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Physical Contact with Pupils Policy

St Aubyn's School



Policy Statement

St Aubyn's School, including EYFS, accepts that there are occasions when physical contact with pupils is appropriate and necessary. The school will follow 'best practice' and national guidelines in establishing the parameters for physical contact with pupils, in the interests of both pupils and staff. Particular note is taken of the guidance in the DfES Circular 10/98: 'The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils'. Any form of corporal punishment is absolutely prohibited.

Procedure and Guidance

Appropriate Contact

There are occasions when it is appropriate for physical contact to take place. Such instances include:

- To comfort or reassure a child in distress.
- To hold a young child's hand to lead the way.
- To direct a child to a row or place.
- In a lesson requiring support in technique or for health and safety reasons e.g. PE, Art, Art and Design, ICT and Music.
- In applying first aid.

A member of staff must avoid any sort of contact which might be considered indecent touching or holding. Physical contact becomes progressively less appropriate as children grow older, especially during and post adolescence.

Reasonable Force

There are also occasions when staff may need to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils. What is 'reasonable' depends upon the circumstances in a particular situation and the age of the child. Such force may be appropriate in, for instance, the following situations:

- Self-defence or imminent fear of attack by a pupil.
- When a pupil self-harms or attacks another pupil.
- Pupils fighting.
- Damage to property or vandalism.
- Dangerous behaviour likely to cause accident or injury.
- A pupil attempting to leave the school grounds.
- A pupil persistently refusing to leave the classroom, playground or learning activity.



Staff should use behavioural management techniques to avoid the use of force, if at all possible, and to calm a situation. Before resorting to physical intervention, staff must inform a child of what will happen and why. Staff must maintain a calm demeanour throughout the situation and must never act in anger. Such physical intervention by staff could include:

- Physical interposing between pupils.
- Blocking the path of a pupil.
- Holding, pulling or pushing.
- Leading by the hand or arm.
- Leading by the hand in the centre of the back.

NB: Other, more extreme, action may be reasonable depending on the circumstances, e.g. if a young child is about to run out into a road.

Authorised Staff

This policy and procedure apply to all staff in the school with supervisory responsibility for children in any given situation. This includes teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors. It also applies when members of staff have responsibility for children out of school.

Record-keeping

Records must be kept of any incident where force is used and the parents must be informed and given the opportunity to discuss what happened. The record should include the following information:

- The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved.
- When and where the incident took place.
- Why the use of force was deemed necessary.
- Details of the incident, including all steps taken to diffuse the situation and resolve it without force and the nature of the force used.
- The pupil's response.
- The outcome of the incident.
- A description of any injuries suffered by the pupil or others and/or any property damaged during the incident.

The relevant head of department or line manager should be informed as soon as possible of an incident and a copy of the record should be sent to the line manager.