



St Matthew's Bloxam C of E (VC) Primary School

Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy

November 2023

All Safeguarding Policies follow Warwickshire LA guidelines

St Matthew's Bloxam School encourages pupils to make positive behaviour choices. However pupils sometimes makes choices where they are not safe or others are not safe, on rare occasions this may result in a situation that requires some form of physical intervention by staff.

1. COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 allows teachers and other persons who are authorised by the Headteacher who have control or charge of pupils 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

- Causing injury to his/herself or others
- Committing an offence
- Damaging property
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline

This policy has been written with DFE 'use of reasonable force' advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2013.

2. DEFINITION OF REASONABLE FORCE AND RESTRAINT AT ST MATTHEW'S BLOXAM

This policy is based upon DCSF Guidance on the Use of Force 11/07 which superseded DfES Circular 10/98. Other relevant guidance documents include the Guidance on the Use of Reasonable force (2015), Working together to Safeguard children (Feb 2017), Behaviour and discipline in schools advice for headteachers and school staff (Jan 2016), Searching and screening pupils (Jan 2018).

The DFE guidance (2013, reviewed in 2015)) on the 'Use of Reasonable Force'
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf

defines and explains these terms in the following way:

- 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.
- Force is usually used to control or restrain, this can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a pupil needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- 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.
- Restrain 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.
- 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.

St. Matthew's Bloxam recognise that there is a need, reflected in common law, to intervene when there is an obvious risk of safety to its pupils, staff and/or property.

St. Matthew's Bloxam is committed to ensuring that all staff and adults with responsibility for pupils' safety and welfare will deal professionally with all incidents involving aggressive or reckless behaviour, and only use Restrictive Physical Intervention - RPI as a last resort in line with DCSF and the LA's advice. If used at all, it will be in the context of a respectful, supportive relationship with the pupil. We will always aim to ensure minimal risk of injury to pupils and staff. This doesn't prevent in an emergency a member of staff taking immediate action by using physical intervention as a first resort. Staff are advised that unless absolutely necessary they should avoid intervening alone. They should aim to win time to call for assistance from other members of staff.

This policy must be read and implemented in conjunction with the whole school Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy and approach to behaviour management.

The Education Act 1996 (Section 550A) states that it is lawful for teachers and other authorised staff to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from committing an offence, causing injury or damage or disrupting the good order and discipline of the school. Teachers are not contractually obliged to carry out restraint procedures and they are not contractually obliged to undertake training in any restraint procedures. **This policy applies to all staff that are authorised and trained to use RPI. All members of school staff have the power to use force.**

All members of staff who can use reasonable force have a legal power to use it. This power applies to any member of staff in 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 an organised school visit.

The DFE Guidance 2013 (reviewed 2015) on 'Use of Reasonable Force' states that 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, 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.
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

In addition to the general power to use reasonable force described above, Headteachers and authorised staff can use such force, as is reasonable given the circumstances, to conduct a search for the following 'prohibited items': knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images and any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property.

Force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

3. OUR APPROACH AT ST MATTHEW'S BLOXAM

This policy sits within the aims, ethos and values of St Matthew's Bloxam Primary School and we are committed to safeguarding our pupils and therefore we strive to achieve a best practice where physical intervention is not necessary. We actively research, adopt and promote strategies to reduce physical intervention and positively influence behaviour.

We aim to avoid the need for physical intervention and regard this as a last resort in a minority of situations. We always aim to deal with behaviour using a positive approach and therefore this policy should be read in connection with our Positive Behaviour and Relationship Policy, Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who Work with Children and Young People.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which RPI would be necessary or appropriate. Staff exercise their own professional judgement in situations which arise within the above categories. Staff act within our school's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour. Once again it is stressed that physical intervention is only used when all other strategies have failed to have the desired effect on a pupil's behaviour.

In line with Education Act 1996 (Section 550A) in the following situations staff must judge whether or not RPI would be reasonable or appropriate:

- Risk to the safety of pupils, staff or visitors or
- Where there is a risk of serious damage to property or
- Where a pupil's behaviour is seriously prejudicial to good order and discipline or
- Where a pupil is committing a criminal offence.

This judgement will take into account the circumstances of the incident. All staff should be aware that the use of RPI in response to a clear or developing danger of injury will always be more justifiable than the use of force to prevent damage or behaviour.

NB it is not illegal to touch a child. There are occasions when physical contact, other than using reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary. Examples of when touching a pupil might be proper and necessary are:

- ✓ Holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or walking around the school.
- ✓ When comforting a distressed child.
- ✓ When a pupil is being congratulated or praised.
- ✓ To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument.
- ✓ To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching.
- ✓ To give first aid.

Staff are aware that when they are in charge of children during the school day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting 'in loco parentis' and have a duty of care to all children they are in charge of. They therefore take reasonable action to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils. This being said, staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer as a result of their intervention.

Staff will understand the general importance of listening to and respecting children to create an environment that is calm and supportive, especially when dealing with pupils who may have emotional and behavioural needs, which may increase their aggression. All staff will understand the importance of responding to the feelings of pupils, which lie beneath the behaviour as well as to the behaviour itself.

Staff will also understand the importance of an individualised pupil centred approach to dealing with challenging behaviour. As part of this approach a risk assessment will be completed for every pupil on admission and regularly updated. Any pupils who exhibit behaviours which could potentially necessitate the use of physical intervention will have a behaviour support plan.

4. USE OF RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION (RPI)

Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) is applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control; it never takes a form which could be seen as punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical restraint i.e. only applying force necessary to stop or prevent danger should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below. In all circumstances, alternative methods are used as appropriate with physical intervention or restraint as a last resort.

All Staff received Safer Handling training November 2023.

In the exceptional circumstances when physical restraint or intervention becomes necessary, staff:

DO	DON'T
• Summon help/involve another member of staff if possible • Continue to talk to the pupil in a calm way • Use simple and clear language • Tell the pupil what s/he must do for them to remove the RPI (this may need frequent repetition) • Use the minimum force necessary • Be aware of any feelings of anger • Relax the restraint in response to the pupil's compliance • Follow specific trained RPI's	• Try to manage on their own • Stop talking even if the pupil does not reply • Act in temper • Allow a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil • Involve other pupils in the restraint • Use physical restraint or intervention as a punishment • Touch or hold the pupil in a way that could be viewed as sexually inappropriate conduct • Twist or force limbs back against a joint • Bend fingers or pull hair • Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck • Slap, punch, trip or trip up the pupil

Practice regarding specific incidents:

All policies, documents and practice regarding the supervision of pupils during the school day will be appropriate to the identified needs and behaviours of the pupils. This combined with the whole school approach to behaviour should minimise the likelihood of requiring RPI to an absolute minimum.

The physical action taken will take into consideration the age and competence of the pupil and will be the least detrimental alternative. Individual pupils' SEND needs are also taken into account and reflected in their personal behaviour support plan (BSP).

A member of staff recognising that a situation is escalating to a point demanding RPI yet feeling unable to carry this out must, as part of their duty of care, clearly tell the pupil(s) to stop the behaviour and seek help by any means available.

Any members of staff who are not trained in physical intervention or are not familiar with pupils BSPs are instructed to avoid the use of physical intervention techniques. This does not impede them from taking immediate action to defend themselves or assist others in the event of an unforeseen emergency.

Staff who become aware that another member of staff is intervening physically with a pupil will have a responsibility to provide a presence and to offer support and assistance should this be required.

A pupil's behaviour may be adversely affected by the presence of an audience. Wherever possible, the

audience will be removed, or if this is not possible, the pupil and member(s) of staff will withdraw to a quiet, but not completely private, place (e.g. two members of staff should be present or a door left open so that others are aware of the situation).

Staff will be aware of the need to tell the pupil being restrained, in a calm and gentle manner that the reason for the intervention is to keep the pupil and others safe. Staff will explain that as soon as the pupil is in control of their own behaviour, she/he will be released. The force used will be reasonable in the circumstances, absolutely necessary and proportionate.

Staff have been issued with radios and are aware that we operate a back-up system to enable staff to call for help in emergencies.

5. POSITIVE HANDLING

Physical intervention should only be used as a last resort and after exhausting every other strategy (especially those detailed in Behaviour Support Plan)

Examples of situations where positive handling may be appropriate include:

- pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil
- pupil is causing, or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- pupil absconds from school or room (this only applies if pupil is at risk if not kept in school or a room)
- a pupil behaving such that the lesson is being seriously disrupted.

More information relating to the Safer Handling process can be found on [their website](#).

NB. There may be rare occasions when a pupil exhibits exceptional behaviours requiring an emergency response (E.G. not detailed on the behaviour support plan) these incidents will be recorded and the plan reviewed. Advice and support can be sought from outside agencies (if behaviours are of significant enough concern.

6. RECORDING AN INCIDENT

All incidents that result in non-routine interventions will be recorded in detail using CPOMS.

Contemporaneous record (i.e. written within 24 hours of the incident's occurrence) will be made by the staff member involved in the incident on CPOMS. In all but the most extreme circumstances, incident reports will be completed (and submitted to SLT) during the actual day of incident occurrence.

Similarly, contemporaneous notes will also be made by any other members of staff involved (i.e. as witnesses or additional providers of support).

The record will contain the following information:

- The name(s) and the job title(s) of the member of staff who used reasonable force
- The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved
- When and where the incident took place
- Names of staff and pupils who witnessed the incident
- The reason that force was necessary
- Behaviour of the pupil which led up to the incident
- Any attempts to resolve the situation
- The degree of force used
- How it was applied
- How long it was used for
- The pupil's response and the eventual outcome
- Details of any injuries suffered by either staff or pupils

- Details of any damage to property
- Details of any medical treatment required (an accident form will be completed, where medical treatment is needed)
- Details of follow-up, including contact with the parents/carers of the pupil(s) involved
- Details of follow up involvement of other agencies – police, Social Care
- Witnesses may also be asked to provide a written account if appropriate.

Copy of this entry will be kept on the pupil's CPOMs file and retained in line with LA guidance on keeping educational records.

The school will report any injuries caused to pupils or staff in accordance with RIDDOR (HSE Regulations 1995)² and senior staff will monitor and evaluate this termly. Pupils who are identified as likely to require RPI as part of their behaviour management will require a BSP alongside their Risk Assessment. This is drawn up in response to the risk posed by the pupil's behaviour and is shared with all staff, parents / carers and the pupil if appropriate.

7. DEBRIEFING ARRANGEMENTS

The pupil and the member of staff will be checked for any sign of injury after an incident. First aid will be administered to anyone who requires it, or medical treatment obtained.

The pupil will be given time to become calm while staff continue to supervise her/him. When the pupil regains complete composure, a senior member of staff (or her/his nominee) will discuss the incident with the pupil and try to ascertain the reason for its occurrence. The pupil will be given an opportunity to explain things from her/his point of view. All necessary steps will be taken to re-establish the relationship between the pupil and the member(s) of staff involved in the incident.

In cases where it is not possible to speak to the pupil on the same day as the incident occurred, this informal discussion will take place as soon as possible after the pupil returns to school.

All members of staff involved will be allowed a period to debrief and recover from the incident. This may involve access to external support. A senior member of staff (or her/his nominee) will provide support to the member(s) of staff involved.

Staff involved in the incident will, at the earliest possible opportunity (on the same day), record the incident on CPOMs, clearly stating that physical intervention has been used. This will notify members of the senior leadership team responsible for behaviour, welfare and safety including the Head teacher. who will initiate the formal de-brief procedures including a phone call to parents, a meeting with all members of staff involved, a debrief with the pupil.

Supporting the member of staff is equally as important as the welfare of the pupil, one group will support the staff member following any incident and another group will be there to support the pupil.

8. TRAINING

Staff trained in Restrictive Physical Intervention need to update their training on a regular basis and ensure that their training record is kept up to date.

All new staff to the service will attend a Safer Handling (or other appropriate NVQ equivalent) training course as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Safer Handling have resources and information on their [You-tube](#) channel which can assist as an intermediate learning tool.

9. AUTHORISATION OF STAFF TO USE RESTRICTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTION (RPI):

We recognise that RPI will be seldom used and it is a last resort to maintaining a safe environment and in accordance with a pupil's individual care plan.

All staff trained to use RPI are authorised to use RPI as appropriate.

Best practice will be monitored. Frequent sessions to practise the use of techniques, as well as to disseminate any revised information (including guidance) will be included as part of the school's normal scheduled CPD or meetings.

These meetings will be open to all staff, who have been authorised to use RPI.

Any members of staff who are trained in physical intervention or are not familiar with pupils behaviour plans are instructed not to use physical intervention techniques unless in the case of an unavoidable emergency.

In the event of a complaint being received by the school in relation to the use of physical force by staff, the matter will be investigated in accordance with relevant guidance.

In accordance with Department for Education Guidance:

- *School staff have a power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.*
- *Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.*
- *Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.*

10. ARRANGEMENTS FOR INFORMING PARENTS / CARERS.

Parents / Carers will be informed of the school's policy regarding positive handling in the following ways: the policy will be available on the website.

All parents will be informed after a non-planned incident where RPI is used with a child and an opportunity to discuss the incident with a member of SLT will be offered.

11. DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS

In cases involving children with special needs or who are disabled, risk assessments and positive support plans will be undertaken and updated regularly.

12. RISK ASSESSMENTS

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning (recorded on an Individual Behaviour Support Plan) addresses:

- Strategies to be used prior to intervention.
- Ways of avoiding 'triggers' if these are known.
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the school might need to take.
- Briefing of staff to ensure that they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance).

- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate.
- The school's duty of care to all pupils and staff.

13. COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS

This clear physical intervention and restraint policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents/carers, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation under our Complaints Procedure. If following preliminary investigations it is deemed necessary, the Headteacher will contact the LADO in line with our Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy

Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy

Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults who Work with Children and Young People.

14. REVIEW

Reviewed 2023

To be reviewed every 3 years – **Next Review November 2026**

Suggested Further Reading:

- HM Government Guidance: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' May 2016
- Service Children's Education Policy: 'Restrictive Physical Intervention'. May 2013
- Department for Education Guidance: 'Use of reasonable force – advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies'. July 2013 (To be reviewed May 2015)
- Department for Education Guidance: 'Keeping children safe in education - Statutory guidance for schools and colleges'. September 2016