



# Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

"Living and Learning in Faith"

## **Introduction**

As a Catholic Primary School we firmly believe that our faith is central to all we undertake and that all our policies will reflect our central mission "Living and Learning in Faith."

This policy helps us to focus in on the techniques we employ to make a fundamental impact on the quality of the relationships we aim to develop and the spiritual, physical and intellectual development of the children in our care.

## **Mission Statement**

The aim of our school is:

To provide a loving Catholic environment which will help each individual member of the school family grow morally, spiritually and academically in the love of Jesus Christ. This means we aim to meet our children's needs in the light of the Good News of Jesus Christ that God loves us all. This is found in the life of the school through:

- The quality of relationships based on love, care, respect and trust.
- Prayer, reflection and celebration
- Learning and teaching that enables children to reach their full potential.
- Partnership between home, school and parish.

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## **Care and Control Policy Statement**

### **SECTION 550A**

This section allows teachers and other persons who are authorised by the headteacher to have control of charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a pupil at Our Lady's Catholic Primary School from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility);

- injuring themselves and others;
- causing damage to property (including the pupil's own property);
- 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 a classroom during a teaching session or elsewhere.

The provision applies when a teacher or other authorised person, is on the school premises and when he or she has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned elsewhere, e.g. on a field trip or other authorised out of school activity.

The Headteacher has identified people, other than teachers, whom she wishes to authorise to have control or charge of pupils and therefore be able to use force if necessary. The Headteacher will inform the people concerned and ensure that they are aware of and properly understand what the authorisation entails. The Headteacher will keep an up-to-date list of authorised people and ensure that teachers know who they are. A copy of this list will be kept in the school office.

### TYPES OF INCIDENTS

There are a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a pupil. They will fall into three broad categories:

- a. where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury;
- b. where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property;
- c. where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Examples of the situations that fall within one of the first two categories are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or other pupil;
- pupils are fighting;
- a pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects;

- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he or she might have or cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others;
- a pupil absconds from class or tries to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom;
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

### REASONABLE FORCE

There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force'. So it is not possible to set out comprehensively when it is reasonable to use force, or the degree of force that may reasonably be used. It will always depend on the circumstances of the case. There are two relevant considerations:

- the use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore, physical force at Our Lady's Catholic Primary School cannot be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that clearly could be resolved without force.
- any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result and in proportion to the seriousness of the incident.

### PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before intervening physically staff should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and explain what will happen if s/he does not. Staff should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and staff should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to merely punish the pupil.

## RECORDING INCIDENTS AT OUR LADY'S SCHOOL

It is important that there is a detailed, contemporaneous, written report of any occasion (except minor or trivial incidents) where force is used. It may help to prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident and it will be helpful should there be a complaint.

Our Lady's Catholic Primary will keep an up-to-date record of all such incidents in the Serious Incident File. Immediately following any such incident the member of staff concerned should tell the Head or senior member of staff and provide a written report as soon as possible afterwards. This written report will include:

- the name(s) of the pupil(s) involved and when and where the incident took place;
- the names of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident;
- the reason that force was necessary, e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil or others;
- how the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how force was applied and for how long;
- the pupil's response and the outcome of physical contact;
- details of any injury suffered by the pupil, other pupils, or a member of staff and of any damage to property.

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from a senior colleague or a representative of their professional association when compiling a report. They should also keep a copy of the report.

Incidents involving the use of force can cause the parents of the pupil involved great concern. It is always advisable to inform parents of an incident involving their child and give them the opportunity to discuss it. The headteacher, or the member of staff to whom the incident was reported, will need to consider whether that should be done straight away or at the end of the school day also whether parents should be told orally or in writing.

## PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES:

Young children and children with SEN needs may need staff to provide physical prompts or help. Touching may also be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. Teachers should use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support.