



KING'S HOUSE SCHOOL

RICHMOND



Member of staff responsible:

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date of policy review:

April 2026

Date of next review:

September 2026

Approved by Head:

April 2026



INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to the whole school, including the EYFS.

The School's Safe Handling Policy is based on provisions contained in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Section 93) which gives all members of school staff, including volunteers supervising pupils, the legal power to use reasonable force. The DfE Guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025) and Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools (April 2026), provides further advice and guidance on this issue.

These documents and this policy apply where any member of staff is on the premises of the School or elsewhere at a time when, as a member of its staff, s/he has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned, for example, on a school trip.

The Act and guidance address when, where and how restrictive intervention, including reasonable force and seclusion, can be used to restrain pupils and also give examples of other circumstances where it is considered reasonable to have physical contact with pupils. It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, is proper and necessary.

Failure to take appropriate action in certain circumstances may, in some cases, be seen as a breach of duty of care. In some cases, not intervening could lead to a claim of negligence, particularly if harm could have been prevented. Any decision to intervene must consider the circumstances and a member of staff would not be expected to intervene at the cost of his or her personal safety.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies: Safeguarding, Staff Code of Conduct and Pupil Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions.

WHAT IS RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION?

The term restrictive intervention means to prevent, restrict, or subdue movement of the body, or part of the body, of a pupil. It is an umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

The term reasonable force covers a broad range of physical actions. Reasonable means using no more force than is necessary, for the least amount of time possible.

A significant incident of force is any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff as described in 'Other Physical Contact with Pupils' as



described in this document. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

Seclusion involves keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others, and preventing them from leaving either by physical obstruction or blocking.

Restraint is a term used to refer to a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not involve direct physical contact, for example, physically holding back or removal of a mobility aid.

School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause an injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

WHEN CAN RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS BE USED?

Staff will proactively minimise the need for restrictive interventions through preventative approaches, positive behaviour management and the use of de-escalation strategies wherever possible. This can include:

- considering how the school environments can support all pupils to achieve and thrive.
- sharing best practice for whole-class behaviour management, and for managing communal spaces such as corridors and playgrounds.
- training staff in effective communication strategies, such as using appropriate tone of voice and empathy to aid de-escalation.
- development of working staff-pupil relationships and trust.
- recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform improvement planning.
- working closely with parents to support individual pupils.
- strategies to support individual pupils based on their identified needs.
- giving pupils time, space and strategies to calm down before their behaviour escalates.

Where there are circumstances where staff need to use restrictive interventions to prevent harm, staff are adequately trained in its safe and lawful use.

Reasonable Force

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force in limited circumstances.

Reasonable force can be used to prevent or stop a pupil from:

- injuring themselves or others.
- committing a criminal offence.
- damaging property.
- causing disorder.



The decision on whether to intervene physically or not is down to the professional judgement of the member of staff. Some examples of situations when reasonable force can be used include:

- To remove a disruptive pupil who has refused to leave a room.
- To prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event, trip or outing.
- To prevent a pupil leaving a room where allowing them to leave would risk the safety of others.
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil or to stop a fight.
- To restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves.
- To search pupils for such items as knives, alcohol, stolen items, pornographic images.

Seclusion

Seclusion is used as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. Any seclusion will occur in a safe, non-threatening space. The pupil will be continuously supervised and the seclusion will last only as long as necessary, and end as soon as the immediate risk reduces.

Seclusion is not a disciplinary response to deliberate or wilful misbehaviour. There are disciplinary measures that are similar, such as removal from the classroom. Further detail can be found in the school's Pupil Behaviour, Discipline and Exclusions Policy.

PUPILS WITH SEND

When using restrictive interventions, staff have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, as required by the Equality Act 2010.

PUNISHMENT

Force cannot be used as a punishment – it is always unlawful to do so.

RECORDING AND REPORTING DUTIES

If a member of staff has used physical restraint, they must inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The School will record and report restrictive interventions, including significant uses of force, seclusion and restraint, using the Intervention Incident Form at Annex A, as soon as practical after the event.

The parents will also be informed of the incident in writing, as soon as practical, and where possible, the same day. If reporting to a parent would likely result in serious harm to the pupil, the incident must be reported to the Local Authority.



COMPLAINTS

If a parent makes a complaint about the use of restrictive intervention, it will be investigated promptly and appropriately. The School's Complaints Policy can be invoked.

The onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that their allegation is true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.

OTHER PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS

As stated, it is not illegal to touch a pupil. Below are some examples of where touching a pupil might be proper and necessary. Ideally consent should be sought prior to physical contact, although this may depend on the age of the child and the circumstances.

- Holding the hand of a child in line when moving around school or outside school.
- When comforting a distressed child.
- When a pupil is being praised or congratulated.
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument.
- To demonstrate techniques in PE and games.
- To administer first aid.
- To change a pupil when soiled or wet, particularly in Early Years. In this circumstance the staff member would inform another member of staff about the changing, prior to carrying it out.

In EYFS and with younger children there are often cases which fall into the above categories.



Annex A - Incident Form (Extract From Online Reporting Tool)

Student

Incident

Categories

Attainment Attendance Behaviour discussed Behaviour Related Log Break reset Bullying Child Contact Child Protection Communication Contact with External Agency Friendship related issues

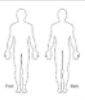
Home Issues/ Parenting Issues Incorrect uniform Medical Issues Non-physical intervention Not completing homework Not having correct stationery Off Break Off WARL Parental Contact Pastoral Log Physical intervention

Playground Pulse feedback Punctuality - Over five minutes late to lesson Safeguarding SEND Subject off break Team Teach Incident Uniform Verbal & Aggressive Incidents

Linked student(s)

Type a student's name to link them to this incident.

Maps



Date/Time

Status

Monitoring will end if you select 'No Further Action'

Assign to

Files

Alert Staff Members

Type a colleague's name or select an alert group to alert them to this incident. Colleagues highlighted in red would not normally be able to view this incident.

Agency Involved

Add to planner