



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Restraint Policy

This policy should be read in light of our Mission Statement that states:

'At St. Joseph's, we live, love and learn by the example of Jesus'

1. Definition

- Restraint occurs in school when a member of staff uses physical force intentionally to restrict a student's movement against his or her will. It is to be used only in exceptional circumstances.

2. When may students be restrained?

- The main reason for the use of restraint is to keep people safe. Restraint is unlikely to be appropriate in the case of older students (Year 9 and above) and it may also increase the risk of injury to both staff and students. The main grounds for restraint (Criminal Law Act, 1967; The Children Act 1989) are:
 - when there is a risk of students injuring themselves or others;
 - when damage to property is being caused.
- A student absconding from school should not be restrained unless there is evidence that he or she is at serious risk.
- Staff are not obliged to restrain a student if it is against their better judgement. It may be more appropriate to summon help.
- When it is known in advance that restraint may be necessary, an individual strategy should be devised following consultation with parents and medical advice. Where it is known that a student is particularly sensitive about physical contact, staff will be informed in advance through the Special Needs Register.
- The police should be called if there is a threat of violence which cannot be contained.
- All telephones accept 999 calls. However, unless circumstances are extreme, a senior member of staff should be contacted (possibly via Reception) so that a decision can be taken at that level.

3. Who may restrain students?

- Everyone has a right to use reasonable force to prevent an attack against themselves or others, whether they are formally authorised or not.
- At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, only adults employed by the school may use physical restraint.

4. How may students be restrained?

- Restraint must be reasonable and in proportion to the circumstances.
- Warning of intended restraint should be given, when practicable, in a non-threatening manner.
- Restraint should never be used as a substitute for normal disciplinary measures.
- Normal disciplinary measures do not include physical contact. Restraint, however, might involve holding, separating, pushing or pulling individuals; it should not involve the more restrictive or percussive forms of force.

5. What should be done after an incident of restraint?

- A senior member of staff should be informed immediately.
- A violent incident report should be completed.
- The Head will decide when and how to inform parents.
- Further action should be considered in accordance with school policies on discipline and health and safety.
- Where appropriate, continued support will be available to those individuals involved in a violent incident.

All incidents must be reviewed to try to establish

- Cause
- Appropriateness of action taken
- Whether and how procedures need amending

Date: July 2009

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