

# MODEL SCHOOL POLICY ON THE USE OF FORCE TO CONTROL OR RESTRAIN PUPILS

## INTRODUCTION

This policy is based on guidance outlined in Circular 10/98 – 'The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils'. The Circular refers to the 1996 and 1997 Education Acts which clarify the position regarding the use of physical force by teachers and other staff working in schools, to control or restrain pupils. Staff should also refer to the whole school positive behaviour policy on behaviour and discipline.

## PART I

Staff should refer to the County Policy - Guidelines for the Use of Physical Restraint in Schools - for more detailed advice. This is available in.....

### **Policy File**

At St. Catherine's C of E Primary School we believe that the use of reasonable force is only necessary to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing a criminal offence
- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing damage to property, including their own
- 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 the classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere.

Headteachers need to clarify which adults are empowered to use restraint – Liz Shepherd, Jan Phillpotts. 'Staff' referred to in this policy applies to all **employed** adults on site. All **teachers** are empowered to restrain.

The use of restraint should always be a last resort. If practical before intervention, a calm warning or instruction to stop should be given and every effort should be made to achieve a satisfactory outcome without physical intervention. **In all circumstances help must be sent for, even when immediate intervention is necessary.** Restraint can take a variety of forms – many of which are outlined in Circular 10/98 and in the County Guidelines referred to above. Staff should always avoid touching/holding a pupil in a way that might be considered inappropriate.

Force, where used, should always be reasonable. There is no definition of 'reasonable force' it should always be proportional to the circumstances of the incident. It should be used only to control or restrain and never with the intent to cause pain or harm. It must, therefore, be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. In any action, due regard has to be taken to the age, understanding and sex of the pupil.

**The school accepts and understands that in accordance with the law corporal punishment is forbidden.**

## PART II

Where restraint has been necessary, the incident must be reported to a senior colleague

**The Headteacher** and logged. A report should be written and filed using the County Proformas which can be obtained from:

### **The Head Teacher's Office.**

In the event of an injury occurring, the appropriate H/S61 or HSW5 must be completed and the accident reporting procedures must be followed. Parents of the pupils involved will always be advised of an incident and it may be necessary for it to be followed up by other disciplinary action or pastoral support.

At least two member(s) of staff will be provided by the L.E.A. with training on the use of restraint

All parents must be made aware this policy. All new members of staff and part time staff will be expected to read this policy.

A policy on restrictive physical intervention (positive handling) is an integral but discrete element of the school's individual behaviour management policy. Should schools wish to devise their own policy it is recommended that it should be organised into sections covering the following :

- introduction
- school expectations
- positive behaviour management
- risk assessment and planning for use of restrictive physical intervention (positive handling)
- use of restrictive physical intervention in unforeseen and emergency situations
- post-incident support
- reporting and recording use of restrictive physical interventions
- monitoring use of restrictive physical interventions
- responding to complaints
- staff training.

Issues for schools to address :

1. Which staff other than teachers, will be authorised to use restrictive physical intervention (rpi) in your school? **Support Staff trained in Team Teach.**
2. By what process will staff be elected and authorised to use rpi in your school? **As designated by the HT depending on requirements in school.**
3. In what situations would the school consider it appropriate for teachers and other authorised school staff to use rpi? **Injuring themselves or others**
4. How will the school involve parent and others who know the young person in the process of developing individual behaviour management plans? **The SENCO will arrange a meeting to discuss ISP.**
5. How will individual behaviour management plans be recorded? **On electronic school form and hard copies kept by class teacher, parent and HT/ SENCO.**
6. Who will provide staff and pupils with support after incidents? **Teaching and support staff. Behaviour Support Department if required.**
7. Who will check for injuries, provide first aid and arrange for medical aid? **Trained staff.**
8. Who will report injuries to HSE? **The HT with the LA.**
9. How are incidents to be reported, recorded and notified? **On line recording of incidents if an injury occurs. Team Teach book.**

## Preferred Practice

### DO.....

- Wherever possible plan appropriate positive intervention and involve parents, carers and colleagues.
- Know the procedures within the school's guidelines for the use of physical restraint.  
A copy of these are available from .....Discuss these with a senior member of staff if you are unsure of any point.
- Be aware of pupils who have been physically restrained before and what happened.
- Send for adult help early if things begin to get out of hand and restraint seems likely.
- Assess the situation before acting.
- Stay calm – do not over-react.
- Use minimum restraint for minimum time until the situation is calm.
- Report the incident to the headteacher or senior member of staff as soon as possible and complete a report form.
- Consult your Line Manager, Professional Association or Trade Union if you have any concerns.
- Remember your professional obligations to all pupils in your care.

### DO NOT....

- Place yourself at risk : do not attempt to restrain a pupil who obviously carries a "weapon".
- Attempt to restrain a pupil when you have lost your temper.
- Allow the situation to get out of control.
- Use unreasonable force.
- Place yourself at risk of false allegation : avoid being alone with any pupil.