Policy Name	Physical Contact and Restrictive Intervention				
Effective Date	January 2022	**Date of last revision**	September 2025	**Version No.**	1.2
Author	Whole School Designated Safeguarding Lead				

Version History				
Version	**Approved by**	**Revision Date**	**Details of Changes**	**Author**
1.2		**15.9.2025**	**Update to the DfE guidance, KCSIE 2025, use of reasonable force, Feb 2025.**	**Head**

Policy Statement and Purpose

It is not realistic to suggest that teachers should never touch students and they, and other staff, have the right to use reasonable force to control or restrain students in certain circumstances.

This policy sets out the parameters in which staff at ICS must operate regarding physical contact and restrictive intervention.

Scope

Definitions of Key Terms:

- **Physical contact** – any intentional touching
- **Reasonable in the circumstances** - using no more force than is needed to achieve safety.
- **Restraint** - to hold back physically or to bring a student under control.

This policy has been written through consultation with:

- The Inspections Act 2006
- The Use of Reasonable Force and other restrictive interventions in schools, February 2025
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)

The following policies should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Code of Professional Conduct

State who this policy applies to:

- **Staff**
- **Volunteers**
- **Students**

Access

This policy is available on request from the school offices. We also inform parents and guardians about this policy when their children join ICS, and through our website.

The policy is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction alongside our ICS Professional Code of Conduct.

Failure to comply

Failure by ICS staff to follow this policy when making physical contact with students or exercising restrictive intervention will result in intervention by the Senior Leadership Team.

Physical Contact

Physical contact may be misconstrued by a student, parent or observer. Touching students, including well-intentioned gestures such as putting a hand on a shoulder, can, if repeated regularly, lead to safeguarding concerns being raised.

As a general principle, staff must not make gratuitous physical contact with their students. It is particularly unwise to attribute touching to their teaching style or as a way of relating to students. See Appendix 2 for further information. Teachers and other staff do, however, have the right to use reasonable physical force to restrain students in certain circumstances.

Relationships with students must be professional at all times. Physical relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction, even if, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual.

Any form of physical punishment of students is unlawful as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of restraint. It is particularly important that staff understand this, both to protect their own position and the overall reputation of the school.

Where physical contact may be acceptable

There may be occasions where a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same student over a period of time. Where a member of staff has particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, they should seek the advice from their Line Manager.

Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with students from time to time in the course of their duties. Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted, examples of safe practices e.g., side-on hug with younger pupils, hand on forearm, using open and observable settings are best practice.

Reasonable Force

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain a student physically to prevent them from inflicting injury to others, self-injury, damaging property, or causing disruption. In such cases only the minimum force necessary may be used and any action taken must be to restrain the student, and whenever possible to use the best practice of having a witness present. Where a member of staff has taken action to physically restrain a student, they should complete the Incident Report Form in Appendix 1.

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.

'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.

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.

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.

School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, and restraint should only be used as a last resort when all other distraction and negotiation techniques have been exhausted. Inspections Act 2006, and the DfE Use of Reasonable Force Guidelines February 2025, support the use of reasonable force in special circumstances.

The use of force to prevent a crime must be shown to be proportionate in the circumstances. The police will be called for criminal matters beyond immediate safeguarding.

Force must never be used as punishment.

All reasonable adjustments must be made in the case of disabled students or students with SEN.

Where a member of staff has found it necessary to restrain a child the incident must be recorded, using the Incident Report Form (Appendix 1), a copy of which must also go to the parents. The DSL must also be informed.

The staff member involved should sign to show that they have recorded the incident, students should also be asked to provide a comment or statement with respect to the details recorded in the Incident Report; as appropriate depending on the age of the child.

ISI and ICS require the systematic recording of every significant incident where restraint or physical intervention has been used.

Teachers will be trained in the appropriate techniques as required by the school's risk assessment.

Appendix 1: Incident Report Form

Details of the person completing this report.

Full name..... Staff/Student (circle as relevant)

School Campus .....

Details of incident

Student(s) involved (include first and last name)

.....

Staff involved (include first and last name)

.....

What happened? Give cause (how and why) if known

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When it happened: Date..... Time.....

Location of incident: .....

Details of any persons injured

Full name..... Staff/Student (circle as relevant)

Nature of injury.....

First Aid given: Yes / No First Aid given by: .....

Recorded in Accident Book on (date) .....

Taken to hospital - yes/no (circle)

If yes, which hospital and how transported? .....

Off school as a result of accident/incident - yes/no If yes - number of days.....

Staff Signature..... Date.....

Student Signature ..... Date.....

DSL Signature ..... Date.....

Bursar (Health & Safety Officer) Signature ..... Date.....

Appendix 2: Physical Contact – Further Guidance

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one pupil, in one set of circumstances, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Any physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the Head of School and recorded. Where appropriate, the Head of School should consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (the LADO).

Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. Staff need to be aware that the child may associate physical contact with such experiences. They also should recognise that these pupils may seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child sensitively and help them to understand the importance of personal boundaries. A general culture of 'safe touch' should be adopted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child.

Pupils with disabilities may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

<u>Other activities that require physical contact</u>

In certain curriculum areas, such as PE, drama or music, staff may need to initiate some physical contact with children, for example, to demonstrate technique in the use of a piece of equipment, adjust posture, or support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury. Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. The extent of the contact should be made clear and undertaken with the permission of the pupil. Contact should be relevant to their age / understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.

Guidance and protocols around safe and appropriate physical contact may be provided, for example, by sports' governing bodies and should be understood and applied consistently. Any incidents of physical contact that cause concern or fall outside of these protocols and guidance should be reported to the Principal and parent or carer. It is good practice if all parties clearly understand at the outset, what physical contact is necessary and appropriate in undertaking specific activities. Keeping parents/carers and pupils informed of the extent and nature of any physical contact may also prevent allegations of misconduct or abuse arising.