



## Positive Handling Policy St Mary's and Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academies

*Our Vision*

*"Many Hearts, One Accord"*

*We are the many hearts that follow Jesus, the one accord.*

***"Through the strength of God's love and the power of prayer***

***we are guided to do whatever He tells us. Many hearts,***

***one accord, growing and learning together for life to build the kingdom of God."***

*(School Mission Statement)*



Approved by: Staff/ Local  
Academy Committee

Date: November 2022

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by: November 2023

At St. Mary's and Our Lady Grace Catholic Academies we strive to create an environment in which both children and adults feel happy, safe, secure and valued. We aim to ensure a whole school approach to behaviour known and understood by all staff, children, parents and outside agencies. **The use of force upon any pupil by a member of staff is a serious matter and should only be considered as a last resort.** However, the law is clear and the Governing Body has a responsibility to all concerned, to support any member of staff who as a last resort uses reasonable force in accordance with the law and this policy.

This policy is designed to serve the best interests of children and to reduce risk of harm to school staff. **It is based on, and should be read alongside DfE Use of Reasonable Force Guidance 2013 and other school policies on Behaviour, AntiBullying and SEN.**

In this policy, the term **"staff"** refers to teachers, teaching assistants, mid-day assistants and support staff alike.

At St. Mary's and Our Lady Grace Catholic we aim:

- To nurture in children a sense of acceptance of responsibility for their own actions in order to promote positive behaviour choices.
- To create conditions for a learning community in which effective engagement can take place, in which there is mutual respect between all members, and where there is proper concern and ownership for the environment.

However, we also acknowledge that there are times when poor behaviour choices may require staff intervention to ensure the safety of the child, other children and staff and that this may require the use of physical interventions.

### **The Legal Framework**

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- injuring themselves or others;
- committing a criminal offence;
- causing damage to property
- Engaging in behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom or elsewhere.

The DfE Use of Reasonable Force Guidance allows all staff at a school to use reasonable force to keep children safe. It also allows other adults in the school to use physical interventions where reasonable, proportionate and necessary to ensure the safety of children. Those might include classroom assistants, care workers, midday supervisors, specialist support assistants, escorts, caretakers or voluntary helpers, including people accompanying pupils on visits, exchanges or holidays organised by the school.

At St. Mary's and Our Lady Grace Catholic Academies only staff who have received appropriate training are authorised to use positive handling techniques where a plan has been agreed for any children. An up to date list of people trained in appropriate techniques is provided as an appendix to this policy. All staff have a duty of care to keep children safe but a few individuals will have planned interventions.

Staff will always consider carefully whether physical intervention is necessary or if other options could be used to de-escalate the situation. Where possible staff will always try to deal with a situation through other strategies before using physical techniques. Trained staff need to develop strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and situations, which they should use to de-escalate and calm a situation. Advice and support will be sought from outside agencies when necessary. Refer to DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018.

### **Key Points**

- School staff have a legal power to use reasonable force and lawful use of this power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.

- Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.
- Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.

### **Planning for Incidents**

Where we are aware that a pupil may be likely to behave in a way that may require physical control, the school adopts a proactive approach to managing these incidents by ensuring that an SEN Pupil Passport, Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Action Plan has been completed and that appropriate planning is in place to:

- De-escalate behaviour before it disrupts others.
- Manage the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict and where necessary the physical techniques to be used when there is no other way)
- Support staff after any crisis situation
- Involve the parents or carers to ensure that they are clear about what specific action the school might need to take and agree to the plans.
- Ensuring that additional support can be summoned where necessary
- Involve medical and health services where necessary

### **Reasonable Force**

- It is advised that wherever possible, another member of staff is present if staff need to use reasonable force in order to assist and/or act as support.
- Staff will always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent and will always follow training advice.
- It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.

### **Post Incident Support**

If injuries result from the application of reasonable force, medical help should be sought straight away. Staff and children must also be given emotional support. The child will have the opportunity to reflect on their choices and actions in a supportive structured discussion using a Listen/ Link / Learn approach. This will help to improve behaviour long term if the child can take responsibility and learn to understand emotional responses and the impact on others. As soon as possible after an incident parents/ carers should be informed and provided with a copy of this policy. When reviewing the incident with staff other multi-agency support will be considered. Where the child is responsible for the injury or distress to another person the child will be offered the opportunity to repair the relationship through a supported restorative approach.

## **Recording Incidents**

Where positive handling has been used a record of the incident always needs to be kept. All recording needs to be completed on the day of incident and needs to include the following (Please see appendix C):

- name of pupil
- date, time and place of incident
- a brief description of the incident and actions taken
- attempts made to calm the situation ☐ names of people who witnessed the situation
- any damage/harm to persons or property
- name of person informing parents
- after investigation a summary of action taken

Staff completing recording forms will keep a copy for themselves for future reference.

After the review of any incident, a copy of the recording form will be placed on the pupil's file.

## **Action after an Incident**

The Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedure:

- Child Protection Procedure
- Staff Facing Allegations of Abuse Procedure
- Staff or Pupil Disciplinary Procedure
- School Behaviour Policy
- Exclusions Procedure

Members of staff will be kept informed of any action taken.

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from a colleague or line manager on a description of the incident and action taken for recording purposes.

## **Complaints and Allegations**

If a complaint is made against a member of staff about the use of force the school will follow the guidance set out in Section 8 of the Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies DfE –Ref:DFE-00341-2014

This policy will be reviewed annually



## Appendix A:

Staff trained in appropriate strategies

### Authorised staff

From section 550A of The Education Act 1996:

1. The Act allows all teachers at a school to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. It also allows other people to do so, in the same way as teachers, provided they have been authorised by the Head teacher to have control or charge of pupils. Those might include classroom assistants, care workers, midday supervisors, specialist support assistants, education welfare officers, escorts, caretakers, or voluntary helpers including people accompanying pupils on visits, exchanges or holidays organised by the school.
2. Head teachers should identify people, other than teachers, whom they wish to authorise to have control or charge of pupils and therefore be able to use force if necessary. Authorisation may be on a permanent or long term basis because of the nature of the person's job, or short term for a specific event such as a school trip. The Head should explicitly inform the people concerned, and ensure that they are aware of and properly understand what the authorisation entails. To ensure that, Heads may find it helpful to arrange for a senior member of the teaching staff to provide training or guidance. They should keep an up-to-date list of authorised people and ensure the teachers know whom they are.

Authorised staff at St. Mary's and Our Lady of Grace:

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Appendix B:  
**RISK ASSESSMENT**  
For use where positive handling may occur



School:		Risk assessment completed by:	
Name of child:	D of B:	Year:	
<b>Identification of Risk</b>			
Describe the foreseeable risks:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>			
Is the risk:	potential	occurring	
<b>Assessment of risk</b>			
In which situations does the risk usually occur?			
How likely is it that the risk will occur? (unlikely, possible, probable, likely)			
If the risk arises, who is likely to be injured or hurt?			
What kinds of injuries or harm are likely to occur?			
How serious are the adverse outcomes? (severe, substantial, minor, minimal)			
<b>Risk Reduction Options</b>			
What actions are being taken to minimise the level of risk? (Consider changes to environment, awareness of triggers, de-escalation strategies, varying staff deployment, varying teaching group/size, access to quiet area etc.)			
Any immediate actions to be taken, by whom and by when?			

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Role:</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Copy to:</b>



**Appendix C:**  
**Positive handling Incident report from**

Name of young person:		Name of person writing report:	
Date & time of incident:		Location of incident:	
Name(s) of staff involved:		Name (s) of witnesses:	
Reason for intervention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury to a person</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Criminal offence</li> <li>• Serious disruption</li> <li>• Absconding</li> </ul>		External agencies informed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical staff</li> <li>• Parent/carer</li> <li>• Social worker</li> <li>• Police</li> <li>• other</li> </ul>	
<b>Describe events leading up to the incident:</b>			
<b>✓ Behaviours that occurred:</b>			
Verbal abuse	Slapping	Punching	
Biting	Pinching	Spitting	
Kicking	Hair grab	Neck grab	
Clothing grab	Body holds	Arm grab	
Weapons/missiles	Head butting	Self-mutilation	
Pushing	Disruption	Damage to property	
Who was at risk?			
<b>Describe any changes made to routines, staff or environment in an attempt to reduce the risk:</b>			
<b>✓ Diversions, Distractions &amp; De-escalation strategies attempted:</b>			
Verbal advice		Limited choice	
Clear directions		Distraction	
Negations		Planned ignoring	
Take up time		Consequences	
Time out		Humour	

Change of staff	Success reminders
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<b>✓ Physical interventions used &amp; duration of restraint:</b>		
Help hug	Sitting wrap	Other:
Cradle hug	One person escort	
Wrap	Two person escort	
<b>Why was this action in the best interest of the student?</b>		
<b>Medical intervention</b>		
Injury to child:	Action taken:	
Injury to staff:	Action taken:	
Injury to others:	Action taken:	
<b>✓ Action following the event:</b>		
Person responsible for safeguarding has checked this record:		
Parent/carer informed by phone:		
Parent/carer informed by letter:		
Risk assessment to be carried out:		
Positive Handling Plan to be completed:		
Procedural change:		
Student support:		
Staff support:		
Relationship repair:		
Disciplinary action:		
Has any complaint been lodged: YES    NO (details not to be recorded here)		
Signed by:		Role: