfE Use of Reasonable Force (2013)** [LINK](#)

and the **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** [LINK](#)

3. Who May Use Force

- Any teacher employed by May Blossom Farm.
- Any other person authorised by the AP lead to have control of students (e.g. teaching assistants, agency staff).
- Temporary authorisation may be granted by the AP lead for specific circumstances.

4. Deciding Whether to Use Force

Force may only be used when:

- The consequences of not intervening are serious.
- Other de-escalation strategies are unlikely to succeed.
- The risks of not acting outweigh the risks of acting.

Staff must always be able to justify their actions.

5. Using Force

- Where possible, staff should **warn students clearly** before using force.
- Force must never be used as punishment.
- Actions may include guiding a pupil by the arm, blocking a path, or, if essential, using trained restraint techniques (in accordance with Team Teach training Level 1 & Level 2)
- Any use of force must be **proportionate, necessary, and minimal**.

6. Planning for Incidents

- Individual Behaviour Support Plans will be developed for pupils likely to present challenging behaviour.
- SEN and disability-related needs will always be taken into account.
- Plans may involve input from outside agencies.

7. Training for Staff

- Only trained staff may carry out physical restraint.
- Training needs will be reviewed regularly. At least every 6 weeks or sooner if there has been need to use restraint training.
- All staff receive guidance on de-escalation and safe intervention.

8. Searching Students

The DSL & DDSL may search pupils where there are reasonable grounds to suspect they are carrying a prohibited item.

Prohibited items include (not exhaustive):

- * Knives or weapons.
- * Drugs (other than prescribed medicines).
- * Alcohol.
- Fireworks.
- * Stolen property.
- Pornographic or indecent images.
- Vapes, e-cigarettes, smoking equipment.
- Any item that could be used to cause harm or commit an offence.

Without consent: Items marked above with * (weapons, drugs, alcohol, stolen property, etc.) may be searched for **without consent** by a member of SLT.

- Where appropriate, parents/carers and the police will be informed.
- Prohibited items will be safely secured and disposed of or handed to the police.
- Disciplinary action may include exclusion, depending on the seriousness.

9. Physical Contact with Students

Some contact is appropriate and necessary, e.g.:

- First aid.
- PE, music, art or DT demonstrations.
- Providing comfort in distress, particularly for SEN students when dysregulated

Staff must use professional judgement and avoid any physical contact that could be misinterpreted.

10. Recording and Reporting

- All incidents involving force or searches must be recorded using May Blossom Farm's incident form.
- Parents/carers must be informed promptly.
- Records will support school improvement, transparency, and safeguarding.

11. Post-Incident Support

- Medical help will be sought where needed.
- Students and staff will be offered emotional support.
- Behaviour plans may be reviewed in light of incidents.
- Parents and, where necessary, external agencies will be involved.

12. Complaints and Allegations

- Allegations against staff will be managed under **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)** guidance [LINK](#)
- Other complaints will follow the May Blossom Farm Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy

Searching Students and Restraint Incident Record Form

This form must be completed as soon as possible after an incident where force or searching has been used. A copy should be given to the AP Lead and stored securely in the safeguarding records.

Student Details

Name of pupil(s): _____

Year/Tutor group: _____

Vulnerabilities (SEN, disability, medical, social): _____

Incident Details

Date of incident: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Staff Involved

Name(s) of staff directly involved: _____

Role(s): _____

Witnesses (staff or students): _____

Description of Incident

(Include context, student behaviour, any de-escalation attempts, and warnings given before force or search.)

Reasons for intervention

- To prevent injury
- To prevent harm to self/others
- To prevent damage to property
- To prevent serious disruption
- Search for prohibited item

Intervention Used

Type of force used: _____

Nature of search (with/without consent): _____

Prohibited item(s) found (if any): _____

Outcome

Any injury to student(s)? Y / N (details): _____

Any injury to staff? Y / N (details): _____

First aid/medical attention required? Y / N (details): _____

Support offered to pupil(s): _____

Support offered to staff: _____

Follow-up Actions

Parents/carers informed? Y / N – Date/Time: _____

Method: phone / in person / letter / email

Police or external agencies involved? Y / N (details): _____

Disciplinary measures (if any): _____

Reporting

Report completed by: _____ Role: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Countersigned by AP Lead: _____