

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils.



### Mission Statement

At St Joseph's we welcome all as members of our school family. We learn and care for each other as brothers and sisters; enriched by the teachings of Jesus.

We encourage Creativity; valuing our unique talents and skills as gifts from God.  
Working alongside pupils and parents\*/ carers, we can all succeed and realise great things.

Serving the communities within the Parish of St Joseph's and St John the Baptist and beyond, we reach out to all.  
We respect each other, our different cultures and faiths celebrating our richness and diversity.

Through worship and prayer we show our love; striving to achieve our very best.

### Introduction

All schools are required to have a policy on the use of force to control or restrain pupils. This policy is based on advice contained in the DCFS document **The Use of Force to Restrain Pupils 11/07**. An effective school behaviour management policy should secure an orderly atmosphere in which effective teaching and learning can take place. There may, however, be rare occasions when staff will need to use "reasonable force" in order to control or restrain pupils.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: - Complaints, Child Protection, Behaviour Management and Anti Bullying

## **Objectives**

- To maintain the safety of pupils and staff
- To prevent serious breaches of school discipline.
- To prevent serious damage to property.

## **Minimising the need to use force**

Through the consistent use of the Behaviour Management Policy we aim to create a calm environment that minimizes the risk of incidents that might require using force arising.

- Using EPR lessons and Circle Time approaches to teach pupils how to manage conflict and strong feelings.
- De-escalating incidents if they do arise.
- Having risk assessments and positive handling plans for individual pupils where necessary.

## **Staff authorized to use force.**

Staff are assured that by adhering to the policy guidelines, they will have acted with the full support of the Governing Body and Senior Management to ensure the protection of students and themselves. All staff who undertake supervision of pupils are authorized to use force. This list includes all teachers, teaching assistants and mid-day meals supervisors.

The school will endeavor to offer training in the use of force to key members staff as and when the need arises; it is the intention that all least two members of staff will have training in positive handling. However, responsible individuals have the statutory power to use force by virtue of their roles.

## **Deciding whether to use force**

As a rule physical intervention should be avoided, staff should only use force when:

- The incident is considered serious enough to necessitate the use of force. This is to be assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used. Staff should have good grounds for believing that restraint is necessary.
- The chances of achieving the desired result by other means were low.
- The relative risks associated with physical intervention are considered less when compared with using other strategies.
- Only after other less intrusive methods have been attempted or considered.

## **Using force**

If physical intervention seems absolutely necessary, staff should follow the guidelines below in order to reduce their own vulnerability to complaint and to ensure the protection of the students.

Where there is a high or immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff is justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principal of using minimum force). Such situations could include preventing a pupil from running off a pavement into a busy road; or preventing a pupil from hitting someone with a dangerous object.

When using force staff should:

- If possible call for urgent assistance to support, observe the incident and call for more extra help if required. They can also act as a credible witness.
- Give a clear oral warning to the pupils that force may have to be used
- Make every effort to avoid acting in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. However, in the most extreme circumstances it may not always be possible to avoid injuring a pupil.
- Always avoid touching or restraining a pupil in a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct.

## **Types of force that may be used are:**

- Physically interpose between pupils.
- Block a pupil's path
- Deflect a pupil's aggressive actions
- Hold (but never around the neck or collar)

- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- Ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back.
- In more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds, which may require expertise or training.

### **Recording incidents**

Incidents where force has been used to restrain or control pupils are to be reported as soon as possible to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. An Incident Record Form should be filled out by the member of staff (see appendix A).

If there are differing accounts of the same incident, these must all be recorded by those giving the accounts. A member of staff may be required to act as scribe for a pupil. These written records will be kept securely as part of the pupil's educational record.

### **Reporting incidents**

Wherever possible the parent/carer will be informed as soon after the incident as possible by telephone. This will be confirmed in writing. The parent will also be given a copy of this policy and information on post-incident support. All injuries will be recorded in accordance with school procedures.

Governors will be informed of any reports on any incidents using force. Individual details will be given to the Chair who can delegate to another governor if necessary. The Chair would not delegate this responsibility to governors who do not have children at the school as these governors may be needed on a complaints panel. The Chair or delegated governor should attend the school to see the incident report within 5 working days of the incident. An Annual report would be sent to the Full Governing Body, listing only the number and types of incidents.

### **Post-incident support**

- Any injuries will be dealt with using First Aid procedures initially.
- Staff and children will be given the opportunity to talk about what happened once those involved have had the opportunity to regain their composure.
- Where a member of staff is assaulted or has been injured they are advised to contact their professional organization or trade union. These will also be reported to the Health and Safety Executive. The member of staff may also wish to report the incident to the police.
- An individual behaviour plan may be appropriate for the pupil; this should be done in conjunction with the parents and any other multi-agency partners as deemed necessary.
- Sanctions should be applied in accordance with the Behaviour Management Policy.

### **Complaints and allegations**

If a specific allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff, this will be dealt with using the guidance set out in **Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education**. Other complaints will be dealt with under the school's complaints procedure. This can be found in the prospectus or on the school website.

### **Monitor and review**

The governors and Senior Learning Team will monitor all reports on the use of force. This policy will be reviewed as per policy schedule.

\*Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person, irrespective of what their relationship is).



**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School**

**Record of an incident of force or restraint to control or restrain a pupil**

Name of pupil involved:.....

When did the incident take place?.....

Where did the incident take place? .....

Name of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident:.....

The reason that force or restraint was necessary

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How the incident began / progressed:

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Details of pupils behaviour:

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What was said by different parties:

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Steps taken to defuse or calm the situation:

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The degree of force used / how it was applied / for how long:

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What was the parents response and the outcome of the incident

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Details of any injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil or a member of staff and or damage to property

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Signatures from Staff and Parents: