



King James's School Federation

POLICY STATEMENT

# Physical Handling and Physical Intervention Policy (Addendum)

Policies last reviewed (date)	November 2025
Ratified by Governors (date)	November 2025
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MISSION STATEMENT:

Significant revisions since the last review:  
No changes since last version.

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### **Section 1: Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to make clear the position of the school with regards to necessary physical interventions and to safeguard the well-being of students and staff when a situation or incident requires the use of physical intervention.

It is the objective of King James's School to maintain consistent and safe practices in the use of handling, reasonable force and restraint.

### **Section 2: Physical Intervention and the Law**

The law allows all adults who are authorised by the Headteacher to be responsible for students to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a student:

- a) Committing a criminal offence (or for younger children that which would be an offence)
- b) Causing personal injury, injury to others or damage to property
- c) Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline

Staff should not hesitate to use their professional judgement and act in these situations provided they follow this policy and the attached guidance; however, they should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of their professional colleagues.

This policy is written following the DfE guidance on the use of reasonable force (2013).

### **Section 3: Definitions of Terms**

Handling – refers to any physical intervention applied by a member of staff where it is necessary to make physical contact with a student in order to manage their conduct or ensure their own or others' safety.

Handling strategies may be restrictive or non-restrictive and include shepherding, guiding, supporting, blocking, confining, holding and, in the most extreme cases, restraining.

Use of Reasonable Force – is the application of appropriate and proportionate force required to achieve the required outcome from the handling strategy employed (see above) without further endangering the student, member of staff or others present at the time of physical intervention.

Significant Injury would include: actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of, or injury to, themselves or others by wilful or reckless behaviour, and self-poisoning.

It must be shown that on any occasion where physical restraint is used there were strong indicators that if immediate action had not been taken, significant injury would have followed.

## **Section 4: Implementation of physical Intervention**

All members of staff working with students at the school are authorised to handle, use reasonable force or restrain students if/when such physical intervention is necessary.

No member of staff is required to employ any physical intervention strategy if they are not comfortable or confident to do so effectively.

No member of staff should intervene physically if they have reason to believe that to do so would worsen the situation/incident that is taking place.

In all circumstances where physical intervention is or may become required, members of staff should ensure that adult assistance is requested before intervention, although it is understood that circumstances may lead to the need for intervention prior to the assistance arriving. Members of the Senior Leadership Team have specialist training and should be called if this is possible in the circumstances.

Staff considering handling, use of reasonable force or restraint must provide opportunity for the student to alter their behaviour/actions before employing a physical intervention strategy and should continue to make instructions to the student and details of their intended interventions clear.

The method of physical intervention employed must use the minimum reasonable force for the minimum length of time (additional guidance regarding what intervention is and is not appropriate is given in Annex A).

## **Section 5: Recording Physical Intervention**

All incidents where staff have used force to modify behaviour or conduct should be recorded. It is not necessary to record every incident of contact with a child, but where a member of staff perceives that contact has been received at all negatively, they are advised to record the circumstances.

Physical Intervention Recording Forms (Annex B) are available on ItsLearning and should be uploaded to CPOMS to notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Headteacher.

It is the responsibility of the intervening member of staff to complete the record form on the day (or as soon as possible) that the intervention took place. The circumstances and nature of the physical intervention will be held on the record of the student involved, on CPOMS. Parent/Carers must be

contacted and informed, it may be appropriate for an member of the appropriate Pastoral Team or a member of the SLT to do this rather than the member of staff, depending on the circumstances.

The DSL will inform any necessary agencies/authorities of the physical intervention in accordance with DfE and LA guidance. Incidents must be recorded using Annex B- the Use of Physical Intervention Recording form, saved on CPOMS using the heading, restraint incident so the Head's PA can inform the Headteacher and the Local Authority.

For the safeguarding of both staff and student, any subsequent investigation of the situation/incident should be undertaken by a member of staff other than the one applying the physical intervention.

If an allegation is made about a member of staff due to a restating then the DSL or another relevant member of staff will refer to the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) .

If appropriate staff have concerns about a restraint, and are concerned there may be challenge or an allegation following a restraint, then the DSL or another relevant member of staff can seek advice from the LADO.

## **Section 6: Searching Students**

On occasions a member of staff may have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is in possession of an item or items which contravene school regulations and could potentially cause harm to the student or others. Under these circumstances The Education Act 2011 extends the power of staff to search students without their consent. Any prohibited items found in a pupil's possession will be confiscated. Such items will not be returned to the pupil. We will also confiscate any item which is harmful or detrimental to school discipline. These items will be returned to pupils after discussion with senior leaders and parents, if appropriate.

Searching and screening pupils is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Searches will be conducted by two members of staff, at least one of whom will be the same gender as the student. When possible, students will be offered the opportunity to have their parents/carers present.

King James's School does not endorse and will not undertake a physical search of any students' person. Where necessary a student will be asked to remove his/her coat and/or blazer, empty all pockets, open their bags and in some circumstances remove their shoes and socks. Possessions and items of apparel that have been removed may then be searched by the staff present.

If prohibited items are discovered the school will use its power of confiscation to retain the item(s). Parents/carers, if not present, will be contacted to explain what has been found and any subsequent sanctions that have been applied. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be invited to retrieve the offending property and asked to ensure that they are not brought to school again.

In the event that illegal items are discovered then the police will be informed.

## **Section 7: Staff Training**

All staff will receive training so they are familiar with de-escalation techniques, this guidance and the Behaviour Policy.

Staff training will include our duty to take into account any SEN and/or learning disability under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure reasonable adjustments are made.

Some key members of staff within the School, including members of the Senior Leadership Team, will be Team Teach trained and regularly updated in the use of positive handling as they are those most likely to find themselves in a situation that may require the use of reasonable force.

## **Section 8: Post Incident**

Appropriate First Aid and emotional support should be offered to staff and students involved.

Sanctions may be issued, according to the Behaviour Policy.

The student's support plan should be updated to reflect any appropriate reasonable adjustments needed to support the student.

Any complaints should be made by contacting the Headteacher and managed through the appropriate procedure.

## **Section 9: Monitoring and Review**

The Governing Body will review this policy every two years.

## Appendices:

### **Annex A: Guidance for Staff re: Handling, Use of Reasonable Force & Restraint**

#### **1. Purpose of this document**

- To provide for the safety and security of pupils in need of physical intervention.
- To clarify for staff the steps they are allowed to take if a situation requiring physical intervention arises
- To enable staff to distinguish between what intervention is and is not acceptable. To ensure that staff have read the documentation from DfE and LA
- To help ensure that any physical intervention is minimal, infrequent, recorded and that relevant authorities and parents are appropriately informed.

#### **2. The decision to employ a Physical Intervention Strategy**

You should be aware that all staff who have responsibility for a student or group of students are authorised to employ physical intervention strategies in the event they are necessary and that the law allows you to intervene in this manner. You should however be aware that you have a choice whether or not to intervene physically in any given situation and that you should not do so if you are uncomfortable with the situation or not confident to deal with it effectively.

You should be aware that in the event that you employ a physical intervention strategy, the parents of the child will be informed of your actions, the record of the intervention will be kept on the student's file and where necessary relevant authorities will be notified of the incident for your own future protection.

Some staff are trained in skills to help them to defuse situations before behaviour becomes challenging and how to de-escalate incidents should they arise. At KJS this is through the training of some staff in "Team Teach", however this is not a legal prerequisite to the use of physical intervention and in extreme cases a duty of care to prevent harm may override the need of Team Teach training.

#### **3. In what way can you Physically Intervene?**

Any application of physical intervention must only use the minimum force for the minimum amount of time. There are a number of ways in which you can physically intervene and you must choose the strategy appropriate to the situation and presenting least risk to yourself, the student and other persons.

Appropriate actions include:

Shepherding or Guiding; using body positioning and positive gestures to move a student away from harm. This may include the placing of a hand on the back (between the shoulder blades) and using reasonable force to actively move them from one place to another.

Blocking or Interposing; placing yourself between the student and their objective (e.g exit, another student) thereby preventing the potential injury, damage or incident.

Holding and Leading; leading the student (with open hand e.g by the upper arm) to prevent them from injury, damage, etc. In cases of resistance from a student, it may be necessary to employ holding to effectively achieve shepherding and, hence you are actively leading them away.

Restraining; used only in the most extreme cases, restraining may require a significant amount of force in order to prevent significant injury (as described in the policy). Essentially, restraining is a more extreme version of holding, may require more than one adult and may last significantly longer than other strategies. However, the same care must be taken to restrain a student appropriately.

#### **4. In what ways must you NOT Physically Intervene?**

The purpose of physical intervention is essentially to maintain good order and ensure the safety of all individuals, therefore it is never appropriate to employ a physical intervention strategy if you are not in control of your own emotions. Physical interventions must never be employed in anger or frustration. If you find yourself angry or frustrated by the situation at hand you must step back and allow someone else to manage the issue. It is never appropriate to use physical intervention strategies as a punishment.

#### **5. Guidance for managing your intervention**

- a) Always give a student an opportunity to resolve the situation without use of physical intervention first.
- b) Always send for assistance from colleagues or another authorised adult; other students should never be involved in physical intervention. You may have to intervene before help arrives, but not managing this entirely on your own is safer for all concerned.
- c) Be aware of your emotions. Are you comfortable and confident to deal with this scenario without anger? If not – don't intervene.
- d) Continue to communicate with the student (and witnesses) throughout the incident even if the student doesn't respond. Be clear about what you are doing and inform the student that the intervention will cease when it is no longer necessary.
- e) Apply only appropriate strategies and the minimum required force to achieve the required outcome (prevention of injury/harm, student/staff safety, restoration of good order). Release the student once this has been achieved.
- f) Manage the situation calmly – even if the student responds negatively.
- g) Complete a 'Use of Physical Intervention Recording Form' (Annex B) on the same day or as soon as possible after the event.
- h) Post-incident support - Following an incident of reasonable force, all students and staff members involved will be given any necessary first aid to treat injuries as soon as possible, and emotional support. Wherever reasonable force is used, staff members and students involved in incidents will be given separate opportunities to reflect on what happened.

It will be explained to the student involved the reason that such intervention was used, and reassured that the use of the intervention was not a punishment for their behaviour, but rather a method of defusing the

situation and preventing them from harming themselves or others. The student will be asked about the reasons for their behaviour, including:

- Why their environment was causing such distress for them, e.g. in an instance of sensory overstimulation leading to a meltdown.
- Whether they feel there was anything that could have been done to meet their needs before the situation escalated.
- Whether, and how, staff actions were helpful or unhelpful.

Staff will be encouraged to reflect on their actions and how they handled the situation, and will be reassured, where appropriate, that they have done nothing wrong and acted in what they perceived to be the best interests of students.

## 6. Minimising the need for Physical Intervention

In most circumstances Physical Intervention really should be a last resort or an emergency action. Therefore, all staff should:

- endeavor to create a calm environment which will minimise the risk of incidents where the use of physical intervention may be required;
- endeavor to teach pupils how to manage strong emotions and conflict through aspects of the Personal Development school curriculum;
- quickly seek to de-escalate incidents if they do arise;
- only use reasonable force when the risks involved in doing so are outweighed by the risks involved in not using force;
- be aware of support plans, risk assessments and positive handling plans for specific individual pupils.

## 7. Additional Supportive Information

- All staff involved are to complete the form as soon as possible after any incident.
- Our physical handling incident form must always have the locations and time recorded down on it. All forms must be signed and dated by staff.
- A clear reason for the physical intervention must be included by staff completing the form. Often this reason is linked to keeping the student involved and other students and staff safe within school. It would be good practice for this common terminology to be used by staff.
- It would assist staff to have this policy to hand when completing a physical handling and intervention form. This is so that they have access to Section 4 of the policy around implementation of physical intervention.
- Staff need to be clear as to the circumstances prior to any physical intervention. Namely that the students must be given warnings to change their behaviour and that any actions. Any subsequent physical intervention must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary.
- Be conscious of the language we use when completing a physical intervention form. We must quantify what 'dangerous behaviour' looks like. It is better practice to state that the student was believed to be at risk of presenting harm to themselves and others.



- When explaining what the physical intervention entailed, it is good practice to use the wording outlined in the policy from Annex A.
- Include the level of emotional support that was offered to the student prior, during and after any incident of physical intervention.
- We don't use the words restraint, but rather physical guidance, handling and/or intervention.

**Annex B- Use of physical intervention recording form**

Pupil Name		Year Group
Date of incident		Time of incident and duration (in minutes)
Date incident reported to DSL/Head		Time incident reported
Location of incident		Lesson or activity
Name of staff member(s)	Team Teach Trained (Y/N)	Name of witness(es) (staff/pupils)

Reason for Physical Intervention	Tick as appropriate
Prevent a pupil harming another person (staff or pupil)	
Prevent a pupil harming themselves	
Prevent damage to property	
Prevent a pupil engaging in serious disorder and disruption or a criminal act	
Conduct a search for prohibited items	

What happened and why
What happened before/may have led to the incident
Describe in detail the nature of the physical restraint. E.g. position, type of hold, location on body, how many people were involved.

Record of any injury or distress as a result of the situation. (Include location on body, the impact on staff and pupil)
Record how appropriate staff and parents/carers of the pupil were informed including date and time
Record of the views/response of the parent/carer when informed
Have any other agencies have been notified? E.g. police, social care
What follow up action has been agreed and by who is responsible (include any sanction issued e.g. suspension)

Signed:.....Date..... This form should be uploaded onto CPOMS using the category Restraint on the same day (or as soon as possible) so the appropriate support can be put in place and so the incident can be reported to the Local Authority.