



## **St. Vincent De Paul RC Primary School**

Positive-Handling Policy  
September 2025

## **Purpose and Intent**

At St Vincent De Paul RC Primary School, there are rare occasions where we will be required to deal with extremely challenging behaviour that can necessitate the use of restrictive physical intervention to prevent injury to the child, staff and pupils, damage to property, or the breakdown of a safe and enjoyable learning environment. The aim of positive handling is not punishment or control but to support safe learning for everyone. This policy has been written to support all staff and to explain the school's arrangements for positive handling.

## **Values and Principles**

St Vincent De Paul RC Primary believes that everyone in the school community:

- has the right to feel safe, secure and cared for
- has the right to access appropriate support to manage emotions and behaviour
- should be provided with a framework so that all staff who come into contact with pupils are clear of their roles and responsibilities around positive handling
- should be provided with information and guidance to support the school's Child Protection, Safeguarding and Behaviour Policies

Staff have a responsibility to follow this policy and to seek alternative strategies wherever possible in order to prevent the need for physical intervention. Reasonable force will only be used as a last resort when all other behaviour management/ de-escalation strategies have failed or when pupils, staff or property are at risk. Unless an unplanned emergency, positive handling should only be carried out by Team Teach trained staff using appropriate procedures and relating to the pupil's behaviour plan. In the case of an unplanned emergency, restrictive physical intervention may become necessary when a child or young person behaves in an unexpected way, the child or young person may not have a behaviour plan and trained staff may not be on hand. The duty of care still remains if appropriately trained staff are not on hand to assist the child or young person. The response must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary and use the minimum amount of force necessary to prevent injury and maintain safety, consistent with the circumstances and with any training the staff may have received.

## **Legal Framework**

The use of all forms of physical intervention and physical contact are governed by criminal and civil law. The unwarranted or inappropriate use of force may constitute an assault. In addition, it may infringe the human rights of a child or young person. Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

- a. committing a criminal offence
- b. causing personal injury or damage to a property
- c. prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among the pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

## **Government Advice Informing This Policy**

Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for Headteachers, staff and governors (July 2013)

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
- Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control.
- School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

*"Team Teach techniques seek to avoid injury to the service user, but it is possible that bruising or scratching may occur accidentally, and these are not to be seen necessarily as a failure of professional technique, but a regrettable and infrequent "side-effect" of ensuring that the service user remains safe"*

George Matthews – Founder

## **Schools can use reasonable force to:**

- remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school visit;
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil
- positively handle a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.
- stop a pupil behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson, causing distress to the pupils and/or a breakdown of order.

Schools cannot use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

## **Roles and Responsibilities and Procedures**

### **Staff Training**

- The vast majority of staff are trained in Team Teach so that their use of physical positive handling falls within safe and statutory guidelines.
- Staff have a duty to inform the Headteacher of any injuries which affect their ability to handle children.
- Training for new staff will be made available when required and is the responsibility of the Headteacher.
- No member of staff will be expected to undertake the use of reasonable force without appropriate training.
- St Vincent De Paul RC Primary School acknowledges that physical techniques are only a very small part of a whole setting approach to behaviour management.

## **Recording**

- Where physical control or positive handling has been used, a record of the incident will be recorded on CPOMS and should be completed as soon as possible after the incident, prior to staff going off duty.
- Parents will be informed by telephone/ meeting and this logged on CPOMS.
- An initial consideration Form will be completed and returned to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in situations where an injury has occurred to a pupil. When an injury has occurred to a member of staff, a Health and Safety/Accident form will be completed and sent to the Local Authority.
- Staff and children will be given basic first aid treatment for any injuries that require treatment. Where staff and pupils have been involved in an incident involving reasonable force, they should have access to emotional support. This can be provided by other members of staff or if an exceptionally serious incident occurs then a referral to Occupational Health may be necessary. Debriefing must take place as soon as possible after the incident has been dealt with.
- If a member of staff needs hospital or GP attention following an incident with a pupil at work, a form will be filled in and sent to the Local Authority.

## **Action after an Incident**

The Headteacher will ensure that each incident is reviewed and investigated further as required. It is the role of the school leadership team is to support staff who work with pupils with challenging behaviour. If further action is required in relation to a member of staff or a pupil, this will be pursued through the appropriate procedures:

- Review of child's behaviour support plan
- Child Protection Procedure (this may involve investigations by Police and/or Social Services)
- Staff or pupil disciplinary procedures
- School behaviour policy
- Exclusions procedure in the case of violence or assault against a member of staff
- A risk assessment will be carried out by the Headteacher and shared
- The member of staff will be kept informed of any action taken.
- In the case of any action concerning a member of staff, they will be advised to seek advice from their professional association/union.

## **Monitoring and Review**

Handling incidents will be monitored through CPOMS behaviour monitoring. New members of staff will receive Team Teach training, where necessary. This policy will be reviewed annually.