

English Martyrs' RC Primary School



Positive Handling Policy 2024-2025

ENGLISH MARTYRS' RC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Positive Handling Policy Updated April 2024 Review Date: April 2025

Introduction

The responsible person for the implementation of the policy is the Head Teacher, Paula Cornell.

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Head Teacher and the Governing body.

It follows the guidance of the Positive Handling Policy issued by Sunderland City Council.

The policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interactions between adults and pupils.

The policy has been prepared for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils and for volunteers working within the school to explain the school's arrangements for the care and control of pupils presenting very challenging behaviour. Its contents are available to parents and pupils. A statement about the school's Discipline and Behaviour Policy is made to parents in the school prospectus.

This statement includes information on the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils.

Purpose of policy

Good personal and professional relationships between staff and pupils are vital to ensure good order in our school. It is recognised that the majority of pupils in our school/provision respond positively to the discipline and control practised by staff. This ensures the well-being and safety of all pupils and staff in English Martyrs' School. It is also acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances, staff may need to take action in situations where the use of reasonable force may be required. English Martyrs' School acknowledges that physical techniques are only part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all staff in this school/provision:

- clearly understand this policy and their responsibilities in the context of their duty of care for taking appropriate measures where reasonable force is necessary and
- are provided with appropriate training to deal with these difficult situations.

Implications of the policy

The Education and Inspection Act 2006 stipulates that reasonable force may be used to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school among any of its pupils, whether the behaviour occurs in a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere within the school (this includes authorised out-of-school activities);
- self-injuring;
- causing injury to others;
- committing an offence;

The application of any form of physical control places staff in a vulnerable situation. It can only be justified according to the circumstances described in this policy. Staff, therefore, have a

responsibility to follow the policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention.

Reasonable force will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk.

Definitions

Reasonable force: No legal definition of reasonable force exists. However, for the purpose of this policy and the implementation of it in English Martyrs' School:

- positive handling uses the minimum degree of force necessary for the shortest period of time to prevent a pupil harming him/herself, others or property.
- the scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled, and the nature of the harm they might cause.

Physical contact: Situations in which proper physical contact occurs between staff and pupils, e.g. in the care of pupils with learning disabilities; in games/PE; to comfort pupils.

Physical intervention: This may be used to divert a pupil from a destructive or disruptive action, e.g. guiding or leading a pupil by the hand, arm or shoulder with little or no force.

Physical control/restraint: This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. It is important to note that the use of 'reasonable force' should be seen as a "last resort".

The level of compliance from the pupil determines whether or not the interaction is an intervention or a control/restraint.

Underpinning values

Everyone attending or working in this school/provision has a right to:

- recognition of their unique identity;
- be treated with respect and dignity;
- learn and work in a safe environment;
- be protected from harm, violence, assault and acts of verbal abuse.
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Pupils attending this school and their parents have a right to:

- individual consideration of pupil needs by the staff who have responsibility for their care and protection;
- expect staff to undertake their duties and responsibilities in accordance with the school's policies;
- be informed about school rules, relevant policies and the expected conduct of all pupils and staff working in school;
- be informed about the school's complaints procedure.

The school will ensure that pupils are given support to understand the need for and respond to clearly defined limits, which govern behaviour in the school.

Authorised staff

In this school, all trained staff are authorised to use reasonable force within the context of The Education and Inspection Act 2006 – 'The use of reasonable force to control and restrain pupils'.

The school provides training for staff and the Head Teacher retains a list of all those staff trained. The list is reviewed on an annual basis (or more frequently if the context requires it).

The Head Teacher is responsible for making clear to whom such authorisation has been given (in what circumstances and settings they may use force and for what duration of time this authorisation will last).

The Head Teacher will ensure that those authorised are aware of, and understand, what the authorisation entails.

Those whom the Head Teacher has not authorised will be told what steps to take in the case of an incident where control or restraint is needed.

Staff from the LEA working within the school

Support services will have their own policies for care and control of pupils. When working within the school, it is the Head Teacher's responsibility to ensure that colleagues from support services are aware of school policy and practice.

Training

It will be the responsibility of the Head Teacher to arrange suitable training. Training for all staff will be made available. No member of staff will be expected to undertake the use of reasonable force without appropriate training. Prior to the provision of training, guidance will be given on action to be taken. Arrangements will be made clear as part of the induction of staff and training will be provided as part of on-going staff development.

Following a review of existing school practice(s), in consultation with governors/staff and the Local Authority, the school is committed to using the Team-Teach Programme in Positive Handling Strategies, providing this approach continues to adopt the British Institute for Learning Difficulties (BILD) Code of Practice on physical intervention, and has been or is working towards being accredited through the BILD Physical Interventions Accreditation Scheme.

English Martyrs' School acknowledges that physical techniques are only a part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management. The governors of the school will ensure that:

- the behaviour policy is reviewed on a two-year cycle at least;
- training will be delivered on a needs-based approach and procedures are in place to monitor incidents, following a behavioural audit and implementation of appropriate risk management procedures;
- All training will include theory on at least the following:
 - causes of challenging behaviour;
 - prevention strategies;
 - positive behaviour management;
 - de-escalation;
 - risk assessment;
 - behaviour support planning;
 - de-briefing following incidents.
- Physical techniques are not treated in isolation and the school is committed to ensuring that, as a result of incidents, learning opportunities are created for children that allow them to 'own' and take responsibility for their behaviour.

Conclusion

Procedures need to be in place to ensure that appropriate support is provided for staff and that following an incident pupil/staff relationships are rebuilt and repaired to ensure that a positive learning environment is maintained.

All the techniques used take account of a young person's:

- age;
- gender;
- level of physical, emotional and intellectual development;

- special needs;
- social context, and
- they provide a gradual, graded system of responses.

Where appropriate, Positive Handling Plans are written for individual children and, when appropriate, these will be designed through multi-professional collaboration. These should be included in any Pastoral Support Plans/IEPs.

Risk assessments need to be completed against each child when it is anticipated that physical restraint may need to be used, in the context of identified target behaviour(s) and environments in which they occur. The assessment should identify the benefits and the risks associated with the strategies being proposed.

Appendix 1

Use of force to control or restrain pupils: incident record form

Details of pupil or pupils on whom force was used by a member of staff (name, class).
Date, time and location of incident.
Names of staff involved (in directly or as witnesses).
Details of other pupils involved (directly or as witnesses), including whether any of the pupils involved were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social reasons.
Description of incident by staff involved including any attempts to de-escalate and and warnings given that force might be used.
Reasons for using force and a description of force used.
Any injury suffered by staff or pupils and any first-aid and/or medical attention required.

Reasons for making a record of the incident.
Follow-up, including post incident support and any disciplinary action taken against pupils.
Any information about the incident shared with staff not involved in it and external agencies.
When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the accident and any views they have expressed.
Has any complaint been lodged (details should not be recorded here)?
Report compiled by: Safeguarding Lead Name and role: Paula Cornell Headteacher