

# **St Matthew's Church of England Primary School**



## **Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy**

# St Matthew's Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy

## Rationale

1. St Matthew's is a safe, caring and inclusive environment for staff and children and we strive to promote positive attitudes to behaviour for all.
2. Our behaviour policy details the way in which we create a positive and caring ethos in the school.
3. Physical intervention is only ever used as a last resort when all other attempts to defuse a situation have broken down and then with the minimum of reasonable force.
4. Some children, because of the nature of their difficulties, will need additional help to manage their behaviour which, may result in the use of physical intervention if that child is in a crisis situation i.e. in danger of harming themselves or others.
5. Key staff will be trained and updated annually on the strategies and procedures they should adopt if all normal systems have failed i.e. there is such a crisis situation.
6. We are committed to equal opportunities for all irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, disability or religion. We will monitor the impact of this policy to ensure that no group is adversely affected.

## General aims

- Physical restraint should only be used as a last resort
- To protect every person in the school community from harm.
- To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful.
- To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations.
- To give full support to staff who have been assaulted or have suffered verbal abuse from pupils or others.

## Legal Framework

Physical Restraint should be limited to emergency situations and used only as the last resort. Under the Children (NI) Order 1995, it is only permissible as described under the heading "Physical Control".

Article 4 of the Education (N.I.) Order 1998 clarifies powers that already exist in common law.

It enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the head teacher, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Examples of possible situations are given in Appendix 1.

### **What does it mean to restrain a child?**

Physical restraint is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property. The proper use of physical restraint requires skill and judgement, as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of restraining.

### **Why use 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. Physical restraint skilfully applied may be eased by degrees as the child calms down in response to the physical contact. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

### **Staff authorised to use force**

Restrictive physical intervention is only ever used as a last resort, however, should the need arise, the staff at St Matthew's Primary School who have been trained and are authorised to use restrictive physical intervention are members of the SLT

### **Informing staff**

Staff who are temporary or visitors to St Matthew's (such as supply teachers, student teachers or outside agencies) are made aware of the restrictive physical intervention policy as soon as they meet with the HT/ DHT.

### **Planned intervention**

For a very small number of children and young people it may be necessary to incorporate restrictive physical intervention into a plan, for use when other de-escalation techniques have not resolved the situation. This is called a positive handling plan (PHP). Positive Handling Plans will only be in place for a child with a history of severe behavioural difficulties who, at times, is not able to respond to de-escalation strategies. The PHP is always agreed with the parents/carers and, where possible, the child. Advice is always sought from appropriate support services on the best ways to prepare our children with significant behavioural difficulties for off site visits. This helps to avoid anxiety in the child and staff and, therefore, the need for the use of restrictive physical intervention.

Before applying the PHP, staff should always consider:

- Can I de-escalate the situation?
- Can I avoid the need to use restrictive physical intervention by removing other pupils?
- Does the context warrant a physical intervention?
- Would intervening make the likelihood of serious injury to myself, the child or others less likely?

## **Unplanned intervention**

There may be circumstances in which members of staff may find themselves in an emergency/unforeseen situation, e.g. a pupil attempts to run into a busy road, children fighting, a child attempting to harm another with scissors.

In this event, staff should:

- Consider how to de-escalate the situation without the use of physical intervention
- As a precaution, summon a member of the SLT.

## **Risk Assessment**

Although most children at St Matthew's will never require any form of physical restraint, staff may have to deal with some children who exhibit disturbed, distressed and distressing behaviour. It is therefore necessary in this situation to carry out a risk assessment.

We will attempt to reduce risk by managing:

- The environment
- Body language
- The way we talk
- The way we act

## **Immediate risk assessment**

In an emergency situation, members of staff may need to make an immediate risk assessment before deciding on the appropriate action. They should consider:

- If the danger is to the other children, and it is possible to do so, remove them from the situation.
- In an extreme emergency, if there is no viable alternative, intervene using the minimum of force i.e. the risks associated with using force outweigh those of not using force.

## **Environmental Risk Assessment**

We have completed a risk analysis within the school and put in place strategies to minimise these risks in identified locations

## **Individual Risk Assessment (PHP)**

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, it is our intention to plan how to respond if the situation arises (PHP) Such planning needs to address:

- Managing the pupil ( e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict)

- Involving the parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take
- Briefing staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance);
- Ensuring that additional support can be summoned if appropriate.

### **Staff Training**

- the level and type of training;
- the arrangements for updating staff and how decisions about training are made;
- the types of restrictive intervention which staff who have been trained by the BILD accredited trainer are authorised to use i.e. types of hold and procedures.

### **Dealing with an incident**

- Physical restraint should be used as a last resort
- Tell the pupil who is 'misbehaving' to stop and state possible consequences of failure to do so
- If possible summon another adult
- Continue to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident
- If physical restraint has been used, make it clear that restraint will be removed as soon as it ceases to be necessary

Appropriate follow-up action should be taken, which may include:

- Providing medical support
- Providing respite for those involved

A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper or are acting out of anger or frustration when handling a problem.

### **Recording**

Staff should record all incidents of restraint in accordance with School Policy and report these to the head teacher.

Details should include:

- Name of pupil(s)
- Staff member(s) involved
- Factors necessitating physical intervention
- The strategies which were employed prior to using physical intervention
- How physical intervention was effected
- Outcome of restraint
- Any other action taken in the management of the incident

- Parents/carers should be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. This action should also be recorded.

## **Complaints**

We all have a duty of care to the young people in our school and cannot escape our legal responsibilities by avoiding taking appropriate and necessary action. Involving parents when an incident occurs with their child, together with a clear policy adhered to by the staff, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It will not prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and social services department under child protection procedures.

Staff, subjected to physical violence or assault, have the right to be supported in making a formal complaint to the police and, if necessary, taking private action against an assailant.

It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils, parents and governors about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Remember that adhering to the principles and procedures referred to in this policy statement, is part of effective practice and should minimise risk to young people in our care and enhance our own self-protection.

## **Statement for Parents**

In keeping with our home/school partnership, we will inform all parents/carers of our Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy. The key messages are that:

- The emphasis is on care and protection for everyone within our school community
- Our insistence that restraint will only ever be used as a very last resort
- Restraint will be needed on very rare occasions.
- Any situation that may arise will be handled with care and responsibility.
- We will always apply follow-up and repair strategies.

The statement will also outline:

- When staff are authorised to use reasonable physical intervention.
- What steps will be taken after an incident has been dealt with.
- The responsibilities of staff, pupils and parents/carers in resolving situations.

## **Consultation**

All stakeholders have been consulted in the production of this policy

## Appendix 1

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

- A child attacks a member of staff, or another child
- Children fighting;
- A child is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects;
- A child is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others;
- A child absconds from a class or tries to leave school (this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).
- A child persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom.
- A child is behaving in such a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

## Appendix 2

All teachers need to be aware of strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and steps which they can take to defuse and calm a situation.

- Move calmly and confidently.
- Make simple, clear statements.
- Intervene early.
- Try to maintain eye contact.
- If necessary summon help before the problem escalates.
- Remove audience from the immediate location.

There are situations where staff should not intervene without help:

Assistance should be sought when dealing with:

- an older pupil,
- a physically large pupil,
- more than one pupil, or
- when the teacher believes that s/he may be at risk of injury.

In those circumstances where the member of staff has decided that it is not appropriate to restrain the pupil without help they should:

- remove other pupils who might be at risk,
- summon assistance from colleagues,
- where necessary, telephone the police,
- inform the pupil(s) that help will be arriving,
- until assistance arrives, the member of staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

### Appendix 3

#### RECORD OF RESTRAINT

Date of incident:

Time of incident:

Pupil Name:

D.O.B:

Member(s) of staff involved:

Adult witnesses to restraint:

Pupil witnesses to restraint:

Outline of event leading to restraint:

Outline of incident of restraint (including restraint method used):

Outcome of restraint:

Description of any injury(ies) sustained by injured pupil and any subsequent treatment:

Date parent/carer informed of incident:

Time:

By who:

Outline of parent/carer response:

Signature of staff completing report:

Date:

Signature of Teacher-in-charge:

Date:

Signature of Head STS:

Date:

Brief description of any subsequent inquiry/complaint or action: