

**St Laurence’s Catholic Primary School**

**Positive Handling Policy**

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| This policy was reviewed: | September 2024 |
| By name: | Mr John Holmes |
| Position: | Chair of Governors |
| Signature: | *J Holmes* |

**Our Mission Statement**

**1. We aim to celebrate our partnership with the families we serve and the community we live in.**

**2. We aim to provide an education that enables each child to reach their full potential.**

**3. Our aim is the creation of an atmosphere where all are valued, gifts and talents are celebrated and the gospel values of love, respect and justice are at the heart of all we do.**

**Our Vision**

Everyone feels a sense of belonging,

Has the opportunity to shine,

To enjoy their teaching and learning

But most of all – to dream big!

**St Laurence’s Positive Handling Policy**

**Introduction**

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies used in positive handling process at Central and makes reference to the DfE 2012 guidance document on the Use of reasonable force.

We acknowledge that Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows school personnel to use reasonable force to restrain a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

* committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
* causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
* 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

(Department for Children, Schools and Families – The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils)

We understand that there is no legal definition when reasonable force can be used. ‘That will always depend on the precise circumstances of individual circumstances of individual cases. To be judged lawful, the force used would need to be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent. The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Use of force could not be justified to prevent trivial misbehaviour’.

The DfE guidance on the Use of reasonable force outlines the following:

**What is reasonable force?**

**Who can use reasonable force?**

**When can reasonable force be used?**

The guidance clearly states:

**Schools can use reasonable force to:**

* remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
* prevent a pupil from behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
* prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behavior that disrupts the behavior of others
* prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
* restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through a physical outburst

**Schools cannot:**

* use force as a punishment – **it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment**

Refer to (Department for Children, Schools and Families – The Use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils 2012) for further guidance

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

**Aims**

* To make school personnel aware that they can use reasonable force to restrain a pupil only in extreme circumstances.
* To make school personnel that the use of positive handling/use of reasonable force is only one of the strategies available to secure pupil safety/well-being and also maintain good order and discipline
* To ensure that school personnel uses this policy as only part of our overall pastoral care procedures and is closely related our policies on Behaviour Management Policy and the school Child Protection Policy

**Procedure**

**Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body has:

* delegated powers and responsibilities to the Head teacher to ensure all school personnel are aware that they can use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances;
* delegated powers and responsibilities to the Head teacher to ensure all school personnel and visitors to the school are aware of and comply with this policy;
* delegates powers to the Head teacher to ensure that all staff, and the governing body is aware of the DfE ‘Use of reasonable force’ guidance document
* responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
* responsibility for ensuring policies are made available to parents;
* nominated a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the coordinator and to report back to the Governing Body;
* responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

**Role of the Headteacher**

The Head teacher will:

* ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
* provide guidance and support to all staff;
* keep up to date with new developments and resources;
* monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
* annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

**Role of the Nominated Governor**

The Nominated Governor will: Chris Davies

* work closely with the Head teacher/Safeguarding Lead;
* ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
* ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
* report to the Governing Body every term;
* annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy

**Role of School Personnel**

School personnel will:

* comply with all aspects of this policy;
* take part in training in positive handling techniques;
* be aware of their responsibility in assessing risks in particular circumstances;
* report to the Head teacher/Safeguarding Lead head all incidents of restraint and record all incidents on the appropriate report form
* Read and comply with the DfE 2012 document ‘Use of reasonable force’ Advise for head teachers, staff and governing bodies

**Role of Pupils**

Pupils will be aware of and comply with the policy

**Role of Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers will be made aware of and comply with this policy

**Minimising the need to use force**

We have the following in place in order to reduce the likelihood of any member of staff using force:

* A calm, orderly and supportive school climate.
* A clear Behaviour Management Policy with Teaching and Management Guidance
* Strong and effective relationships between pupils and staff.
* Pupils at risk identified through a Personalised Support Plan in partnership with parent/carer
* A whole school approach to developing social and emotional skills
* An effective staff development programme that develops the skills of positive behaviour management.
* Identifying when an incident is going to happen.
* Using effective strategies to manage all incidents that occur.
* Informing a disruptive pupil that force may be used before using it.

**School Personnel authorised to use force**

All school personnel whose job involves supervising pupils may use force to restrain a pupil but only in extreme circumstances. For example 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/herself); 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.

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**Deciding whether to use force**

We believe that the use of force and what force to use must always depend on the circumstances of each incident.

We acknowledge that when faced with an incident there is very little time for school personnel to think before making a quick but effective decision.

However, school personnel must be aware of and consider the following:

* Assessing the seriousness of the incident that if force is not used then it could result in injury, damage or disorder.
* After considering alternatives for dealing with the situation, force is the only justifiable way of achieving a positive result.
* Assessing the number of risks connected with using force compared with using other strategies.

**Types of Incidents**

School personnel will have to make decisions when dealing with any of the following incidents:

* **Fighting** - pupils fighting.
* **Attack** - a pupil attacks an adult or another pupil.
* **Damage to property** – a pupil deliberately damages property or is about to.
* **Injury or damage** – a pupil causes or is about to cause injury or damage.
* **Absconding** – when a pupil tries to leave school which could put his/her own safety at risk, the safety of others or the damage to property.
* **Defying an instruction** – when a pupil persistently refuses to leave a classroom.
* **Disruption of lessons** – when a pupil’s behaviour seriously disrupts a lesson.
* **Disrupting a school event** – when a pupil’s behaviour seriously disrupts a school event.

**Using Force**

When faced with an incident and before force is used, school personnel must

* act in a calm and measured manner;
* show no anger or frustration;
* tell the pupil to stop misbehaving or restraint will be used but will stop when the pupil behaves

School personnel may use the following types of force:

* **passive physical contact** by standing between pupils or by blocking a pupil’s path;
* **active physical contact** byusing restrictive holds, leading a pupil by the arm or hand or ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back

School personnel must make every effort not to harm a pupil or restrain a pupil that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct.

**Risk Assessments**

Risk assessments are in place for:

* a variety of potential incidents
* individual pupils
* We have two stages of risk assessment for pupils

Stage 1 particularly concentrates on low risk with an emphasis on drawing up an action plan to support the pupil and parent/carer. We pay particular attention to responsive strategies. We use a range of approaches (including humour, distraction, relocation and offering choices) as direct alternatives to using restrictive physical intervention.

Stage 2 risk assessment maybe used for minority cases were pupils may present as high risk. The assessment focuses on analysis of behaviours. Planning to support the pupil and parent to draw up an action plan and pupil contract. We use a guide to ensure preventative measures and proactive measures are implemented to support each pupil to avoid serious inconsequential behaviors.

We record the outcome from these planning meetings and seek parental signature to confirm their knowledge of our planned approach. We review these plans at least once every 4 to 6 months, or more frequently if there are any concerns about the nature of frequency of the use of restrictive physical intervention or where there are any major changes to the child’s circumstances.

**Recording Incidents**

Records will be kept of all incidents. These will be logged in the physical intervention file and on cpoms.

**Reporting Incidents**

All incidents will be reported to the Head teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead who will inform parents.

**Post-incident Support**

After an incident has occurred the following procedure will take place:

* First aid if necessary
* Medical help if necessary
* Emotional support to pupils and school personnel
* Discussions with parents

**Monitoring**

* We monitor the use of restrictive physical intervention in our school. The Head teacher, with the Safeguarding Lead, are responsible for reviewing the records on a termly basis, and more often if the need arises, so that appropriate action can be taken. The information is also given to the head teacher who will quality assure that appropriate actions and strategies have been put in place. This information will be shared with Governors.

**Complaints and Allegations**

All complaints will be dealt with by the Head teacher or Safeguarding Lead.

**Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy**

Annually (or when the need arises) the effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated governor and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Governors.

**Covid 19 Pandemic-Additional Guidance**

The use of physical handling could be required even at this time as a Safeguarding response. If de-escalation and pre-emptive work has not alleviated a situation, staff may use the ‘least amount of force necessary’ in order to restore good order.

At a time when ‘social distancing’ is necessary, staff may be concerned about their own safety if undertaking physical handling situations and therefore the following procedures will be carried out

* Use de-escalation to try to reduce the behaviours of the learner and to reduce the likelihood of a physical intervention.
* Risk assessments for pupils who have behaviours which may cause increased likelihood for physical intervention to be carried out.
* Use the de-escalation time to summon extra support if required.
* Give verbal reminders that you do not want this to lead to physical intervention.
* Staff who are classed as or live with someone who is vulnerable will not be involved in the positive handling situations.
* Additional protections will be put into place. Staff will be provided with masks and gloves to use in the event of positive handling being necessary.
* At the discretion of the Headteacher, staff and pupils involved in a physical handling incident will be given the opportunity to undertake appropriate hygiene measures. If the child needs to go home or the parent requests that they go home, this could be marked as an authorised absence.
* Use the de-brief to consider the consequences of the physical handling and enforce the school’s behaviour policy. This is particularly relevant if the pupil has used Covid-19 as a threat to staff or pupils or has attempted to use body fluids (spitting, biting, scratching) to inflict an injury on staff or pupils.

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| **Headteacher:** |  | **Date:** |  |
| **Chair of Governing Body:** |  | **Date:** |  |

**REVIEW OF POLICY**

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and every year by the Governing Body. If changes are made to the policy, the Governing Body will ratify amendments.

This policy was reviewed: September 2024

Signed: J Holmes

Designation: Chair of Governors

Date: 12th September 2024