

## St. Andrew's Church of England Primary School

### Appendix to Behaviour and Discipline Policy

#### Policy for Physical Control of Pupils

##### Rationale

The Behaviour Policy at St. Andrew's is aimed at encouraging self-discipline in a positive atmosphere of praise and reward.

Sanctions are included, but occasions could arise, and frequently do arise in many other schools, where reasonable force could be needed to control or restrain a pupil or pupils. The aim of the policy is to provide clear guidelines in such a situation. It is based on The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils in Schools, government guidance to school document published in 2013 which can be viewed at [DfE advice template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

**Any use force to control or restrain pupils should only ever be used as an absolute last resort.**

##### Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to

- maintain the safety of pupils and staff
- prevent serious breaches of school discipline
- prevent serious damage to property

Teachers and other members of staff who are authorised by the Head teacher are allowed to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:-

- committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under age of criminal responsibility);
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing damage to property (including the pupil's own property);
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere.

Authorised personnel apart from members of the school's teaching staff, include:-

Nursery Nurses  
Teaching and Learning Support Assistants  
Special Needs Assistants  
School Meals Supervisory Assistants  
School Office staff  
Governors  
Voluntary helpers in school

The authorisation applies at any time when a teacher or other authorised member of staff, is on school premises or when he or she has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned, elsewhere i.e. on a school trip or holiday.

##### Minimising the need for use of force

All other appropriate strategies should be tried, if at all possible, with disruptive pupils before there is any question of physical control. Such strategies should normally include:-

- Being aware of the build up of tension. Looking out for signs of aggression in the pupil and yourself and learning to control your own emotional state. Know the trigger points.

- Being aware of the individual pupil's response to frustration and so anticipate problems.
- Listening to the pupil both actively (acknowledging the pupil's feelings) and passively (giving full attention and conveying interest).
- Talking to the pupil and reasoning. If the behaviour continues then issue a warning with a brief clear statement such as "Please will you....." before proceeding (if necessary) to such statements as "I am instructing you to....." and "If you don't stop I will....."

Throughout the process it is important to try to diffuse the situation by using some or all of these methods:-

- Using a calm voice - lower one's voice, do not shout.
- Do not approach the pupil head on, approach from the side so the child can see you but remain at arm's length out of their personal space.
- Isolating the area so that there is no audience.
- **Bringing in a second member of staff not involved in the situation using the red card system to send for other members of staff, the Head teacher and/or Deputy Headteacher**
- Guiding a pupil away from the situation - withdrawal of an agitated pupil may be more effective than restraint
- Negotiating with an angry pupil if possible, especially when the member of staff is the only adult present.
- Offering alternatives to the behaviour e.g. "Why don't we sit down and talk this through?"
- Using conciliatory body language, arms open, emphatic expression, sitting down, etc..

### **The Principles of Physical Restraint of Managing Confrontation.**

- Physical restraint must be seen as choice of last resort.
- Staff should have grounds for believing that immediate action is necessary to prevent a pupil injuring himself or others, or causing damage to property or engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline.
- Staff should take steps in advance to avoid the need for physical restraint (see above). E.g. through dialogue and diversion, and the pupil should be warned orally that physical restraint will be used unless he desists.
- Only the minimum force necessary should be applied.
- **Every effort should be made to secure the presence of other staff before applying force to restrain or control.** Other staff should keep a close watch on the situation as it develops and be ready to give support if necessary - it is often helpful to "distract" any other pupils around so that they do not become involved and make the incident worse.
- Force to restrain or control should be gradually relaxed as soon as it is safe to allow the pupil to regain self-control.
- Force to restrain or control should be an act of care and control to support a child 'in crisis' not punishment.

- Force to restrain or control **must** not be used purely to force compliance with staff instructions when there is no immediate risk to people or property.
- Force to restrain or control should be carried out in a firm and calm manner without being aggressive towards the pupil.
- A distinction must be maintained between the use of “one-off” intervention which is appropriate in the particular circumstance and using it repeatedly as a regular feature of a regime.
- The age and competence of the pupil should be taken into account in deciding what degree and manner of intervention is necessary.
- Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the child / young person, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent side effect of ensuring that the child / young person remains safe. Any adjustments to professional technique are examined in the recording and reporting phase of the procedures in light of any issues arising out of a crisis episode.
- It is important that the child is counselled - probably by another member of staff and the situation talked through. It is also important that at some stage the child and the “restrainer” talk over the incident. After restraining an aggressive child the staff member(s) may also be upset or even hurt and they will need the time and the opportunity to put the incident into perspective - the child has released his aggression but the staff have kept theirs in check.
- A detailed report of any incident where force is used should be completed by all members of staff involved as soon as possible after the incident. These reports should be dated and, where appropriate, signed. Witness statements may also be sought. Accident/Incident Forms should be completed and filed in a ‘Restraint Folder.’ Members of staff should consult with their Professional Association before the report is submitted.
- Parents/Guardians and any attached Social Workers should be informed as soon as possible after an incident involving physical intervention.

### **Physical Intervention in Practice.**

If physical intervention is necessary, in the view of a member of staff, the following guidelines should be followed:-

- Do not attempt physical intervention before assistance has been obtained; one additional authorised member of staff should be sent for; more, only if circumstances warrant, in your view.
- Use the minimum force required to control aggression and should apply it in a manner which attempts to prevent rather than provoke aggressive reaction. Restraint must not be applied any longer than necessary and the adult should continue to calm the pupil down and should cease the restraint when it appears safe to do so.
- Make every effort to safeguard the vulnerable areas of the pupil’s body when restraining a child who is being violent, e.g. head, throat, chest and abdomen. If limbs have to be grasped, they should be held near to a major joint to reduce the danger of fracture or dislocation. Gripping the head, throat or fingers should be avoided.
- The following are examples (and not an exhaustive list) of what would not be regarded as acceptable as they might reasonably be expected to cause injury:-
  - striking a pupil
  - pulling a pupil’s hair
  - pulling the pupil by the arm
  - squeezing a pupil’s neck

shaking a pupil  
lifting a pupil off the ground in order to intimidate  
twisting or forcing limbs against a joint  
tripping up a pupil

- Restraining pupils by their clothing still constitutes physical restraint: caution and professional judgement need to be exercised in situations where clothes could be held. A young person's response, where clothing is ripped or damaged, can sometimes trigger more extreme and violent behaviour or prolong the duration of an incident.
- A member of staff who is physically attacked or threatened must use the most appropriate means available for self-defence, this will be a matter for personal judgement. If no other pupils or adults are at risk the member of staff should remove themselves from the immediate vicinity, or from the attacker.
- Consider seeking medical assistance in dealing with the aftermath of incidents:-
  - where the physical health, prolonged hyper-activity or state of shock of a person involved suggests the need for medical examination, treatment or re-adjustment of existing medication;
  - where breathing patterns change during, or immediately afterwards, particularly if the person concerned uses an inhaler;
  - where there is evidence of physical injury.

### **Follow up actions.**

- Whenever an incident involving the use of physical control occurs, all staff and pupils involved should be offered an appropriate de-briefing from someone not involved in the incident. Recovery time should be allowed.
- If the Head teacher is unaware of the incident, inform immediately.
- An incident report form should be completed as soon as possible after the incident. An example is attached to this policy. These will be kept in the top drawer of slim cabinet in front office where incident and child protection incident forms are also available. Completed forms put into back of same folder.
- Where a member of staff or a pupil suffers an injury the standard LA Health and Safety Form must be completed and returned to the Department of Education and Arts.
- Parents should be informed of the incident, preferably before the child leaves school. A telephone call should be followed up by written notification. Parents will be offered the opportunity to discuss the incident with the Head teacher.

### **Training.**

It is very unlikely that force to restrain or control a child needs to be used at St. Andrew's and that if this is the case the pupils would already be identified and have a behaviour plan in place. All staff have undertaken Team Teach de-escalation techniques in January 2019 and are due for updates in January 2022. Refresher courses are regularly attended when required.

**Policy agreed by governors – June 2021**

**Review date – every 2 years unless incidents occur that require its review**