

QUEENSWAY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Restraint Policy

(Physical Intervention)

Adopted by Staff on:

“You are like light for the world.”

(Matthew 5 v 14)

Rationale

The school believes that to deny pupils physical contact with adults is to deny a basic human need and expression of care and concern for all pupils.

However physical contact must be appropriate for the age, understanding and sex of the child and must never threaten or be sexually inappropriate.

Staff must be sensitive to:

- cultural backgrounds
- the need to maintain pupils' personal space
- any concerns that a pupil may have been sexually abused and will either seek physical contact or positively avoid it

Physical contact may be appropriate:

- when a pupil needs to get comfort or reassurance e.g. following an accident or personal crisis
- when a pupil needs encouragement to attempt a new challenge e.g. to climb on to a piece of equipment
- when there is a need to take urgent action to avoid an accident or injury

Staff should take extreme care when offering physical comfort to pupils of the opposite sex particularly as they approach puberty because physical contact can be misconstrued and this can cause distress to all concerned.

Staff should not be left alone with pupils except in exceptional circumstances. Classroom doors should be left open when one member of staff is left supervising, talking with or teaching small groups or individual pupils.

Purpose

This policy should be read in conjunction with DfE Circular 10/98 and takes into account the Education Acts 196/1997 which states that reasonable force and restraint may be used to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property including the pupils own property
- committing a criminal offence
- engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order at the school or among any of its pupils whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere

Physical intervention intended to control or restrain will only be used as a last resort.

A number of strategies will be used to manage a child's behaviour such as: distraction, redirection, ignoring negative behaviours and positive engagement before physical intervention.

Guidelines

Restraint will not be used punitively. The school has a disciplinary approach based on positive reinforcement of acceptable behaviour, as detailed in the Behaviour Management Policy.

All staff are familiar with the school's policy and have a clear understanding about when physical restraint is appropriate and how it should be done. They must also know when and how to get support from other staff.

Physical restraint may be used by those authorised to do so by the Head Teacher. (Due to the geography of the school, all staff have been given and accepted this authorisation.)

Staff have the right to defend themselves against attack and do everything possible to diffuse the situation before such attacks occur. In the event that it is necessary to defend themselves against a physical attack minimum force for maximum effect should be used. Parents will be informed of the action the school intends to take should the need arise. This will be done through induction meetings and a statement in the school prospectus.

Risk Assessment

- all staff including teachers, teaching assistants, MTAs and other colleagues in the school must be informed about pupils and families who are vulnerable or volatile
- vulnerable and volatile pupils and families should be clearly identified in documentation kept in the class data files
- a risk assessment based on knowledge and previous experience will be carried out and a plan of action for individuals written by a delegated member of staff

Action

Situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate.

1. When action is necessary in self-defence e.g. when a pupil attacks another pupil or adult.
2. When there is an immediate or imminent risk of injury to another child or an adult e.g. when pupils are fighting or there is rough play or misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
3. When there is immediate risk of significant damage to property - when a pupil is about to vandalise property.
4. Where behaviour jeopardises good order or discipline.
5. A pupil persistently refuses to leave an area e.g. the classroom or a playground.
6. Behaviour which seriously disrupts a lesson.

Physical intervention may need to be used when:

1. There is clearly no alternative approach which should work in the circumstances i.e. there is an immediate urgency to resolve.
2. Defending or protecting.
3. For children with special needs (EBD, Aspergers, and Autism etc.) special procedures may be needed appropriate to their condition. Details will be noted on their care plan as to what these measures are.

Application of force:

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff in:

- Physically interposing between pupils.
- Blocking a pupil's path if they are intent on hurting themselves or another pupil.
- Deflecting a hand or foot, or another body part that is intended to make contact with another child or adult.
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm.
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back.
- **In extreme circumstances** using more restrictive holds.

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an **immediate risk to injury**, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of reasonable force. For

example to prevent a young pupil from running onto a busy road or to prevent a pupil from hitting someone or throwing something.

In other circumstances staff should not act in a way that might be expected to cause injury, for example:

- Holding a pupil around the neck or by the collar or in a way that might restrict the ability to breathe.
- Slapping, punching or kicking.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against the joint.
- Tripping up.
- Holding or pulling by the hair or ear.
- Holding a pupil face down on the ground.

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent.

Staff must always consider whether a risk is urgent and whether there is any alternative to physical intervention.

Staff should always try to deal with the situation using other agreed strategies to calm a situation before using force.

Procedure

1. Staff must use minimum force for maximum effect over the shortest time and use only the agreed restraint methods. (NB ONLY ADULTS TRAINED TO USE RESTRAINT TECHNIQUES BY ESSENTIAL 6 SHOULD USE THEM. SEE EXAMPLES OF THE TECHNIQUES.)
2. Pupil safety is paramount. Staff must be aware of the signs of distress such as vomiting, changes in colour and breathlessness.
3. After an incident staff must complete the 'Report of Incident Involving Physical Restraint'. One copy is to be placed in the staff incident file and one copy is to be given to the Head Teacher. (See appendix 1)
4. Parents must be informed, on the same day as the incident, of the circumstances which led up to the incident and its outcome.
5. A meeting will be arranged with parents, the SENDCo and/or Head Teacher and any other professionals/agencies thought to be appropriate. This meeting will be an opportunity to plan strategies which will be adopted to manage a child's behaviour and promote improved behaviour patterns which will promote consistency at home and within school.
6. The SLT and Staff will evaluate any incident of physical restraint to inform future management of pupils in similar situations.
7. Staff involved will be debriefed following an incident and kept informed of any future action which relates to it. (See appendix 2)
8. The Head Teacher will make a report to the Governing Body if there has been occasion to use restraint.
9. The Chair of Governors will be informed on the day of any incident.

Essential points to remember

Whenever possible staff are advised to seek the support of another adult when they need to use reasonable force to resolve a situation they cannot deal with in any other way.

The other adult will be a witness to the incident and will sign the report for the record.

Complaints

In the event of complaints to the school or to Children Services in connection with the use of force by a member of staff, the Head Teacher will seek the advice and support of personnel on how to respond to the complaint.

APPENDIX 1

Report of Incident Involving Physical Restraint

Report no.

Pupil's name

Location of incident

Staff name

Witness name

Date of Incident **Time**.....

Details of the incident (include a sketch plan if appropriate)

Behaviour being presented

Reason for intervention (please circle)

- * Injuring themselves or others (including putting themselves or others in a vulnerable position)
- * Engaging in behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school
- * Causing damage to property
- * Committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility)

Type of restraint used (please circle)

- * Passive escort
- * Holding
- * Single elbow
- * Wrap
- * Figure of four
- * Wrap to floor

Duration of restraint

Signed **Date**
Staff member carrying out restraint

Witness **Date**

APPENDIX 2

Physical Restraint – follow up meeting

Description of injuries sustained by pupil or staff as a result of physical intervention and subsequent medical attention.

Damage to property Yes/No

Details

Discussion and reflection with pupil Yes/No

Details

Discussion and reflection with staff member Yes/No

Details

Further action taken: Closer supervision by staff / Verbal Reprimand / Exclusion

Details

Parents informed telephone / letter / e-mail / other

Details

Signature of staff member

Signature of staff witness

Signature of Head Teacher/SLT member