



KING EDWARD VI
SCHOOL LICHFIELD

Use of Reasonable Force and Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures

Original version	Ratified on 13/02/2025, now superseded
To be reviewed by:	Assistant Headteacher (Community)
Governors' review: Summary of changes: Ratified by: Date:	Updated following new DFE Guidance 2025 Student & Staff Welfare Committee 09/10/25
Version:	FINAL
Dissemination: Teams policy folder KES website Other	✓ ✓ ✓ KES All Staff Team
Next review:	October 2026

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Context

Our whole-school behaviour policy sets out how staff aim to create and maintain good order and relationships through positive approaches and the application of agreed sanctions within a consistent framework. These approaches are successful for the vast majority of the time. This policy on the use of restrictive physical interventions supplements the main whole-school behaviour policy. Both should be read in conjunction with the school's SEN Policy, Health & Safety Policy, and Child Protection policy.

This document was written in consultation with the Use of Reasonable force document published by the Department of Education. [DfE advice template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) This document was updated in February 2025 using the consultation document. We are still awaiting the final version.

School aims and values

We want everyone in school to develop to their full potential; it is our job to ensure that students leave us as confident, life-long learners who have a strong sense of responsibility for themselves and for others.

We are a learning community with a positive, inclusive and friendly environment where we take the time to get to know our students so we can support their learning and their personal development. We seek to develop a strong partnership between students, parents and the school to enable this to take place. We encourage all stakeholders to involve themselves in the wider life of the school and its community.

Our overriding aim is to provide the highest quality education for all students. Our commitment is to help each young person to make the most of their abilities, developing their character and life skills. Students are challenged to do their best and are supported to ensure that they make good progress. In return we expect a commitment to high standards of effort and behaviour.

To support us in achieving our aims, the staff, students and governors designed and agreed the following Code of Conduct and our Principles of Learning and Teaching.

RESPECT	STRIVE
Code of Conduct: How We Live As a member of King Edward VI School I aim to be: • Respectful towards others and the environment • Enthusiastic and engaged • Smart and presentable • Proud to be part of King Edward VI School • Equipped to learn • Community-minded • Trying hard, aiming high	Principles of Learning and Teaching: How We Learn • Share in and celebrate success <i>High-quality progress and success are recognised by reviewing, identifying and celebrating learning</i> • Teamwork for environment and achievement <i>Our school environment allows everyone to flourish</i> • Reflect on learning to consider how work is successful and how it can be improved <i>Everyone understands that a resilient and resourceful approach can help to improve and develop learning</i> • Inspire one another to learn and flourish <i>Everyone understands the learning aims and their link to prior learning</i> • Value our school, value ourselves, value the community <i>Everyone is willing and able to participate fully</i> • Equip everyone with skills for life

Aims and objectives of this policy

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance so that any physical intervention which is undertaken is carried out in a way that supports the values and principles described above. In particular, it aims to describe the circumstances in which restrictive physical intervention is an appropriate response and how staff at school will fulfil their responsibilities in those circumstances.

Objectives

- To protect staff and students from harm.
- To prevent serious breaches of school discipline
- To prevent serious damage to property
- To reduce the likelihood of actions by staff being successfully challenged in the courts

What is reasonable force?

1. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with students.
2. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a student to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
3. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
4. As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control students and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of a classroom.
5. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two students are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
6. School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the student.

Minimising the need to use force

It is important to have a calm, orderly and supportive school climate that minimises the risk and threat of violence of any kind.

Wherever practicable, staff will issue a warning to a student that force may have to be used before using it or de-escalation techniques such as the following may be employed:

- Offer verbal advice and support
- Calm talking and distraction
- Negotiation and warning
- Reassurance
- Solutions offered
- Non-threatening body language

Staff authorised to use force

All teachers and members of staff, who have the Head's authorisation to be in control of or take charge of students, automatically have the power to use force (Section 93, Education and

Inspections Act 2006). This power does not apply to prefects, parents, volunteers or visitors in the school.

Deciding when to use force

Staff can use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- a) Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student themselves); or
- b) Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any students receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Any force used must be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent.

The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified:

- Remove disruptive students from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- Prevent a student behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- Prevent a student leaving the classroom where allowing the student to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- Prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student/other students, or to stop a fight; and
- Restrain a student at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Using force

Wherever possible, staff should tell the student to stop and be calm and measured. They should not give the impression of acting out of anger, frustration or punishment. *Force should cease quickly.* Examples include:

Standing by students, leading by the arm, hand on the centre of the back and finally, appropriate restrictive holds.

The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

When exercising the power to use force, we must also take proper account of any special need and/or disability that a student might have and make reasonable adjustments to accommodate this.

Staff working with special needs students will have an awareness of situations that may provoke difficult behaviour, preventative strategies and de-escalation techniques. They will know of any previous incidents and handling strategies that are recommended.

SLT, Student Support Staff, and medical staff may be called – though not necessarily waited for. They should be involved in post-incident follow-up.

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force as described above, headteachers and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following prohibited items (however, where possible consent to search should be sought):

- Knives and weapons
- Alcohol

- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Force cannot be used to search for other items banned under the school rules.

It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Always avoid touching or restraining in such a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct. Sometimes physical contact may be proper or necessary – such as sport and first aid.

Staff training

There may be particular needs for staff that work closely with students with additional needs or disabilities; however, training will be offered to all pastoral staff. Staff should be made aware of this policy and procedures during their Induction.

Recording and reporting incidents

Systematic records of any serious incident are kept using the specific form and the school's management information system (Go4Schools) - (See Appendix 1)

It is very important to have a witness to what happened. Whilst schools do not require parental consent to use force on a student, after any recordable incident, parents should always be informed – (telephone first and then confirm in writing). The report made to parents should include the following:

- time, date, location and approximate length of time the force was used
- brief account of what type of reasonable force was applied, and the degree of force
- details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable
- brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance

Post-incident support

First aid and emotional support will be offered for staff and students. Punishments such as isolation, suspension and pastoral support programmes or bespoke intervention may follow where appropriate for students.

Dealing with complaints and allegations

Parents and students have a right to complain about actions taken by school staff and should follow the school's complaints procedure.

Monitoring and review

Members of the Governing Body, the Learning Support Department, and the SLT will review this policy every 2 years.

Appendix 1 – Record of Incident form

King Edward VI School Lichfield		
Details of student or students on whom force was used by a member of staff		
Name		
Tutor Group		
Date, time and location of incident		
Names of staff involved (directly or as witnesses)		
Details of other students involved (directly or as witnesses), including whether any of the students involved were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social reasons.		
Description of incident by the staff involved, including any attempts to de-escalate and warnings given that force might be used. Length of time of incident		
Reason for using force and description of force used		
Any injury suffered by staff or students and any first aid and/or medical attention required.		
Reasons for making a record of the incident.		
Follow-up, including post-incident support and any disciplinary action against students.		
Any information about the incident shared with staff not involved in it and external agencies		
When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the incident and any views they have expressed.		
Has any complaint been lodged (details should not be recorded here)?		
Report compiled by: Name and role		Signed Date
Report countersigned by: Name and role		Signed Date