



ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL
*To lead those in our care to grow in their faith
and to benefit from an enriching education*

PUPIL RESTRAINT POLICY

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

All members of staff, including supply staff, non-teaching staff, volunteers and those that work on a contracted basis teaching or supporting teaching in the school, are empowered and authorised by the Headteacher and governors to use physical restraint when appropriate. Using such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, could prevent a pupil or pupils from:

1. Committing an offence;
2. Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
3. 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.

This applies where a member of the staff of a school is:

- on the premises of the school; or
- elsewhere at a time when as a member of its staff, he has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned (e.g. when patrolling a bus-stop at the end of the day).

Pupils should not be asked to restrain other pupils although it is recognised that their intervention may sometimes be useful.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO RESTRAIN A PUPIL?

Physical restraint is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the pupil from harming himself/herself or others or seriously damaging property. The proper use of physical restraint requires skill and judgement, as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of restraint. Staff must avoid acting in a way that might cause injury.

VULNERABLE PUPILS

Where it is known that a pupil has a proclivity for behaviour that might require the application of restraint, a risk assessment should be prepared under the direction of the pastoral director. It is accepted that mitigation steps will not always be known to staff who use restraint.

Particular care should be taken when a pupil is disabled, has Special Educational Needs or is Autistic. However, it is accepted that this may not always be known to staff who use restraint.

WHY USE RESTRAINT?

Physical restraint should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a pupil's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him/herself or others. Physical restraint skilfully applied may be eased by degrees as the pupil calms down in response to the physical contact. It is only likely to be needed if a pupil appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour. The following list is not intended to be exhaustive.

EXAMPLES OF CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH RESTRAINT MIGHT NEED TO BE USED

1. When the safety of (an)other pupil(s) is threatened.
2. When self-injury is being or is likely to be caused.
3. When a child or vulnerable young person is exposing him/herself to potential danger by seeking to leave the premises or vehicle.
4. When the safety of a member of staff or a visitor is threatened.
5. When there is a risk of serious damage to property.
6. When there is the risk of a crime being committed (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the child were not under the age of criminal responsibility).
7. When there is defiance and/or refusal to move.

If restraint is used, then all such incidents should be reported as soon as possible to the Associate Headteacher and recorded on a Physical Restraint Incident Report Form.

The following points should be recorded:

- (a) Details of the date, time and location of the incident.
- (b) Circumstances and significant factors which led to the incident.
- (c) The duration and nature of any physical restraint used.
- (d) The names of the pupil(s) and staff involved.
- (e) A description of any injury sustained by the pupil(s) or staff.
- (f) A description of any action taken after the event.
- (g) The full name and job title of the person making the report.
- (h) The signatures of:
 - The person who applied the restraint
 - The person making the report
 - The Head of School or Executive Headteacher

Parents will always be informed within 24 hours.

WHAT ACTION IS AND IS NOT ACCEPTABLE

In all cases of pupil restraint, there should be the use of only minimum force.

Acceptable forms of restraint include:

1. A safe holding tactic by which a pupil is restrained as far as possible without injury to any party or until he/she calms down.
2. Physical contact with a pupil designed to limit his/her movements which are posing a danger or involving serious disruption.
3. The physical removal of a child from one place to another.

4. The use of minimum physical force to remove a weapon/dangerous object from a pupil's grasp, when he/she is in the act of assaulting another person or evidently about to do so.

Unacceptable forms of action:

Any act, or the threat of an act that causes or threatens harm of the expectation of harm, for example, hitting, kicking, slapping, punching, poking, prodding, biting, throwing an object, unnecessarily rough handling or shaking, even in the heat of the moment. Such acts would constitute an application of force as punishment and would fall under the definition of unlawful corporal punishment, which is illegal under Section 548 of the Education Act 1996, unless they have been undertaken within the context of self-defence or the defence of others.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN USING RESTRAINT

1. **Before taking action that may involve physical restraint a member of staff should:**
 - Be mindful that the use of physical restraint should only be taken where there is no other realistic alternative.
 - Give clear instructions to the pupils as to what is required of him/her.
 - Warn the pupil, wherever possible, of the possible consequences of failure to comply (e.g. "If you carry on doing that I will have to stop you!"). Whatever warning is used must not contain any threat of physical assault.
 - If at all possible, summon a colleague. This reduces the risk of the first member of staff suffering physical violence or becoming emotionally involved and additionally provides a witness in case a complaint is subsequently received.
 - Physical restraint should only be attempted if it can be successfully undertaken.
2. **During the exercise of physical restraint staff must:**
 - Use minimum physical force.
 - Use such force for the minimum period necessary.
 - Keep trying to calm the situation.
 - Keep his/her temper under control.
 - Seek to avoid any injury to the pupil.
 - Cease the use of restraint as soon as safety is re-established.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years

This policy was agreed on 28 February 2011

This policy was reviewed on 28 March 2017

This policy was reviewed on 20 March 2018

This policy was reviewed on 14 March 2019

This policy was reviewed on 9 March 2021