



ST PETER'S SCHOOL

USE OF REASONABLE FORCE TO CONTROL OR RESTRAIN STUDENTS

Date Reviewed: May 2025

Date of Next Review: May 2027 (new government advice is in consultation currently)

Reviewer: Mike Gregory

Date of ratification by Advisory Board : 20th March 2025

Document Control		
Edition	Issued	Changes from previous
1	11/17	References to legislation updated Categories of authorised staff updated Addition of last sentence to 3f) Removal of 4c) referring to corporal punishment being against the law
2	Mar 2020	No changes
3	Nov 2021	Addition of h) to para 5
4	Dec 2021	3f – removed “Only be appropriately trained staff” as no staff are trained and updated physical intervention record
5	May 2023	Changed order – bringing underlined section to top. Changed Behaviour policy to relationship policy throughout Added two middle paragraphs to rationale section Added to definitions of when to intervene to improve clarity
6	Mar 2025	Changed reference to Trust and school policies in rationale and linked policies.
Policies/Documents referred to in this policy		Post holders/Persons named in this policy
This policy links to other school policies on: Cam Trust Behaviour Policy St Peter’s School Positive Relationships Procedures		Safeguarding Lead SLT Teachers Associate staff Catering/cleaning staff

Notwithstanding all the details in the legislation and this policy, the strong advice to all staff is to avoid physical contact unless absolutely necessary.

Rationale:

This policy should be used in conjunction with Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act (2006), Use of reasonable force – advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies and Guidance on the use of restrictive physical interventions for pupils with severe behaviour difficulties. The CAM Trust’s Behaviour Policy and the school’s Positive Relationship Procedures should also be referred to throughout.

As a school we believe that pro-social behaviour has to be actively taught and modelled by staff at all times. We understand that the way adults act and talk to young people can escalate or de-escalate a situation and that physical intervention is a last resort that should only be used when no other alternative is available.

Staff should try to ask themselves, what is the worst that will happen if I don’t intervene physically? What is the worst that will happen if I do?

These documents clarify the law on physical contact between school staff and students. It also requires the school to have a formal policy setting out which categories of staff come under the new legislation and what response there should be when an incident occurs.

Objectives:

1. To state the categories of staff covered by the key documents set out above.
2. To provide guidelines on the use of force to control or restrain students.
3. To establish the reporting route when an incident of the use of force has taken place.

Guidelines:

Those categories of staff who are authorised to “have control or charge of students” and so are authorised to use reasonable force to control or restrain students are:

- Teachers
- Associate staff
- Catering staff
- Cleaning staff
- Other colleagues or visitors on site e.g. school nurse, youth workers and contractors.

Situations in which the use of reasonable force could be appropriate include:

- a) In self-defence or where there is imminent risk of injury to another student or member of staff.
- b) Where there could be risk of injury the student themselves
- c) Where there is significant risk of damage to property (however in most cases it would be better to let them damage the property than physically intervene and risk escalating the situation)

Examples of such situations include:

- a) A student attacking another student or a member of staff.
- b) A student damaging or vandalising property (or is about to do so).
- c) A student is putting themselves / others at risk by misuse of material or objects.
- d) A student leaves a class or the school without permission and in **doing so may be at significant risk.**

3. “Reasonable Force” is difficult to define but the term can only be applied to circumstances that warrant the use of force (i.e. are not trivial). Force must be proportional to the circumstances and should be the minimum to achieve a result (taking into account the age, understanding and gender of the student). Wherever possible a verbal warning should be given before force is used. A member of staff should not intervene physically if they are going to put themselves at risk but instead should immediately seek assistance.

Examples of reasonable force include:

- a) Blocking a student’s path.
- b) Physically interposing between students.
- c) Holding a student
- d) Leading a student by the hand or arm.
- e) Shepherding a student by a hand on the back.
- f) In more extreme circumstances, using a restraining hold.

4. Warnings

- a) Staff should not act in a way that there is a risk to students or themselves (especially if pregnant) unless there is an immediate risk of serious injury.

b) Staff should avoid any contact that could be considered indecent.

5. Reporting of incidents

All physical intervention should be recorded in the Physical Intervention file retained by the Head Teacher's PA. Accompanying Witness Statements should be added to the file. A record must be kept of any incident involving the use of force on a student and the matter must be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding lead and senior leadership team.

The record should note briefly:

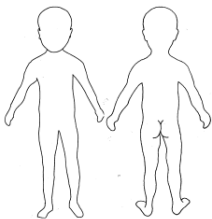
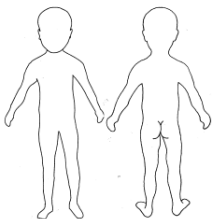
- a) Name of student and place of incident.
- b) Names of witnesses (staff and students).
- c) Reasons for the use of force.
- d) Details of the event.
- e) Outcome of the incident.
- f) Any injuries or damage to property.
- g) Action taken by member of staff.
- h) Consideration of how to prevent the need for such physical intervention in the future
- i) Confirmation of appropriate contact with a parent/carer.

The Head of Year should discuss the incident with the member of the Leadership Team dealing with the matter and should then contact parents and give details of the incident.

Conclusion

This policy covers extreme cases of control or restraint of students. St Peter's positive behaviour procedures should be followed initially for all students.

Physical Intervention Record

Student:	
Date:	
Intervening staff member:	
Staff witnesses:	
Reason for physical intervention	
<p>Description of event (indicate on the body map where the student was touched). Remember to include how you attempted to de-escalate the situation:</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	
<p>Student's description of the event (indicate on the body map where the student was touched):</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	
Were any persons injured:	Yes/ No (please delete as appropriate). If yes, please complete an accident form.
Could the need for physical intervention have been averted? Yes/No (delete as appropriate)	
Parents informed: Yes/ No (delete as appropriate)	Date:
Staff member's signature:	
Head Teacher's signature:	
Copies to intervention file/safeguarding	