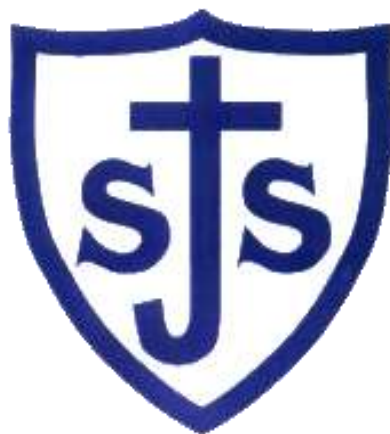


ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
CRAYFORD



POSITIVE HANDLING

Learning and growing together with Christ

Updated:	Spring 2024
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Approved by:	Full Governing Body

Contents

1. Aims	3
2. Legislation and statutory requirements	3
3. Catholic Context	3
4. Rights Respecting Context	4
5. Physical contact with pupils	4
6. Physical restraint	4
7. Preventative measures	5
8. Practice	5
9. Recording and Communication	6
Appendix 1 Staff Handbook Extract	7

1. Aims

Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties. This policy is intended to make staff aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted.

There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain a pupil physically, to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing what would be a criminal offence for an older pupil
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself)
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- Use of reasonable force in schools

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils

As a Catholic school, this policy is further informed by:

- Gospel Values for Catholic Schools, Raymond Friel, 2017

As a Rights Respecting school, this policy responds to:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

3. Catholic Context

As a Catholic school, the Gospel Values should be at the heart of any Catholic education, emphasising Christ as the foundation of all that we do as a school.

Gospel Values	Scripture
Non-violence gentleness	"But Jesus said, 'No more of this!' And he touched his ear and healed him." Luke 22:51
Justice action against wrong doing	"Then he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling things there." Luke 19:45
Integrity honesty, truth-telling	After the ascension, Peter and John were summoned before the Council of rulers, elders and scribes in Jerusalem and ordered to speak no more of the resurrected Jesus. Peter and John were unmoved by the order, stating they "cannot keep from speaking about what [they] have seen and heard." Acts 4:20

4. Rights Respecting Context

As a Rights Respecting school, we seek to promote and give due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article 19 Protection from violence, abuse and neglect	Ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by anyone else who looks after them.
Article 28 Right to education	Every child has the right to an education. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights.
Article 37 In humane treatment	Children must not... suffer cruel or degrading treatment or punishment.

5. Physical contact with pupils

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. Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:

- Holding the hand of a child in a line when going from one place to another
- When comforting a distressed pupil
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching
- To give first aid.

6. Physical restraint

Physical restraint should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him/herself or others. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour. It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations.

Staff should always act with the school's policy on behaviour, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour. Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in loco parentis and should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.

Failure to physically restrain a pupil who is subsequently injured or injures another, could, in certain circumstances, lead to an accusation of negligence. At the same time staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury as a result of their intervention.

7. Preventative measures

The school, through its use of pupil passports and application of strategies listed within Education, Health and Care Plans, will make staff aware of the relevant characteristics of individuals at greatest risk of needing restrictive physical interventions. At risk pupils should have agreed strategies and communication techniques in place that staff are familiar with, for example social stories which are a part of common practice in the classroom.

8. Practice

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment.

There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil's path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary. In all circumstances other methods should be used if appropriate or effective, and physical restraint should be a last resort.

When physical restraint becomes necessary:

Do

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible, e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

Don't

- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil
- Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing, e.g. around the neck
- Bend fingers or pull hair, slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil
- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)

9. Recording and Communication

Where positive handling has been used, with pupils outside of the strategies outlined as usual within their pupil passports or EHCPs, it should be reported on the day to a member of the senior leadership team and parents notified of what has taken place. The incident will be recorded on the school's Management Information System, within the behaviour module.

Appendix 1

Staff Handbook Extract

Physical Contact with Children

All staff have a legal duty of care for both themselves and others in their place of work, with an expectation that all employees are taking reasonable care. Schools cannot have a “no contact policy”.

There are some identified children, typically who are very young or with significant sensory needs, who respond positively to touch. This might include rubbing of the upper arms or back, tousling hair or other agreed strategies. These techniques are deployed following consultation with the EHT, HoS or SENCO for identified pupils. The number of pupils that such techniques might be deployed with is likely to be quite limited. These strategies should be included in the child's EHCP or pupil passport and communicated with the children's parents.

All school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force, but never as a punishment, in cases where it prevents an offence, personal injury or damage to themselves or others, and for the maintenance of good order and discipline. A good guide is that the use of force should only be applied as a last resort:

- Imminent risk
- Verbal de escalation has failed or will fail
- Disengagement is not possible
- Last resort

If a child needs to be restrained, which should be rarely, this process requires a minimum of two staff:

- Communicate
 - Do we intervene?
 - Do we disengage?
- Monitor
 - Where is the child in this moment of crisis¹?

Baseline ⇒ Triggering ⇒ Escalation ⇒ Violence ⇒ Resolution ⇒ Reflective ⇒ Recovery

- Corroborate
 - Did staff have care, custody and control which required them to:
 - Remove a child
 - Prevent disruption
 - Prevent leaving
 - Prevent a fight or assault
 - Prevent someone (including the child) harming themselves or others
 - Is the force proportionate to the risk faced in the situation?
- Manage the audience and environment
 - Should we contain rather than restrain?

If a child is likely to need a planned physical intervention, this should be included in the child's EHCP or pupil passport strategies as a foreseeable risk. The school avoids practices that might expose children to the foreseeable risk of injury or psychological distress when considering whether to physically restrain a child. The school recognises the dangers of positional asphyxia, where restraint or application of body positions that potentially could interfere with breathing.

For more information, please refer to the full positive handling policy.

¹ “The Assault Cycle”, Kaplan & Wheeler