

ST JOHN BOSCO COLLEGE

POSITIVE HANDLING POLICY 2023

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to make clear the position of the school with regards to necessary physical interventions and to safeguard the well-being of students and staff when a situation or incident requires the use of physical intervention. It is the objective of Saint John Bosco College to maintain consistent and safe practices in the use of handling, reasonable force & restraint.

2. Physical Intervention and the Law

The law allows all adults who are authorised by the Headteacher to be responsible for students to use such force as is reasonable to prevent a student:

- a) Committing a criminal offence (or for younger children that which would be an offence)
- b) Causing personal injury, injury to others or damage to property
- c) Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline

Staff should not hesitate to act in these situations provided they follow this policy and the attached guidance; however, they should always satisfy themselves that the action they take would be considered justifiable by a wider audience of their professional colleagues.

3. Definition of Terms:

Handling – refers to any physical intervention applied by a member of staff where it necessary to make physical contact with a student in order to manage their conduct or ensure their own or others safety. Handling strategies may be restrictive or non-restrictive and include shepherding, guiding, supporting, blocking, confining, holding and, in the most extreme cases, restraining.

Use of **Reasonable Force** – is the application of appropriate and proportionate force required to achieve the required outcome from the handling strategy employed (see above) without further endangering the student, member of staff or others present at the time of physical intervention.

Restraint - is the positive application of force in order to actively prevent a child from causing significant injury* to him/herself or others or seriously damaging property.

*Significant Injury would include: actual or grievous bodily harm, physical or sexual abuse, risking the lives of, or injury to, themselves or others by wilful or reckless behaviour, and self poisoning.

It must be shown that on any occasion where physical restraint is used there were strong indicators that if immediate action had not been taken, significant injury would have followed.



4. Implementation of Physical Intervention:

All members of staff working with students at the school are authorised to handle, use reasonable force or restrain students if/when such physical intervention is necessary.

No member of staff is required to employ any physical intervention strategy if they are not comfortable or confident to do so effectively.

No member of staff should intervene physically if they have reason to believe that to do so would worsen the situation/incident that is taking place.

Whilst no member of staff is required to intervene physically they should request support from colleagues and assist in managing other pupils who congregate close to a situation.

In all circumstances where physical intervention is or may become required, members of staff should ensure that adult assistance is requested before intervention, although it is understood that circumstances may lead to the need for intervention prior to the assistance arriving.

Staff considering handling, use of reasonable force or restraint must provide opportunity for the student to alter their behaviour/actions before employing a physical intervention strategy and should continue to make instructions to the student and details of their intended interventions clear.

The method of physical intervention employed must use the minimum reasonable force for the minimum length of time.

5. How to use reasonable force

- Warn the child of what you are going to do. Offer them the chance to avoid the use of force by stopping the behaviour. There may be some situations where this is not always possible.
- Carry out the physical intervention using no more force than necessary
- Stay calm and do not react to any abusive or highly-emotional language from the pupil
- Use tone of voice and body language appropriately to support in de-escalating
- Allow the pupil to calm down, and once you feel the restraint is no longer necessary begin to release your hold on the pupil
- Discuss the behaviour that triggered the situation with the pupil
- Complete an incident report and inform parents (if necessary)

6. Recording Physical Intervention

All incidents where staff feel that they have used force to modify behaviour or conduct should be recorded. It is not necessary to record every incident of contact with a child, but where a member of staff perceives that contact has been received at all negatively, they are advised to record the circumstances.

It is the responsibility of the intervening member of staff to complete the record form on the day that the intervention took place. Details of the incident should be recorded on SIMs and communicated with a member of the School Leadership Team.

The circumstances and nature of the physical intervention will be held on the record of the student involved.

The DSL will inform any necessary agencies/authorities of the physical intervention in accordance with DFE and LA guidance. The Headteacher will ensure that parents/carers are appropriately informed.

For the safeguarding of both staff and student, any subsequent investigation of the situation/incident should be undertaken by a member of staff other than the one applying the physical intervention.

Appendix A

Guidance on appropriate and inappropriate intervention How can you intervene – examples include:

- interposing of restrainer's body
- blocking a pupil's path
- holding
- leading by hand or arm
- shepherding with hand placed in the small of the back
- minimum force/minimum duration

You cannot:

- use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.
- use the 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing;
- use the 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest;
- use the 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.
- use any hitting, kicking or punching
- deliberately inflict pain
- restrict breathing
- use any arm, leg, throat, finger locks or holds that result in pupils being put face down on the ground