



London Private Academy

Physical Contact Policy

#We are the Future

Approved By:	Louis Hood
Position:	Head of School
signed:	
Date:	November 2025
Proposed Review Date:	June 2026
Review Team:	HOS, Head of SEND/Inc, Pastoral leader



London Academy Physical Contact Policy

Vision:



Mission Statement:

Empowering children with 21st-century skills.

Providing a happy, safe, and caring environment for all individuals.

Promoting learning through project-based and technology-based tools.

Delivering an exciting curriculum while fostering high self-esteem and respect.

Partnering with parents to develop children educationally, morally, spiritually, physically and socially.



1. Introduction and Scope

This policy outlines the principles and procedures governing physical contact (touch) between all London Academy staff (including teachers, teaching assistants, support staff, and volunteers) and students. This policy is written in alignment with UK safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance (such as Keeping Children Safe in Education – KCSIE), and the requirements of the British Schools Overseas (BSO) standards regarding safeguarding and welfare.

The welfare and safety of students is paramount, and all staff must ensure that any physical contact is professional, appropriate, and easily understood as being in the child's best interest.



2. Guiding Principle

All staff must actively avoid unnecessary or ambiguous physical contact with students. Any contact must be:

- **In response to a student's need (e.g., distress, injury, developmental need).**
- **Transparent, with other staff or students present where possible.**
- **Brief and appropriate for the student's age and developmental stage.**



3. Age-Specific Guidelines for Permitted Contact

The acceptability of physical contact varies based on the age and emotional maturity of the student.

Permitted Contact

Early Years (EYFS) and KS1 (Nursery, Reception, Year 1)

Brief Hugging Permitted. Staff may initiate brief, side-on, and open-handed contact, including brief hugging, when comforting a distressed student or celebrating a small achievement.

Students in these stages are still developing emotional maturity and independence and may require reassurance through brief, limited physical comfort. Contact must never be prolonged or private. Where brief hugging is necessary, staff should ensure another colleague is present or visible.

Key Stage 1 and Above (Year 2 onwards)

Brief Arm Over the Shoulder Only. No other intentional physical contact is permitted with the following single exception: A brief, open arm over the shoulder may be used solely when a student is upset, distressed, or requires immediate comfort.

At this developmental stage, students are expected to have greater emotional resilience and independence. The "arm over the shoulder" exception ensures comfort is available while maintaining clear professional boundaries, and should be done with other witnesses present only.



4. Universally Permitted and Unpermitted Contact

4.1. Universally Permitted Professional Contact (All Ages)

The following forms of brief, low-contact, non-intrusive, and professional physical contact are permitted for all students (EYFS through Year 13):

- **Handshakes, high-fives, and fist bumps as a form of greeting or encouragement.**
- **Assisting with curriculum activities (e.g., guiding a hand during practical art, demonstrating a sports skill).**
- **Incidental or accidental contact (e.g., brushing past a student in a corridor).**

4.2. Unpermitted Contact

Other than the specific exceptions outlined in Section 3 and Section 5, no other forms of physical contact between staff and students are permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, touching a student's hair, back, waist, or legs, prolonged embraces, or any contact made out of sight of other adults or students.



5. Exceptions (Health, Safety, and Restraint)

Physical contact is permitted when it is reasonably necessary and proportionate for the following purposes:

- **Safety and Restraint:** To prevent a student from causing injury to themselves or others, or causing damage to property.
- **First Aid and Medical Needs:** To administer necessary medical treatment or first aid.
- **Personal Care:** Providing essential personal care to students with specific needs (which must be detailed in an individual care plan and involve appropriate training and consent).



6. Reporting and Monitoring

If a member of staff is concerned that a physical interaction could be misinterpreted, or if a student expresses discomfort regarding physical contact, the staff member must immediately record the incident and report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as practically possible.

Any deliberate breach of this policy will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter and may involve a referral to external authorities.