



St Aidan's Catholic Academy

'We believe that God has created each person to celebrate life to the full'



St. Aidan's Catholic Academy

Care and Control Policy

2025-26



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Statement of Policy

The Academy firmly believes that in most instances, staff should not use any form of physical restraint on a pupil. The Education Act of 1996 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006, clarifies the powers of teachers and other staff in school to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing a crime, causing injury, damage or disruption. In summary, this policy notes that force cannot be used as punishment or as a premeditated strategy for control and the normal expectation would be that it would not be used at all.

All schools are expected to devise a policy which can be understood by staff, parents, Governors and pupils. This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy, Behaviour for Learning Policy and Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

Authorised Staff

It should be remembered at all times that the use of reasonable force is open to interpretation and very much depends on a teacher's risk assessment of the situation at the time. A guiding principle is whether any other strategy could have been used at the time. The following staff are authorised to exercise this control and restraint:

- All Support Staff
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

These staff are trained with regards to Team Teach.

The Extent of the Responsibility of those Authorised

Section 550A of the Education Act allows teachers and those authorised to have control or charge of pupils to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

1. Committing a criminal offence (including behaving in a way that would be an offence if the pupil were not under the age of criminal responsibility).
2. Injuring themselves or others.
3. Causing damage to property (including the pupils' own property).
4. Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at school or among any of its pupils, whether in the classroom or elsewhere.

This provision applies whether the pupil is at school or on an organised activity e.g. field trip or visit. However, the section does cover all situations in which it might be reasonable to use a degree of force. For example, everyone has the right to defend themselves against an attack provided they



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do not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so. Similarly, in an emergency, for example if a pupil was at immediate risk of injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff would be entitled to intervene.

Types of Incident

There are a wide variety of situations where force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a pupil:

1. Where action is necessary in self-defence.
2. Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property.
3. Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Examples of situations in the first two of the above **categories** include:

1. A pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil.
2. Pupils are fighting.
3. A pupil is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate serious damage or vandalism to property.
4. 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.
5. A pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he or she might cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others.
6. A pupil absconds from class or tries to leave school (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at greater expected risk if not kept in the classroom or at school).

In the third category, control or restraint should only be used if the pupil could cause harm to the teacher or other pupils (e.g. through violation of health and safety).

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

1. A pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave a classroom
2. A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson

Definitions of Positive Handling

This policy does more than outline the use of positive handling at St Aidan's Catholic Academy. It aims to provide a transparent overview of how we use physical contact to both care for and, where appropriate, control our pupils. The policy describes the acceptable physical interaction between



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staff and pupils on a daily basis. Based on the principles of moving from least intrusive to more restrictive holding, we have divided interaction into three areas.

Physical contact: situations in which physical interaction occurs between staff and pupils to either care for pupils who may be distressed, or have severe and profound learning disabilities, or in subject areas such as physical education, in order to promote inclusive learning opportunities and deliver the National Curriculum.

Physical intervention: This may be used to divert a pupil from destructive or disruptive action, for example, guiding or escorting a pupil by the arm or shoulder with little or no force. The techniques implemented here will include “turn, gather, guide” and the “friendly hold”. The important factor within these situations is the compliance of the pupil.

Physical control and restraint/restrictive physical intervention: (This will be termed “restraint” in the new guidance.) This will involve the use of reasonable force when there is an immediate risk to pupils, staff or property. It is important to note that the use of reasonable force should be seen as a last resort. All such incidents are recorded, reported and stored in an accessible way.

The following strategies are employed as a means by which to deal proactively with challenging behaviours and so ensure that restrictive physical interventions are used as a last resort and only when absolutely necessary:

1. De-escalation, diffusion and distraction activities.
2. Firm, verbal instructions, as recommended by Team Teach, with the emphasis being on ‘calm’ communication and defusing skills.
3. Allowance of take up time and processing of requests.
4. Supervised time out of the situation.
5. Withdrawal of class/school privileges.
6. Positive handling techniques such as prompts, guides and escorts.
7. Behaviour Analysis recording to evaluate inappropriate behaviours and develop a plan of action through a behaviour management strategy to reduce such behaviours.
8. Behaviour management strategies are discussed with parents/carers and children (if appropriate) and an indication of the positive handling techniques (prompts, guides and escorts) that may be used.



Reasonable Force

Staff at St Aidan's Catholic Academy follow the most up to date guidance in the event of having to use reasonable force to restrain a child. (There are also members of staff trained in Positive Handling restraint techniques to ensure pupils and staff are safe at all times.) **DFE Use of reasonable force advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies July 2013**

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf.

There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force'. It will always depend on all the circumstances of the case.

There are two relevant considerations:

1. The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it. The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. Therefore, physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation that clearly could be resolved without force.
2. The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. If force is judged to be necessary, consideration should be made to the age, gender and emotional development of the pupil. Whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could reasonably be employed, might also depend on the age, understanding and sex of the pupil.

Before intervening physically, a teacher should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop, and what will happen if he or she does not. The teacher should continue to attempt to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measured approach to a situation is needed and teachers should never give the impression that they have lost their temper, or are acting out of anger or frustration, or to punish the pupil.

There are times when a teacher should not intervene in an incident without help (unless it is an emergency). For example, when dealing with an older pupil or a physically large pupil, or if the



teacher believes he or she may be at risk of injury. In those circumstances the teacher should remove other pupils who might be at risk, and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or where necessary phone the Police. The teacher should inform the pupil(s) that he or she has sent for help. Until assistance arrives the teacher should continue to attempt to defuse the situation, and try to prevent the incident from escalating.

Application of Force

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve staff:

1. Using techniques such as prompt, guide and escort.
2. Physically interposing between pupils.
3. Blocking a pupil's path.
4. (In extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds that are reasonable and proportionate in their nature.

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of "reasonable force", for example, to prevent a young pupil running off a pavement onto a busy road, or to prevent a pupil hitting someone, or throwing something. Staff should avoid touching a pupil in any way that might be considered inappropriate.

Where the risk is not so urgent the teacher should consider carefully whether, and, if so, when, physical intervention is right. Teachers should always try to deal with a situation through other strategies before using force. All teachers have developed strategies and techniques for dealing with difficult pupils and situations which they should use to defuse and calm a situation. In a non-urgent situation force should only be used when other methods have failed. That consideration is particularly appropriate in situations where the aim is to maintain good order and discipline, and there is no direct risk to people or property. As the key issue is establishing good order, any action which could exacerbate the situation must be avoided. The possible consequences of intervening physically, including the risk of increasing the disruption or actually provoking an attack, need to be carefully evaluated. The age and level of understanding of the pupil are also relevant in these circumstances. Physical intervention should never be used as a substitute for good behavioural management.



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Strategies for dealing with challenging behaviours

As endorsed in St Aidan's Behaviour for Learning Policy, staff will utilise consistent positive strategies to encourage acceptable behaviour and good order. Every effort will be made to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to pupils, staff, property, buildings or the environment. Where unacceptable behaviour threatens good order and discipline and provokes intervention, some or all of the following approaches may be taken according to the circumstances of the incident:

1. Consistent application of the Academy Behaviour system and narratives.
2. Verbal acknowledgement of unacceptable behaviour with request for the pupil to refrain (this should include negotiation, care and concern).
3. Further verbal reprimand stating that this is a repeated request for compliance, an explanation of why observed behaviour is unacceptable, an explanation of the consequences of the continued inappropriate behaviour.
4. A statement of intent that physical intervention may well be used alongside a reminder that holding will cease when the child shows compliance.
5. Physical intervention – reasonable force being used to prevent a child harming themselves, others or property.
6. Withdrawal - which involves removing the young person from a situation which causes anxiety or distress to a location where they can be continuously observed and supported until they are ready to resume their usual activities.

Recording Incidents

It is important that there is a detailed, contemporaneous, written report of any occasion (except minor or trivial incidents) where force is used. At St Aidan's Catholic Academy there is a simple form (See appendix) for staff to complete. It may help to prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident, and it will be helpful should there be a complaint. Following any such incident the member of staff concerned should immediately tell the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher and provide a written report as soon as possible afterwards. That report should include:

1. The name(s) of the pupil(s) involved, and when and where the incident took place.
2. The names of any other staff or pupils who witnessed the incident.
3. The reason that force was necessary (e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil, another pupil or member of staff).



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4. How the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long.
5. The pupil's response, and the outcome of the incident.
6. Details of any injury suffered by the pupil, another pupil, or a member of staff and of any damage to property.

Staff may find it helpful to seek advice from a senior colleague or a representative of their professional association when compiling a report. They should also keep a copy of the report. Incidents involving the use of force can cause the parents/carers of the pupil's involved great concern. It is school policy to inform parents of an incident involving their child, and allowing them an opportunity to discuss it. The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will need to consider whether that should be done straight away or at the end of the school day, and whether parents should be told orally or in writing.

Complaints

Involving parents/carers when an incident occurs with their child should aid in creating transparency between the school and home. In rare cases, however, it may not provide desired clarity for parents/carers, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff could lead to an investigation; either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and Social Services Department under child protection procedures.

The possibility that a complaint might result in a disciplinary hearing or a criminal prosecution. There is also the possibility that civil action could be brought by a pupil or parent. In these circumstances it would be for the disciplinary panel or the court to decide whether the use and degree of force was reasonable. In that event, however, the panel, or court, would have regard to the provisions of section 550A. It would also be likely to take account of the school's policy on restraint, whether that had been followed, and the need to prevent injury, damage, or disruption, in considering all the circumstances of the case.

Monitoring Incidents

Whenever a member of staff has occasion to use reasonable force, this will always be recorded and documented following agreed procedures. Monitoring of incidents will help to ensure that staff are following the correct procedures and will alert their line manager and senior staff to the needs



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of any pupils whose behaviour may require the use of reasonable force. The monitoring of incidents will take place on a regular basis and the results used to inform planning to meet individual pupil and school needs. To support the Headteacher and the school and ensure objectivity, there is a named Governor who supports this process by undertaking regular audits of incidents and feeding back findings to the Headteacher and Governing body.

Physical Contact with pupils in other circumstances

There are occasions when physical contact with a pupil may be proper and necessary other than those covered by Section 550A of the 1996 Act. Some physical contact may be necessary to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons, sports or DT, or if a member of staff has to give first aid. Younger pupils and pupils with special educational needs may need staff to provide physical prompts or help. Touching may also be appropriate where a pupil, particularly a younger pupil is in distress and needs comforting. Staff will use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support. (See Staff Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policies).

There may be some pupils for whom touching is particularly unwelcome. For example, some pupils may be particularly sensitive to physical contact because of their cultural background, or other social issues. It is important that all staff receive information on these pupils. Staff will receive information, (normally from the Head of House and SENDCO) about these pupils. Physical contact with pupils becomes increasingly open to question as pupils get older, and staff should also bear in mind that even innocent and well-intentioned physical contact can sometimes be misconstrued.

Searching Pupils

The Headteacher and Governing Body follow the most up to date Government advice on searching pupils: **DFE Searching, screening and confiscation Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies January 2022**

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

The members of the SLT have the power to search pupils if there is reasonable suspicion of the possession of banned, illegal or offensive items. The belongings of any pupil and the person may be searched with consent. However, legislation allows designated staff, SLT, to search pupils



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without, if the request is based on reasonable suspicion and is proportionate. A second staff member must be present at all times. Mobile devices can be searched by senior leaders if content is thought to be inappropriate.

'Reasonable suspicion' would be:

1. If an item has been seen by staff
2. If something, not necessarily identifiable, has been seen by staff
3. A pupil is seen by staff behaving suspiciously
4. A report has been made by reliable pupil/pupils
5. Rumours in context are felt likely to be accurate.

The following items are banned from site:

- Knives and weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Items that are likely to be used to:
 - Commit an offence or
 - Cause personal injury to, or damage property of any person
- Tobacco and cigarette papers including vapes
- Fireworks
- Pornographic materials.

Under common law, SLT have the power to search

Procedures for Search

A search can be conducted only by a member of the SLT. The searcher must be of the same gender as the pupil and in the presence of a person of the same gender. These staff have the power to search when: (Education & Inspections Act 2006)

1. An offence is being committed
2. An injury may occur
3. There may be damage to property
4. It is prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline



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A search must be limited in extent to:

1. The removal of and search of outer clothing only i.e. any clothing worn otherwise than wholly next to the skin or immediately over underwear. This may include the use of a handheld metal detector.
2. A pupil's possessions i.e. goods over which he has or appears to have control over (including bags)
3. A search may be conducted on the school site or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the school.
4. Safety must be paramount and if the degree of danger/threat posed by a search is unacceptable to a member of staff, then the police should be called.

Where

An appropriate location for the search should be found. Where possible, this should be away from other pupils. The search must only take place on the school premises or where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil, for example, on a school trip.

Recording

Any search by a member of staff for a prohibited item listed above and all searches conducted by police officers should be recorded, including whether or not an item is found. The following information should be included:

- the date, time and location of the search;
- which pupil was searched;
- who conducted the search and any other adults or pupils present;
- what was being searched for;
- the reason for searching;
- what items, if any, were found; and
- what follow-up action was taken as a consequence of the search



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Confiscation and disposal

The Headteacher has the power to direct designated staff in their right to confiscate a pupil's possession if the item in possession is in breach of a school rule (E & I Act 2006).

In addition:

1. Any item may be seized if it is in relation to an offence.
2. Staff must hand over to the police any item as above.
3. Alcohol/cigarettes/e-cigarettes will be disposed of, as injurious to health.

Other items may be retained or disposed of thus:

1. Items of little value may be disposed of immediately
2. Items of value, such as jewellery, mobile 'phones etc., will be stored safely until a responsible family adult can come to retrieve it, at a time convenient to school staff
3. Items of a hazardous or unlawful nature may be given by the school to an external agency for disposal or further action as necessary.



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St Aidan's Catholic Academy: CARE AND CONTROL OF PUPILS

RECORD OF THE USE OF RESTRAINT SECTION ONE

| | | | |
|--|------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Serious Incident Book Reference Number: | | | |
| Please refer to the Care and Control of Pupil Policy before completing this form. This report should be complete as soon as practically possible following an incident. | | | |
| Name of Pupil: | | Tutor: | |
| Date/Time of incident: | | Place/Activity: | |
| Reporting Staff: | | Job/Role: | |
| Other Adults involved: | | | |
| LAC: | Yes | No | Ethnicity: |

Record of Incident:

| | | | |
|---|---------------|---|---------------|
| Why was the use of force in the best interests of the pupil? | | | |
| Was the pupil liable to injury? | Yes/No | Were other pupils at risk of injury? | Yes/No |
| Were staff liable to injury? | Yes/No | Was property about to be damaged? | Yes/No |
| Was good order prejudiced? | Yes/No | Other? Please describe below | Yes/No |



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Please give concise details of how the incident began and presenting behaviour:

Strategies other than restrictive physical intervention that were used:

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----------------------|--|-----|
| Verbal/non-verbal advice/support: | Y/N | Humour: | | Y/N |
| Reassurance? | Y/N | Options (offered)? | | Y/N |
| Calm talking/communication? | Y/N | Distraction? | | Y/N |
| Time out (offered)? | Y/N | Time out (directed)? | | Y/N |
| Step/move away? | Y/N | SLT called? | | Y/N |
| Clear instructions given? | Y/N | | | Y/N |

Other (please describe):

Description of graded restrictive intervention used:

Approximate duration of physical intervention:

Record of any immediate injuries to pupil:



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| | | |
|---|------------|--------------------|
| Action Taken: | | |
| Time check: | | Staff name: |
| Record of later check: | | |
| Time check: | | Staff name: |
| Were any other pupils injured? | Y/N | Names: |
| Were you injured? | Y/N | Details: |
| Were any other adults injured? | Y/N | Names: |
| Record of damage to property: | | |
| Measures taken to ensure that the pupil was calm after incident: | | |
| Signature of staff making report: | | Date: |



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St Aidan's Catholic Academy: CARE AND CONTROL OF PUPILS

RECORD OF THE USE OF RESTRAINT SECTION TWO

| | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Serious Incident Book Reference Number: | | | |
| Person Completing this section: | | | |
| How parents/carers informed/by whom: | | | |
| Signature of member of staff informing parents/carers: | | | |
| Date: | | Time: | |
| Any further Action/Information: | | | |
| Signature of Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher: | | | |
| Name: | | Signature: | |
| Role: | | Date: | |
| Does the pupil have a positive handling plan? | | Has the incident been logged? | |

Forms are available from Main Reception.



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Policy Review

This policy document will be reviewed in June 2026.

Signed by:

Dr C Emmerson
June 2025
Chair of Governors