



ROYAL
BALLET
SCHOOL

SETTING THE STANDARD

RESTRAINT POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2026

INTRODUCTION

The Royal Ballet School recognises that on some occasions it may be necessary, in the interests of all students and for the safety of all students, to use restrictive interventions including reasonable force and seclusion to restrain or control students. It recognises that these practices can have a significant impact on the students, staff and parents, involved as well as the wider classroom.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use such force, as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing any offence, causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student himself/herself)
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its students, whether that behaviour occurs during a teaching session or otherwise
- OR, to remove a disruptive child from a classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction or because of a physical outburst.

This policy recognises that there is a need to be sensitive to cultural and religious expectations of parents, students and staff, and to make reasonable adjustments for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). This policy follows Government guidelines, including 'Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies', July 2013 and "Restrictive Interventions, including use of reasonable force, In England" April 2026

The school is committed to minimising the use of restrictive interventions through:

- Early identification of need.
- Positive behaviour support.
- Reasonable adjustments.
- De-escalation strategies.
- Trauma-informed practice.
- Relational approaches.

Restrictive interventions will only be used when absolutely necessary, proportionate to the risk presented and for the shortest possible time. Restrictive interventions must never be used as a punishment or disciplinary sanction.

Physical contact and reasonable force

As a general principle, teachers should not make unnecessary physical contact with their students. However, there are occasions when physical contact is appropriate and/or necessary, for instance when a student is being shown how to play a musical instrument or use a piece of equipment, or while demonstrating a move or exercise during ballet or PE, when a student is being congratulated or praised and when comforting a distressed student.

The administration of First Aid will inevitably involve physical contact and First Aiders should ensure that, where possible, others are present in circumstances when physical contact could be misconstrued.

Definitions

Restrictive Intervention

Any intervention that prevents, restricts or subdues a student's movement, whether through physical or non-physical means.

Reasonable Force

The use of force that is proportionate, lawful and necessary to prevent injury to self, injury to others, Damage to property, Serious disruption or disorder or criminal offences.

Non-Force Restraint

A restriction of movement that does not involve force but limits a student's actions, movement or access to items.

Seclusion

The confinement of a student away from others where they are prevented from leaving, either physically or because they reasonably believe they are not permitted to leave.

Prevention and De-escalation

Staff must use preventative approaches wherever reasonably possible before considering restrictive interventions.

This may include:

- Verbal de-escalation.
- Active listening.
- Emotional regulation strategies.
- Sensory regulation support.
- Adjustment of environmental triggers.
- Use of trusted adults.
- Personalised behaviour support plans.
- Time and space for regulation.
- Reasonable adjustments for SEND pupils

Prohibited practices

The following practices must not be used except where there is an immediate and unavoidable risk to life:

- Techniques that restrict breathing.
- Pressure to the neck.
- Pressure to the throat.
- Pressure to the face.
- Pressure to the mouth or nose.
- Pressure to the abdomen.
- Deliberately forcing a student into a prone (face-down) position.
- Pain compliance techniques.
- Restrictive interventions used as punishment.

Power to restrain

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force should it be deemed necessary. The power also applies to people whom the School has temporarily put in charge of students such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on individual circumstances. Staff do not require parental consent to use force on a student should it be necessary.

School staff should, however, **never** use force as a punishment as this is unlawful.

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a student in a way that might be considered indecent and they should ensure, where possible, that the student maintains his/her dignity.

Students should not be authorised to use force to restrain or control another student.

Students with SEND and Additional Needs

The school recognises that students with SEND, autism, communication needs or social, emotional and mental health needs may be disproportionately affected by restrictive interventions.

When planning support, the school will consider the following

- Individual risk assessments.
- Medical conditions.
- Communication needs.
- Sensory needs.
- Trauma history.

- Equality Act duties.
- Reasonable adjustments.

Any anticipated use of restrictive intervention should be reflected within appropriate behaviour support or risk management plans.

Seclusion

Seclusion may only be used as a safety measure where necessary to reduce an immediate risk of harm. It must never be used as a punishment, for staff convenience or as behaviour management alone,

Should seclusion be used, it must be time-limited, and the student must be monitored. At all times the student's welfare must be paramount. The incident must be recorded on CPOMS and parents must be informed.

Reporting and reviewing

All instances involving the use of reasonable force, physical constraint, non-force restraint or seclusion should be reported to the Principal (Academic & Pastoral) or the Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Welfare) and the DSL and recorded on CPOMS.

Written records must include the date and time, location, staff involved, student involved, triggers, de-escalation attempts, the nature of the intervention, duration and any injuries sustained.

All instances will be thoroughly and appropriately investigated and a written record kept by completing the Use of Reasonable Force Record Form. Records will be held centrally on CPOMS by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or their deputy during their absence).

Reporting to Parents

Parents/carers will be informed by the DSL, as soon as practically possible, following significant incidents involving force, restraint or seclusion.

Reporting to parents should include-

- Why the intervention was necessary.
- The type of intervention used.
- Duration.
- Any injuries.
- Actions taken afterwards.

Monitoring and Governance

The Governing Body and Academic and Pastoral Principal will regularly review data relating to the frequency of interventions, location, staff involved, SEND status, protected characteristics and patterns and themes

This analysis will be used to reduce future interventions, identify training needs, ensure equitable practice and improve safeguarding arrangements.

Record keeping

A written record (Use of Reasonable Force Record Form) of any use of restraint on a student, the action taken and the reason given for the restraint, will be held centrally on CPOMS by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or their deputy during their absence).

Post-incident debriefs and support

Following any restrictive intervention the following support will be put in place for students and staff involved.

Student Support

Following such incidents staff will check in on student welfare, provide opportunity to talk, restore relationships and review support needs.

Staff Support

Following such incidents staff will be provided with an opportunity to debrief. There will be a review of decision making and an identification of future training needs. Staff will be offered emotional support.

Complaint

A complaint by a student about the use of force used on him/her will be speedily and appropriately investigated.

The onus will be on the complainant to prove that his/her allegations are true and not for the member of staff to show that he/she acted reasonably. Where an allegation of use of excessive force is used against a member of staff by a student the School will refer to the Complaints Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

Where an allegation of using excessive force is made against a teacher, in line with the DfE Guidance “Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff”, suspension is not an automatic response. The school will consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant the staff member being suspended until the allegation is resolved or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate. The Governing Body of the school will always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action.

Appropriate pastoral care will be provided for a member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident as well as to the student.

Power to search students without consent

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force the Artistic Director, Principal (Academic & Pastoral), the Assistant Principal (Pastoral & Welfare) and Senior House Staff may use force as is reasonable, given the circumstances, to conduct a search for the following prohibited items; knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images and any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property. *See Searching a Student Policy.*

Force cannot, however, be used to search for other items which are banned under the school rules.