

St Mary's C of E Primary School



'Even though we are many individuals, Christ makes us one body and individuals who are connected together' Romans 12:5

Compassion, Friendship, Koinonia, Trust

Physical Intervention Policy

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Statement of intent

St Mary's C of E believes that it is important to establish a safe, secure and stable environment to enable pupils to grow, develop and learn. To achieve this, the school recognises that, in certain circumstances, physical intervention, including safe touch and the use of reasonable force, is necessary.

The school understands that behaviour is often a means of communication which may signal that a pupil is in need of support but does not know how to express this; therefore, the school takes a proactive approach to anticipating, managing and minimising potential triggers of distressed behaviour that may cause harm.

This policy acknowledges that situations may arise in which staff members will be required to use physical intervention, and in some cases reasonable force, in order to handle pupils' emotions or aggressive behaviour when other measures have failed to do so.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that physical intervention is used in a correct and safe manner, which is in accordance with the relevant legislation and national guidance.

1. [Updated] Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2011
- Children Act 1989
- Equality Act 2010
- **[Updated]** DfE '*Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools*'
- DfE '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*'
- DfE '*Keeping children safe in education 2025*'
- HM Government '*Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention*'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following St Mary's C of E policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Procedures Policy

- Staff Code of Conduct
 - Low-level Safeguarding Concerns Policy
 - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
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2. [Updated] Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Monitoring the overall implementation of this policy.
- Notifying the headteacher that the Behaviour Policy should include the power to use reasonable force.
- Evaluating, on an annual basis, instances of physical intervention to analyse how and when reasonable force is used and identify any trends.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- Responding to any complaints, in liaison with the headteacher, from pupils or parents regarding the use of reasonable force.

[Updated] The headteacher is responsible for:

- Deciding whether members of staff require additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities, considering the needs of pupils.
- Ensuring all members of staff understand the correct conduct in terms of positive handling.
- Handling any allegations of abuse in line with the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy.
- Maintaining records of the use of reasonable force and evaluating, on a termly basis, how reasonable force and physical intervention are used.
- Ensuring that any member of staff who uses reasonable force completes the Physical Intervention Report Form.

- Ensuring that the Behaviour Policy sets out the circumstances in which force might be used.
- Responding to any complaints, in liaison with the governing board, from pupils or parents regarding the use of reasonable force.
- **[New]** Carrying out risk assessments to ensure that staff who regularly work alongside pupils can use reasonable force and other restrictive interventions as safely as possible, if and when required.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Providing training to members of staff on how to handle the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Ensuring staff understand how pupils with SEND may react differently to reasonable force.
- Ensuring that staff understand the additional vulnerability of pupils with SEND or medical conditions.
- Developing individual risk assessments for pupils with SEND or medical conditions that are agreed with parents, and ensuring teaching staff are aware of these.
- Ensuring that staff understand how reasonable force principles may need to be adapted for pupils with medical conditions.
- Evaluating, on a termly basis, how reasonable force and physical intervention is used with regard to pupils with SEND, in collaboration with the headteacher.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Providing staff with annual reasonable force training where the headteacher deems it necessary.
- Ensuring all members of staff use reasonable force in accordance with this policy.
- Reviewing this policy in liaison with the headteacher and governing board.

[New] All staff members are responsible for:

- Avoiding restrictive interventions wherever possible and only using reasonable force as a last resort.
 - Only using reasonable force to prevent or stop a pupil from:
 - Causing injury to themselves or others
 - Committing a criminal offence
 - Damaging property
 - Causing disorder among pupils
 - Understanding unacceptable uses of force and the legal implications.
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3. [Updated] Definitions

Restrictive intervention:

An action or measure used to prevent, limit, or control the movement of a pupil's body, or part of their body. This includes both physical and non-physical interventions.

Reasonable force:

The minimum level of force necessary, applied for the shortest possible duration, and proportionate to the circumstances.

Significant incident:

Any incident in which the use of force exceeds appropriate physical contact between pupils and staff.

Seclusion:

A non-disciplinary intervention involving the confinement of a pupil to a space away from others, with restricted freedom to leave.

Restraint:

A non-disciplinary intervention that immobilises a pupil or restricts their movement, directly or indirectly.

4. [New] Avoiding physical intervention and reducing risk

St Mary's C of E expects staff to assess whether situations can be resolved without physical intervention and to use preventative and de-escalation strategies wherever possible.

Reasonable force will only be used where necessary to prevent harm, criminal offences, damage to property, or serious disorder, and will always be proportionate and time-limited.

5. [New] Seclusion

St Mary's C of E recognises seclusion as a non-disciplinary safety measure that may be used only in exceptional circumstances.

Seclusion will:

- Be used solely to reduce risk
- Never be used as punishment
- Be supervised and time-limited
- End as soon as it is safe

All incidents of seclusion will be recorded and reported in line with this policy.

6. [Updated] Pupils with SEND

St Mary's C of E recognises that pupils with SEND may express distress differently and is committed to minimising disproportionate use of restrictive interventions.

The school will:

- Use proactive and preventative strategies
 - Co-produce behaviour support plans with parents and pupils
 - Implement risk assessments where appropriate
 - Adhere at all times to the SEND Policy and Equality Act 2010
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7. [Updated] Post-incident support

All incidents will be reviewed as soon as practicable. Medical assessments, reflective discussions, and wellbeing support will be provided where necessary for pupils, staff, and witnesses.

8. [Updated] Recording and reporting incidents

The governing board will ensure procedures are in place for recording all significant incidents involving force, seclusion, or non-physical restrictive interventions.

Parents will be informed unless doing so would place the child at greater risk, in which case the incident will be reported to the local authority.

Records will be reviewed termly by the headteacher and SENCO and annually by the governing board.

9. [Updated] Complaints

Complaints will be handled in accordance with the Complaints Procedures Policy. Allegations against staff will be managed in line with *Keeping children safe in education*.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher, DSL, SENCO and governing board.

Reviewed: Richard Moss

10.2.26