



Physical Handling and Restraint Policy

Dec 2016

Date agreed: 15/03/2017

Next review due: March 2022

**This policy is in support of St Mary's Christian ethos of R.E.S.P.E.C.T.
(Responsibility, Excellence, Spirituality, Partnership, Enjoyment, Caring, Tolerance).**

Introduction

This policy links with the school's overall pupil behaviour policy and includes guidance for staff and for pupils. The value of one policy covering all matters is that parents can see what restraints will be used and the circumstances in which they will be used.

Objectives

Staff should have good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent:

- a pupil from significantly injuring himself or others,
- serious damage to property,
- a serious breach of school discipline.

Equal Opportunities

This policy is applicable to all groups of individuals within the school regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, colour, disability, need or nationality.

Minimising the need to use reasonable force

Staff should take steps in advance to avoid the need for physical restraint, e.g. through dialogue and diversion, allowing space, talking, listening and humouring, cajoling and reasoning, diversion and distraction, and the pupil should be warned orally that physical restraint will be used unless he/she desists.

- Only the **MINIMUM REASONABLE FORCE NECESSARY** to prevent physical injury or damage should be applied.
- Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before applying restraint. These staff can act as assistants and witnesses.
- As soon as it is safe, restraint should be gradually relaxed to allow the pupil to regain self-control. Restraint should take place calmly but firmly.
- Restraint should be an act of care and control, not punishment.
- Physical restraint should not be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate risk to people or property.
- Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning approaches to teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings will be used throughout the school as part of the school's Personal, Social and Health Education teaching.
- Where a pupil may require restraint that pupil should already have a plan in place notifying staff that restraint procedures may be necessary. Parents/carers will have been involved in the creation of this plan.
- Pupils who do not have plans will have one drawn up should such a need arise following an incident.

Staff authorised to use reasonable force*Permanent authorisation*

All staff who are Team Teach trained are authorised to use reasonable force to restrain a pupil although they may choose not to do so. They may be used in a supportive role.

Temporary authorisation

Any adult working with children in the school, whether on a supervisory, e.g. supply teacher or voluntary basis, e.g. parent helper/student, may need to use reasonable force to restrain a pupil and will be given the statutory power to do so.

In any incidence where restraint is used the incident must be immediately reported to the Headteacher or Deputy Head so that it can be correctly recorded in the blue book and parents will be informed.

This policy is evidence of the use of temporary or permanent authorisation to use reasonable force to restrain a pupil.

Deciding whether to use reasonable force

- A distinction must be maintained between the use of 'one-off' intervention, which is appropriate in the particular circumstances, and using it repeatedly as a regular feature of a regime.
- Staff must be able to show that the method of intervention was in keeping with the incident that gave rise to it.
- The degree and duration of any reasonable force applied must be proportional to circumstances.
- The potential for damage to persons and property in applying any form of restraint must always be kept in mind.
- The failure of a particular intervention to secure a pupil's compliance should not automatically signal the immediate use of another more forceful form of intervention.
- Escalation should be avoided if possible, especially if it would make the overall situation more destructive and/or unmanageable.
- The age and social competence of the pupil should be taken into account in deciding what degree of intervention is necessary.
- Consideration should be given to approaches to control that would be appropriate to that particular pupil.
- The risk associated with not using reasonable force should be outweighed by those of using reasonable force.

Operational procedural points relating to the use of physical restraint

- The circumstances and justification for using physical restraint must be recorded immediately.
- Afterwards, the pupil should discuss and be counselled on why it was necessary to restrain him/her. He/she should also be given the chance to put his/her side of the story.
- The head teacher, or senior member of staff authorised to act for the head teacher, should discuss the incident with the teacher/person using reasonable force within 24 hours.
- A full report of every incident should be prepared within 48 hours (the sooner the better).
- Where it is clear that the teacher concerned needs further advice/support/training, the head teacher should take prompt action to see that it is provided.
- Staff meetings should provide the opportunity for a review of the incident where discussion is essential to prevent the development of a culture where a physical response becomes routine.

Using force

- It is important to only use the minimum reasonable force necessary to achieve the desired result.
- It is important that a pupil should be warned, where appropriate and where time allows, that he/she will be restrained and that reasonable force will have to be used.
- Acceptable restraint procedures are those taught on the official training. No other restraint should be used except in extreme emergencies and where there is no viable alternative.
- Staff should always try to ensure that another adult is present should it become necessary for reasonable force to be used. This other adult will be present to support, observe and call for assistance.