



St Mary's and Our Lady's Academies – Respectful Restrictive Engagement Policy

Our Vision
"Many Hearts, One Accord"

Many hearts, one accord - in God's love, we grow and learn together to build the kingdom of God.
(School Mission Statement)

Approved by: Local
Academy Committee

Date: November 2025

Next review due by: November 2026

Person responsible for
implementation of this
policy: Mrs Rathbone

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, 'Respectful Restrictive Engagements' training (March 2024) and other school policies on Restorative Practise, Anti Bullying 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 restraint is deemed unavoidable. These occasions fit into three key headings:

- Being a risk to themselves
- Presenting a risk to others
- Presenting a risk to the environment to such an extent that the environment may become risky

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 restrictive engagement 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 challenging 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 2025.



Principles of Rational Engagement – PRIDE model

Where restrictive engagement needs to take place staff should always adopt the PRIDE model, ensuring that the care, respect and safe management of the individual are at the forefront of any situation.

P – PROTECT – The safety of children and staff, and the need to minimise is paramount. Named staff have been trained to support and hold children in an appropriate, safe and dignified way.

R – Respect – Staff will always respect the feelings, rights and views and the child needing restrictive engagement.

I – Individuality – Staff will always act in a non-judgmental, person-centred approach.

D – Dignity – Staff will always consider the child's self worth and self esteem when needing to use restrictive engagement

E – Empowerment – Ensuring equality, independence and confidence of the individual

Planning for Incidents

Where we are aware that a pupil may be likely to behave in a way that may require restrictive engagement, the school adopts a proactive approach to managing these incidents by ensuring that a SEN Pupil Passport and Risk Assessment has been completed.

Appropriate planning is in place to:

- De-escalate behaviour and the use of non-restrictive interventions before it disrupts others.
- Manage the pupil (e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict and where necessary restrictive engagement is 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

Principles of Holding

- Always adopt the PRIDE model
- 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. **RESTRAINT SHOULD NOT BE DONE FOR MORE THAN 10 MINUTES. BUT ANY RESTRAINT MUST ALWAYS BE ENDED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** (NICE, 2015)
- 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.

4D'S Framework



- Staff will always ensure to implement the 4D's framework throughout any type of intervention
- **Determine** - Why are you holding the person?
- **Dangers** - Consider the dangers to all those involved - physical, psychological or environmental?
- **Decrease** - Decrease the level of intervention at the earliest opportunity
- **Disengage** - Disengage from the hold at the earliest opportunity

Post Incident Support

Following restrictive engagement, the following actions will need to be considered

- Check if medical attention required
- Protection of the witness
- Ensure that the incident is fully recorded and reported
- Provide 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. If injuries result from the application of reasonable force, medical help should be sought straight away.

Staff Responsibilities

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 – Use of ABC
- 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

[Use of reasonable force advice Reviewed July 2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)



Appendix A: **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:

- Debra Statham (Head of School)
- Demi Molloy
- Imogen Minor
- Gina Law
- Danika Sigley



Appendix B:
RISK ASSESSMENT
For use where respectful restrictive engagement may occur

School:		Risk assessment completed by:	
Name of child:	D of B:	Year Group:	
Identification of Risk			
Describe the foreseeable risks:			
•			
Is the risk:		potential	occurring
Assessment of risk			
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)			
Risk Reduction Options			
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?	
Signed:	Role:
Date:	Copy to:



Appendix C:
Respectful Restrictive Engagement Incident Report Form

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"> • Injury to a person • Damage to property • Criminal offence • Serious disruption • Absconding 		External agencies informed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical staff • Parent/carer • Social worker • Police • other 	
Describe events leading up to the incident:			
✓ Behaviours that occurred:			
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?			
Describe any changes made to routines, staff or environment in an attempt to reduce the risk:			
✓ Diversions, Distractions & De-escalation strategies attempted:			
Verbal advice		Limited choice	
Clear directions		Distraction	
Negations		Planned ignoring	
Take up time		Consequences	
Time out		Humour	
Change of staff		Success reminders	



✓ Physical interventions used & duration of restraint:		
Cushion/Blanket	Tuck In	Other:
Cushion/Pillow	One person escort	
Pillow/Pillow	Two person escort	
Why was this action in the best interest of the student?		
Medical intervention		
Injury to child:	Action taken:	
Injury to staff:	Action taken:	
Injury to others:	Action taken:	
✓ Action following the event:		
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: