St Mary's CIW VA Primary School

Positive handling & physical intervention policy

Approvals	
Approved by Governing Body on	Date: 1/07/2026
Review and Update	Completed: 25/05/2026
Model Policy Implementation	Date: May 2026
Signed: Chair	
Signed : Headteacher	

St. Mary's Church in Wales School.

Positive handling and physical intervention Policy

This policy has been drawn up in consultation and agreement with all Staff and Governors at St Mary's Church in Wales VA School.

At St Mary's School our aim is to provide a welcoming, secure and safe environment.
This policy should be read in conjunction with the guidance issued from time to time by the Welsh Government and with particular reference to Circular 041/2010 "Safe and Effective Interventions". The school follows the principles and recommendation set out in this guidance. It should also be read in conjunction with the school's pupil behaviour policies as well as the All Wales Child Protection Policy and school child protection policy. Our aim is to create an environment in which the use of force in relation to a pupil is unlikely and situations are diffused before it becomes necessary.
However, 041/2010 states:

> "Schools should never seek to inhibit the ability of staff to use force by adopting a 'no contact' policy. The power to use force helps ensure pupil and school safety and the risk with a no-contact policy is that it might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a pupil, or prevent them taking an action needed to prevent a pupil causing injury to others".

Circumstances in which reasonable force may be used

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, replaced Section 550A of the Education Act 1996 and enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:
- committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Staff authorised to use force

The staff to which this power applies are defined in section 95 of the Act. They are:
- any teacher who works at the school, and any other person whom the head has authorised to have control or charge of pupils. This includes:
    i. support staff whose job normally includes supervising pupils such as teaching assistants, learning support assistants, learning mentors and lunchtime supervisors;

ii. will include people to whom the head has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge of pupils such as paid members of staff whose job does not normally involve supervising pupils (for example catering or premises-related staff) and unpaid volunteers (for example parents accompanying pupils on school-organised visits); and

iii. does not include prefects.

Staff need to make judgements about:

- Whether to use force and what force to use should always depend on the circumstances of each case and - crucially in the case of pupils with SEN and/or disabilities - information about the individual concerned.
- St Mary's School will ensure that staff will be made aware of any individual pupils behaviour plans e.g. IBP, PSP and/or specific needs of individual pupils and in particular those with Special Education Needs, which may impact on the range, type and appropriateness of any physical intervention.
- Decisions on whether the precise circumstances of an incident justify the use of significant force must be reasonable. Typically such decisions have to be made quickly, with little time for reflection.

Nevertheless, staff need to make the clearest possible judgments about:

- the seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder which is likely to result if force is not used. The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified;
- the chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of achieving the desired result by other means, the more likely it is that using force may be justified; and
- the relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.

Examples of situations

Examples of situations that particularly call for judgments of this kind include:

• a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;

• pupils are fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others;

• a pupil is committing, or on the verge of committing, deliberate and serious damage 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 absconds from a class or tries to leave school other than at an authorised time. Refusal of a pupil to remain in a particular place is not enough on its own to justify use of force. It would be justifiable where allowing a pupil to leave would:

i. entail serious risks to the pupil's safety (taking into account age and understanding), to the safety of other pupils or staff, or of damage to property; or
ii. lead to behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline, such as disrupting other classes;
• a pupil persistently refuses to follow an instruction to leave a classroom;
• a pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson; or
• a pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school sporting event or school visit.

Using force
Before using force staff should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil to stop misbehaving and communicate in a calm and measured manner throughout the incident. Staff should not act out of anger or frustration, or in order to punish a pupil, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.
The types of force used could include:
• passive physical contact resulting from standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path;
• active physical contact such as:
i. leading a pupil by the hand or arm;
ii. ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
iii. in more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds, **which require specific expertise or training.**
Where there is a high and immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff would be justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principle of seeking to use the minimum force required to achieve the desired result). Such situations could include preventing a pupil running off the pavement onto a busy road or preventing a pupil from hitting someone with a dangerous object such as a glass bottle or hammer.
Staff should make every effort to avoid acting in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury. However, in the most extreme circumstances it may not always be possible to avoid injuring a pupil.
Staff should always avoid touching or restraining a pupil in a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct.

Post Incident Support
Serious incidents that require use of force can be upsetting to all concerned and may result in injuries to the pupil or to staff. Immediate action should be taken to provide first aid for any injuries and to access medical help for any injuries that go beyond first aid. It is also important to ensure that staff and pupils are given emotional support.

Incident report
See Appendix 1

The Headteacher will keep securely copies of all written reports and the governing body will monitor the use of restraint. Any use of force will be reported to the Governing Body at its next meeting. A record of reports relating to Staff involved will be kept with Staff details.

The Headteacher will advise the parent/guardian of any incident involving their child as soon as is reasonably practicable or otherwise at the end of the school day depending upon the seriousness of the incident.

Risk Assessment
See Appendix 2

Staff Training
It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that staff are fully informed of the school's policy and understand what authorisation entails. The Headteacher will arrange training and guidance to staff as appropriate.
The school will maintain a register of all staff that have been appropriately trained and include dates. Staff should be updated with training on a regular basis. Newly appointed members of staff will receive training within 12 months of their appointment or as soon as it is reasonably possible.

Review
All policies are available on request from the Headteacher.
This policy will be reviewed by Staff and Governors. It will be reviewed in line with local or national initiatives or the School Improvement Plan.

Appendix 1: Incident Record Form

Details of pupil or pupils on whom force was used by a member of staff (name, class).	
Date, time and location of incident.	
Names of staff involved (directly or as witnesses).	
Details of other pupils involved (directly or as witnesses), including whether any of the pupils involved were vulnerable for SEN, disability, medical or social reasons.	
Description of incident by the staff involved, including any attempts to de-escalate and warnings given that force might be used.	
Reason for using force and description of force used.	
Any injury suffered by staff or pupils and any first aid and/or medical attention required.	
Follow up, including post-incident support and any disciplinary action against pupils.	
Any information about the incident shared with staff not involved in it and external agencies.	
When and how those with parental responsibility were informed about the incident and any views they have expressed.	
Has any complaint been lodged (details should not be recorded here)?	
Report compiled by: Name and role: Signature: Date:	Report countersigned by: Name and role: Signature: Date:

Appendix 2: Pro-forma for assessing and managing foreseeable risks for children who present challenging behaviours – developing a Behaviour Management Plan

Name of child .....

Class group .....

Name of teacher .....

School .....

Identification of Risk	
Describe the foreseeable risk	
Is the risk potential or actual? (Has there already been an incident?)	
List who is potentially affected by the risk.	
Assessment of Risk	
In which situations does the risk usually occur?	
How likely it is that the risk will arise?	
If the risk arises, who is likely to be injured or hurt?	
What kinds of injuries or harm are likely to occur?	
How serious are the adverse outcomes?	

Assessment completed by:

Print Name ……..

Signature …….. Date ……..

Appendix 2 (continued)

Risk Reduction Options			
Measures	**Possible Options**	**Benefits**	**Drawbacks**
Proactive interventions to prevent risk.			
Early interventions to manage risk.			
Reactive interventions to respond to adverse outcomes.			

Agreed Behaviour Management Plan and School Risk Management Strategy		
Focus of Measures	**Measures to be employed**	**Level of Risk**
Proactive interventions to prevent risk.		
Early interventions to manage risk.		
Reactive interventions to respond to adverse outcomes.		

Agreed by: ……

Relationship to child: ……

Date: ……..

Appendix 2 (continued)

Communication of Behaviour Management Plan and School Risk Management Strategy		
Plans and strategies shared with	**Communication Method**	**Date Actioned**

Staff Training Issues		
Identified training needs	**Training provided to meet needs**	**Date training completed**

Appendix 2 (continued)

Evaluation of Behaviour Management Plan and School Risk Management Strategy		
Measures set out	**Effectiveness in supporting the child**	**Impact on risk**
Proactive interventions to prevent risks		
Early interventions to manage risks		
Reactive interventions to respond to adverse outcomes		
ACTIONS FOR THE FUTURE		

Plans and strategies evaluated by: …….

Relationship to child: ……

Date: .....