



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

Physical Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force Policy

Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out the framework for the use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School. It aligns with the **Education and Inspections Act 2006 (sections 93 and 93A)**, the **Education Act 1996**, the **Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009**, and the **Department for Education guidance (2025): Use of reasonable force and other restrictive interventions**.

The policy applies to all staff, governors, pupils, volunteers, and parents/carers. It ensures a safe, supportive environment where interventions are only used when necessary and proportionate.

Definitions

- **Reasonable force:** Physical contact used to control or restrain pupils that is necessary, proportionate, and the minimum required for the shortest possible time.
- **Restraint:** Direct physical contact that restricts a pupil's movement.
- **Restrictive intervention:** Any planned or reactive act that restricts a pupil's movement, liberty, or freedom of action. This may involve physical, mechanical, chemical, or seclusion measures.
- **Seclusion:** Placing a pupil in a supervised area or room from which they cannot freely exit.
- **Significant incident:** Any event where force is used that results in injury, distress, or substantial intervention, or where restraint is applied.

Legal Framework

Under section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, staff may use reasonable force to:

- Prevent a pupil committing a criminal offence.
- Prevent injury to self or others.
- Prevent damage to property.
- Maintain good order and discipline in the classroom or elsewhere.

Section 93A requires all schools to record and report significant incidents involving the use of force. These reports must be shared with parents/carers unless doing so risks harm to the pupil.

Preventative and De-escalation Strategies

Staff will prioritise:

- Creating a calm, orderly, and supportive environment.
- Teaching emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and social skills.
- Using verbal de-escalation, calm body language, and offering choices.
- Identifying and mitigating known triggers, particularly for pupils with SEND.
- Applying individualised behaviour support plans.

Use of Reasonable Force and Restrictive Interventions

Reasonable force will only be used:

- As a last resort, when other strategies have failed or when immediate action is required.
- Proportionately, using the minimum force necessary for the shortest possible time.
- In the best interests of the pupil, considering their dignity, rights, and wellbeing.

Force or restrictive interventions will never be used:

- As a form of punishment.
- In a way that restricts breathing, airway, or circulation.
- To deliberately inflict pain or humiliation.
- By forcing a pupil onto the floor or holding them face down.

Examples of acceptable interventions:

- Blocking a pupil's path to prevent unsafe exit.
- Leading a pupil by the arm to a safer space.
- Separating pupils engaged in a fight.

SEND Considerations

For pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND):

- Risk assessments will be carried out where physical intervention is foreseeable (see Appendix 3).
- Behaviour support plans will specify agreed strategies, including any use of restrictive interventions.
- Parents/carers and pupils will be involved in developing and reviewing these plans.
- Adjustments will be made to reduce the likelihood of incidents.

Staff Training and Authorisation

- All staff have the power to use reasonable force when necessary.
- Staff likely to use restrictive interventions will receive accredited training.
- The senior leadership team will ensure staff are familiar with this policy and the school's behaviour procedures.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

Recording (statutory requirement):

- All significant incidents involving the use of force will be recorded on the school's Physical Intervention Record Form (see Appendix 2).
- Records will include: date, time, location, pupil and staff details, description of incident including de-escalation attempts, force used and description of any injuries.

Reporting (statutory requirement):

- Parents/carers must be informed of significant incidents as soon as practicable, unless doing so would put the pupil at risk of harm.
- Reports will be written, clear, and factual, and parents will be invited to discuss the incident (see Appendix 4).

Best practice (non-statutory):

- Restrictive interventions not involving force (e.g. seclusion) should also be recorded and reported.
- Governors will regularly review incident data for trends and disproportionality.

Post-Incident Support

Following any significant incident:

- Medical attention will be provided for any injuries.
- A debrief will be held with staff and the pupil, facilitated by a senior leader.
- Support will be offered to the pupil, staff, and any witnesses.
- The SENCO or Learning Mentor will help pupils develop strategies to avoid repeat incidents.
- Lessons learned will inform policy and practice.

Complaints and Allegations

- Complaints will be handled in line with the school's Complaints Policy.

- Allegations of inappropriate force will be managed under *Keeping Children Safe in Education* procedures.
- Staff are protected by the school's vicarious liability insurance when acting appropriately in their professional duties.

Policy Communication

- This policy will be published on the school website and available to all staff, parents, pupils, and governors.
- Staff will receive regular training on its content.
- Governors will monitor its implementation.

Monitoring and Review

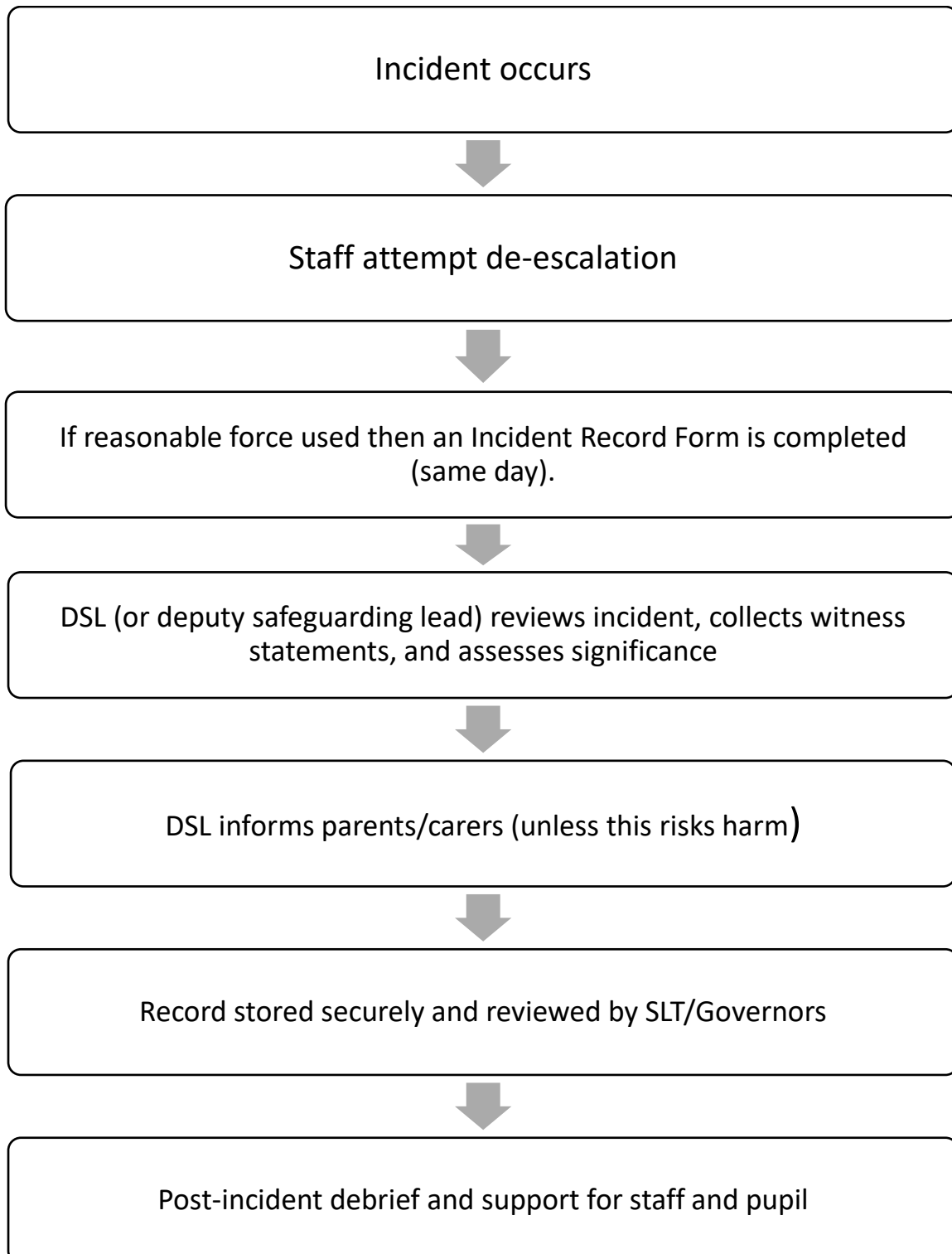
- Incident data will be analysed by the senior leadership team and governing body.
- Equality and disproportionality will be monitored.
- This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by updated legislation or guidance.

Approved by Governing Body:

Next Review Date:

Appendix 1

Physical Intervention Incident Process Flowchart



Appendix 2

Physical Intervention Incident Record Form



Details of pupil on whom force was used			
Name :		Gender:	M / F
SEND :		Form :	

Details of incident location			
Date :	/ /	Time:	:
Location :			

Details of staff involved (either directly or as witnesses)		
Name	Position	Involved Directly/Witness

Description of incident by the staff involved, including any attempts to de-escalate and any warnings given that force may be used

Reason for using force and description of force used	

Description of any injury suffered by staff or pupil(s) and any first aid / medical attention	

Post incident support offered	

Parent/carer notification			
Date:		Parental response:	
Method:			

Report compiled by			
Name :		Position :	
Signature :		Date :	/ /

Report countersigned by DSL/DDSL			
Name :		Position :	
Signature :		Date :	/ /

Appendix 3

Physical Intervention SEND pupil risk assessment



Details of Pupil with Identified Risk			
Name :		Gender:	
SEND :		Form :	

Identification of Risk	
Description of foreseeable risk :	
Potential Triggers and settings:	
Likelihood and severity assessment:	

Agreed Behaviour Management Plan & School Risk Management Strategy	
Agreed Proactive Strategies (to prevent risks):	
Agreed Early Interventions (to manage risks):	
Agreed Reactive Interventions (to respond to incidents):	

Agreement signatures			
	Name	Signature	Date
Parent/carers			
Pupil			
SENDCO			

Next Review Date:

Appendix 4

Parent/Carer Notification Letter Template



Date: [Insert date]

Dear [Parent/Carer name],

I am writing to inform you of an force to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff.

Details of the incident: [brief factual description]

The member of staff did initially attempt to avoid the use of force by using de-escalation strategies:
[list]

However, the de-escalation strategies were not successful and the member of staff chose to:
[description of force used]

Injuries sustained (if any): [details]

The matter has been recorded in line with statutory requirements. We would like to invite you to discuss the incident further and review any support or strategies to help prevent recurrence.

Please contact [staff name/role] at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

[Position]