

St George's C. E. Primary School



Reasonable Force Policy

Approved by: Headteacher

Date approved: April 2024

Review Date: April 2025



Vision Statement

Jesus said: 'Love each other as I have loved you'. John 15:12

Our school motto, 'EVERYONE matters, EVERYONE achieves' is at the heart of everything we do and believe.

At St George's Primary School, we aim to prepare the children in our care to become well-rounded members of society on their journey through school life and beyond. We strongly believe that children learn best and can achieve their potential when they are happy and content. We endeavour to provide a safe learning environment with a warm, welcoming atmosphere which creates a sense of belonging amongst the children, the staff, the families and the community. We embrace their individuality and diversity, always encouraging respect and acceptance of each other as equal human beings and celebrating our differences.

We have high expectations of the children and we work hard to support them to become the best that they can be. For our children to flourish, socially and academically, we aim to provide an outstanding education that is both challenging and inclusive. All children are encouraged to embrace the many opportunities and the support school provides, so that they become curious learners who are motivated and resilient with a 'Can do' attitude. Our aim is to provide the children of St George's with countless positive experiences, along with happy lifelong memories, from their time with us. We also have high expectations of attendance. We encourage families to be at school every day and to arrive on time in order to not miss any learning.

Through our supportive and inclusive Christian ethos, we are proud to foster our school values of kindness, respect, friendship, honesty, happiness, perseverance, forgiveness and responsibility, embedding these within everyday life at school. We believe that the emotional health and wellbeing of the whole school community is fundamental to the ongoing success of our school.

We aspire to make our school a place of excellence where we educate, nurture and value everyone; that ALL children will enjoy learning and achieve their potential in the 'St George's Way.'

'Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.'
Mother Teresa.

Aims of the policy

This policy aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance so that any physical intervention that they undertake is carried out in a way that supports the values and principles described above. In particular, it aims to describe the circumstances in which restrictive physical intervention is an appropriate response and how staff at the school will fulfil their responsibilities in those circumstances. The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that staff, Governors and parents are aware of the policy. She will ensure that any necessary training/awareness-raising takes place so that staff know their responsibilities. The Education and Inspections Act 2006, the DfE Guidance Use of Reasonable Force July 2013 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 have been used to inform this policy.

Objectives

- To protect staff and students
- To prevent serious breaches of school discipline
- To prevent serious damage to property
- To reduce the likelihood of actions by staff being successfully challenged in the courts

What the law says

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:

- Committing an offence (or for a student under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- Causing personal injury to themselves or another;
- Causing damage to property belonging to them or another, including the school;
- 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.

What is reasonable force?

1. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
2. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm or to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight.
3. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
4. As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
5. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
6. School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

Who can use reasonable force?

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying pupils on a school organised visit.

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 behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or school trip or visit;
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour 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 physical outbursts.

Schools cannot:

- Use force as a punishment- it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

Deciding whether to use force

Before using force, staff should - where practicable – use the behaviour policy to try to regulate their behaviour.

Care should be taken to avoid giving the impression that the staff member is angry or frustrated. It should be made clear with calm language that as soon as the need for force ceases, it will stop.

The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

Staff working with special needs students will have an awareness of situations that may provoke difficult behaviour, preventative strategies and de-escalation techniques. It may also be decided to create a positive handling plan ([Appendix A](#)) to reduce the likelihood of the need for restrictive physical intervention as well as describing how such intervention will be carried out. This plan will be discussed with parents/carers.

Training for staff

Physical restraint is an available option, only to be used when other means of dealing with the situation have failed. Staff are made aware of this policy and have training on child protection and other training that will ensure they are aware of their duties and the law.

The below members of staff are CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute) trained. CPI training is behaviour management training providing strategies to safely respond to anxious, hostile or violent behaviour:

Sally Sixsmith (Head Teacher & DSL)
Kathryn Watts (Deputy Head Teacher & DSL)
Sarah Foxley (Assistant Head Teacher & DSL)
Vicky Mackeen (TA)
Jill Hough (TA)
Emma German (TA)

Recording incidents

We will keep a record of each significant incident of the use of force to control and restrain on CPOMS. Whether or not an incident is significant will be a matter for the school to decide on a case-by-case basis.

The following will be included on the incident log on CPOMS:

- Names of staff and pupils involved
- Time and place where the incident happened
- Details of the behaviour and the level of risk presented at the time
- Degree of force used
- Injuries sustained (if any)
- Space to represent the sequence of events
- Time and date the parents were informed

If more than one member of staff was involved, they should create an individual record rather than collaborate on one.

Post-incident support

As soon as possible after the incident parents/carers should be informed. If necessary, details of the incident will be confirmed in writing.

When assessing the incident, consideration may be given to involving multi-agency partners to offer support or advice.

Where a pupil is responsible for injury to another, as well as holding him/her to account and issuing appropriate sanction, the pupil will be given the opportunity to repair the relationships with pupils and staff affected by the incident.

The pupil will be offered appropriate support to help develop strategies for avoiding such crisis points in future.

Complaints and allegations

If a complaint is made against a member of staff about the use of force, the school will follow the guidance set out in Section Eight of the Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies. Any allegations made against members of staff will be acted upon as per the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy by one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.