

Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School



Touch and use of Physical Restraint Policy

This policy was approved by	
Name	
Position	
Date	October 2021
Review Date	October 2022

Mission Statement

Our school is a place where we respect the views and value the opinions of everyone.

We encourage the development of behaviour and attitudes which reflect the life of Christ and the teachings of the gospel and so nurture the appreciation of every individual regardless of race, gender, colour or creed.

We endeavour to involve teachers, parents, governors and the wider community in the spiritual, intellectual, emotional and social development of our children. We strive to help our young people become more independent, making their own decisions and taking responsibility for themselves and others.

“Jesus holds my hand and guides me on my way”

Touch and the Use of Physical Restraint Policy

Introduction

At Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School we believe that pupils need to be safe, know how to behave, and know that the adults around them are able to manage them safely and confidently. For a very small minority of pupils the use of restrictive physical intervention may be needed, and, on such occasions, acceptable forms of intervention will be used.

The School behaviour Policy outlines how staff at Holy Spirit create and maintain good order and relationships through positive approaches. This policy will supplement the main behaviour policy but should also be read in conjunction with the school SEND policy, the Health & Safety policy and the Safeguarding policy.

Purpose of this Policy

The majority of pupils behave well and conform to the expectations of our school. We have responsibility to operate an effective behaviour policy that encompasses preventative strategies for tackling inappropriate behaviour in relation to the whole school, each class, and individual pupils.

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance so that any physical intervention that they undertake is carried out in a way that supports the values and principles of our school. In particular it aims to:

- Describe the circumstances in which restrictive physical intervention is an appropriate response.
- Make restrictive physical intervention as safe as possible and relevant for staff and pupils.
- Put safety of staff during restrictive physical intervention as of equal importance to the best interests of pupils and both take priority over care of property.
- Indicate how staff at school will fulfil their responsibilities in those circumstances.
- The Head Teacher will be responsible for ensuring that staff and parents are aware of the policy. She will ensure that any necessary training/awareness-raising takes place so that staff know their responsibilities.

Objective of the Policy

- All methods of restrictive interventions are used as infrequently as possible.
- That restrictive interventions, when used, are used in the best interests of the user/pupil.
- That the safety and well-being of all staff and pupils are important considerations and every reasonable effort is made to minimise risk or harm or injury to anyone involved and that the need to maintain an individual's respect, dignity and welfare is maintained.
- That restrictive physical interventions are risk assessed, so that the impact of the restrictive physical intervention will be minimised when key factors are evaluated and a planned approach is taken to incidents whenever possible.

Physical Touch

Physical touch is an essential part of human relationships. In our school adults may well use touch to prompt, to give reassurance or to provide support e.g. in PE. To use touch/physical support successfully, staff will adhere to the following principles. It must:

- Be non-abusive, with no intention to cause pain or injury.
- Be in the best interests of the child and others.
- Have a clear educational purpose (e.g. to access the curriculum or to improve social relationships).
- Take account of gender issue.

All the school staff need to feel able to manage inappropriate risk and behaviour, and to have an understanding of what and how challenging behaviours might be communicated. They need to know what the options open to them are, and they need to be free of undue worries about the risks of legal action against them if they use appropriate physical intervention. Parents need to know that their children are safe with us, and they need to be properly informed if their child is the subject of a Restrictive Physical Intervention, including the nature of the intervention, and the rationale for its use.

Definition of 'Restrictive Physical Intervention'

The Law allows for teachers and other persons authorised by the Head teacher to use Restrictive Physical Intervention to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following: -

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property
- engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintain the good order and discipline at the school

"Restrictive Physical Intervention" is the term used by the DFE to include interventions where bodily contact using force is used. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorised by the Head teacher has to, in specific circumstances, use "reasonable force" to control or restrain pupils. There is no legal definition of "reasonable force". However, there are two relevant considerations:

- the use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of an incident warrant it
- the degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent

The definition of physical force also includes the use of mechanical devices (e.g. splints on the pupil prescribed by medical colleagues to prevent self-injury), forcible seclusion or use of locked doors. It is important for staff to note that, although no physical contact may be made in the latter situations, this is still regarded as a Restrictive Physical Intervention.

When the use of restrictive physical interventions may be appropriate Restrictive Physical Interventions will only be used within Holy Spirit when all other strategies have failed, and therefore only as a last resort. However, there are other situations when physical

management may be necessary, for example in a situation of clear danger or extreme urgency.

Certain pupils may become distressed, agitated, and out of control, and need calming with a brief Restrictive Physical Intervention that is un-resisted after a few seconds. The safety and well-being of all staff and pupils are important considerations. Under certain conditions this duty must be an over-riding factor.

Who May Use Restrictive Physical Intervention in Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School

The following staff (as well as the teachers employed at the school) are authorised by the Head teacher to have control of pupils, and must be aware of this Policy and its implications. We take the view that staff should not be expected to put themselves in danger, and that removing pupils and themselves is the right thing to do. We value staff efforts to rectify what can be very difficult situations and in which they exercise their duty of care for the pupils.

C Roberts, M O'Brien, A Long, D Daniels, C Durkan, P Foster, E Gattrell, m Griffiths, J Haizenden, K Harris, L Kelly, J Moore, N O'Dempsey, A Parry, C Profitt, M Quadrio, F Smith, C Uittermark, D Williams, R Kenealy

Planning For the Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention in Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School (Appendix B)

Staff will use the minimum force needed to restore safety and appropriate behaviour. The principles relating to the intervention are as follows: -

- Restrictive Physical Intervention is an act of care and control, not punishment. It is never used to force compliance with staff instructions.
- Staff will only use it when there are good grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary and in the pupil's and/or other pupil's best interests
- staff will take steps in advance to avoid the need for Restrictive Physical Intervention through dialogue and diversion and at the level of understanding of the child or young person
- only the minimum force necessary will be used to prevent severe distress, injury, or damage
- staff will be able to show that the intervention used was in keeping with the incident
- every effort will be made to secure the presence of other staff, and these staff may act as assistants and/or witnesses
- as soon as it is safe, the Restrictive Physical Intervention will be relaxed to allow the pupil to regain self-control
- a distinction will be maintained between the use of a one-off intervention which is appropriate to a particular circumstance, and the using of it repeatedly as a regular feature of school policy
- escalation will be avoided at all costs, especially if it would make the overall situation more destructive and unmanageable
- the age, understanding, and competence of the individual pupil will always be taken into account
- in developing Individual Education/Behaviour Plans, consideration will be given to approaches appropriate to each pupil's circumstance

- procedures are in place, through the pastoral system of the school, for supporting and debriefing pupils and staff after every incident of Restrictive Physical Intervention, as it is essential to safeguard the emotional well-being of all involved at these times

Acceptable Forms of Intervention in Holy Spirit School

There are occasions when staff will have cause to have physical contact with pupils for a variety of reasons, for example:

- to comfort a pupil in distress (so long as this is appropriate to their age)
- to gently direct a pupil
- for curricular reasons (for example in PE, Drama etc)
- in an emergency to avert danger to the pupils or staff
- in rare circumstances, when Restrictive Physical Intervention is warranted

In all situations where physical contact between staff and pupils takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the pupil's age and level of understanding
- the pupil's individual characteristics and history
- the location where the contact takes place (it should not take place in private without others present)

Physical contact is never made as a punishment, or to inflict pain. All forms of corporal punishment are prohibited. Physical contact will not be made with the participant's neck, breasts, abdomen, genital area, other sensitive body parts, or to put pressure on joints. It will not become a habit between a member of staff and a particular pupil.

Developing a Positive Handling Plan in Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School

If a pupil is identified for whom it is felt that Restrictive Physical Intervention is likely, a Positive Handling Plan will be completed, following a risk assessment. This Plan will help the pupil and staff to avoid difficult situations through understanding the factors that influence the behaviour and identifying the early warning signs that indicate foreseeable behaviours that may be developing. The plan will include:

- involving parents/carers and pupils to ensure they are clear about what specific action the school may take, when and why
- a risk assessment to ensure staff and others act reasonably, consider the risks, and learn from what happens
- a record needs to be kept in school of risk reduction options that have been examined and discounted, as well as those used
- managing the pupil, strategies to de-escalate a conflict, and stating at which point a Restrictive Physical Intervention is to be used

- identifying key staff who know exactly what is expected. It is best that these staff are well known to the pupil
- ensuring a system to summon additional support
- identifying training needs

A school may also need to take medical advice about the safest way to hold a child with specific medical needs.

Guidance and Training for Staff

Guidance and training is essential in this area. We need to adopt the best possible practice. In Holy Spirit School this is arranged at a number of levels including:

- behaviour management for all staff
- managing conflict in challenging situations - all staff
- specific training on Restrictive Physical Intervention techniques
- awareness for governors, staff and parents

Complaints

It is intended that by adopting this policy and keeping parents and governors informed we could avoid the need for complaints. All disputes that arise about the use of force by a member of staff will be dealt with according to Sefton's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies.

Review

This policy, which will be reviewed and updated as appropriate, should be read in conjunction with:-

Anti-Bullying Policy.

Behaviour Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Complaints Policy

Date Agreed January 2021

Review Date January 2022