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Behaviour for Learning

**St Mary’s Banbury**

Approval date: November 2023

Review date: November 2026

Signed Chair of Governors………………………………………….

Signed Headteacher…………………………………………………..

Date…………………………….........

St Mary’s Banbury

Southam Road

Banbury

OX16 2EG

***Learning, Transforming, Growing.***

**Context and Rationale**

This policy is aligned to the ODST written statement for Behaviour Principles with shared aims for creating a positive culture that promotes excellent behaviour.

St Mary’s CE Primary School has high expectations of its pupils. Through our Vision of “***Learning, Transforming, Growing”*** we aim to provide an education that brings out the best in every child, which builds on their strengths, enables them to enjoy and extend their own learning and helps them to become motivated and successful.  We aim to work with children to support and encourage them to build positive relationships with others and work effectively within a team so that they grow into confident citizens, valued for the contribution they make to society.

In working towards this aim we recognise that promoting good behaviour is the responsibility of all stakeholders within the school community. We believe that our distinctly Christian Values of Compassion, Endurance, Koinonia and Truth will help to create a culture in which the beliefs and attitudes of everyone supports the positive behaviours necessary to maintain an effective learning environment. Alongside our Christian Values, the school vision is rooted in Theology and our text, The Prodigal Son, helps our school community understand that Jesus told this story to show how much God loves us and forgives us.

St Mary’s School promotes an environment in which every member of our school community feels valued and respected, where pupils learn best in a safe and secure environment, free from disruption. We are a caring community whose Christian Values, supported by our other faith communities, are built on mutual trust and respect for all. The school Behaviour for Learning Policy is therefore designed to maximise the ways in which all members of the school can live and work together in a supportive and collaborative way that promotes good teaching and learning. It aims to promote an environment in which everyone feels safe, happy and secure. We are an inclusive school that understands the importance of a personalised approach to curriculum planning for all children including those with challenging behaviour. Sometimes appropriate personalisation may necessitate the school in using additional interventions supported by outside agencies. We recognise that the dysregulated behaviours of some vulnerable pupils needs to be tackled with an understanding of individual pupil needs.

We consider adults to be important role models for the children in our school. Therefore, everyone who works in our school is bound by the principles of this policy and is expected to behave accordingly. This includes staff, pupils, parents, governors, visitors and outside agency professionals.

**Our Behaviour for Learning Policy at St Mary’s aims to:**

* Create a positive climate, placing greatest emphasis on praise and reward and less on criticism and sanctions
* Create a school community which is safe, purposeful and a happy environment for effective learning, based on high standards, shared values and a clear understanding of the behaviour expected
* Foster mutual respect and caring attitudes where all achievements are acknowledged and celebrated
* Help pupils develop responsibility for their own behaviour and grow into self-disciplined young people who show respect for themselves and others
* Manage pupils’ behaviour effectively by a whole-school approach to behaviour management which is clearly understood by pupils, parents and all staff
* Make boundaries of acceptable behaviour clear and ensure children feel safe
* Promote good behaviour focusing on each individual making ‘good choices’

We Aim to achieve this by providing a safe, welcoming, happy, calm and purposeful school environment in which children can learn effectively and reach the highest standards of which they are capable.

We believe that the partnership between home and school plays a vital role, and that all members of the school community should be valued and supported equally. We believe that a whole-school community approach is the means to achieving the positive behaviour that allows us all to learn and grow as people.

We believe in early intervention: being pro-active rather than reactive and that praise is the most powerful form of influencing children’s behaviour.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a consistency of approach within our school community, one which also understands that we are all individuals. We believe the ethos of the school should be built on a foundation of core Christian Values.

These core values are the basis for the social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and moral development of the whole child. We encourage children to absorb our St Mary’s values, thereby developing knowledge, skills and attitudes which enable them to develop as reflective learners and grow to be stable, educated, respected and respectful adults.

We believe that all pupils are intrinsically motivated to do the right thing. With this at our core, the school rewards good behaviour, as it believes that this will develop a climate of kindness and co-operation and help strengthen relationships.

This policy is designed to promote good behaviour, rather than just to deter poor behaviour choices.

Each class follows the whole-school approach towards praising positive behaviour, including the use class rewards and our weekly Celebration Worship.

A weekly Vision and Values Worship is also held to promote St Mary’s Values and reflect on positive behaviour along with social and moral development. These are the key drivers that enable us to uphold the above objectives.

**Zones of Regulation – *A framework designed to foster regulation and emotional control***

At St Mary’s, we recognise the importance of promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to our pupils and their families. We aim to create an open culture around the discussion of mental health and wellbeing and to empower our children be able to regulate their emotions. In September 2021, St Mary’s Primary School adopted the whole-school approach of ‘Zones of Regulation’ created by Leah Kuypers.

This is a systematic, cognitive approach used to teach children how to regulate their emotions by categorising feelings and stages of alertness into four concrete coloured zones. The Zones of Regulation framework provides strategies to teach children to become aware of and independent in recognising, naming and therefore controlling their emotions and impulses and improve their ability to solve potential conflicts. There is a consistent approach to the use of the zones of regulation throughout the school, the language of zones is referred to by all adults. By implementing the Zones of Regulation curriculum we aim to teach our pupils to identify emotions in themselves and others and provide them with a bank of strategies to help them to regulate their emotions and improve their wellbeing.

The Zones of Regulation curriculum also helps children to better understand their emotions, sensory needs and thinking patterns. The children learn different strategies to cope and manage their emotions based on which colour zone they are in. Additionally, the Zones of Regulation helps children to recognise their own triggers, learn to read facial expressions, develop problem-solving skills, and become more attuned to how their actions affect other people. There is progression across the curriculum with children in Early Years learning to identify different emotions to children in Upper Key Stage 2 discussing how our behaviour can impact upon the feelings of those around us.

We use this approach alongside the positive behaviour system outlined in this policy.

**Consequences**

Christian Values guide all members’ behaviour within our school. We recognise that it is equally important that the consequences of failing to make good behaviour choices are consistent throughout school and understood and agreed by the whole school community.

We refer to behaviour using the terms ‘expected behaviour’ and ‘unexpected behaviour’.

**We define these terms as:**

**Expected Behaviour**: the things we do and say that are friendly, helpful and respectful to others. Doing what is expected is based on where we are and who we are with. For example, it is expected for a child to make a joke during playtime but not while in the middle of a test.

**Unexpected behaviour:** These are the things we do or say which make other people uncomfortable and are not respectful or helpful to others. For example, it is unexpected for a child to be excited and physically energised during a core lesson.

Unexpected behaviours are also different depending on who the child is with and where they are.

The vast majority of our children behave well and respond to our positive behaviour approach. However, some pupils may not always act according to our core Christian Values. This is not acceptable and a range of sanctions are necessary.

**Adult support**

At St Mary’s, our approach is one of curiosity about a child’s behaviour and understanding it as communication of an unmet need in the first instance and of giving a child an opportunity to make the right choice / behave appropriately with support, rather than a deliberate act of defiance. With the use of scripts, we adhere to the principle by using positive comments and rewards publicly, whilst giving time to reflect on unexpected behaviour incidents in private and with dignity.

**Consistent Use of Scripts**

**Script 1**

**To be used when an unexpected behaviour first occurs.**

• I’ve noticed that… (You’re looking very sad / you do not want to come to your table / you are standing very close to me / you are telling me that you are feeling poorly etc.)

• I wonder if… (You are feeling anxious about being back in school / worried about your Mum / feeling sad that you can’t play with our usual toys / finding our new rules frustrating etc.)

• I imagine that… (You have lots of energy to get rid of / your tummy might feel tight / you would really like to play with xxx / thoughts or pictures keep popping into your mind about the time when xxx / you would love a big hug with your Dad right now etc.)

• I wonder how we can help you to do x and to feel (safe) here? Suggest a tool e.g. Take 5 breathing / reading your book / sitting quietly / go for a walk outside in your bubble space / do some sensory circuit activities /

Tell me what’s wrong etc.)

**Script 2:**

**To be used when an unexpected behaviour continues**

• (Discreet 1:1 conversation) (Name) I have asked you to xxx and tried to help. Your behaviour is not following my instructions. This is your warning. If you do not xxx, you will need to (sit in our Calm Space to finish your work.

**Script 3:**

**To be used when the unexpected behaviour persists, and support is needed.**

• (Name) I have given you a warning and time to follow my instruction. You are still not xxx. I am calling for Mr / Mrs Xxx.

The adults in school use the language associated with the zones to support children to understand and regulate how they are feeling.

While some children may be able to self-regulate using their zones toolbox others may require more adult support.

It is important to note that throughout the process of consequences children are given opportunities to reflect on their behaviour choices, and to see how their behaviour is not reflecting our Christian Values.

**Adults also ensure that:**

* Children are encouraged to view behaviour as a choice.  Adults are asked to use the language of choice, *‘You can either continue to ………. Or you can choose to ……. If you do choose to continue to …… then I will have to ask you to ……. If you stop and make the right choice, then we can ……’*
* Low-level attention-seeking behaviour can be ignored, but if it disrupts learning for others then the consequences should be put in place quickly and with as little attention to the individual child as possible.
* Refusal to accept any of the consequences triggers the next stage in the sequence.  However, children may be given some ‘take-up time’ which means that they are given a specified amount of time to make their choice.

Some behaviours are serious and skip the first stages of consequences. Any behaviours which are considered to be bullying or verbal abuse including physical injury to children or adults should be brought to the attention of the SLT as soon as possible.

**Rewards**

We recognise that high standards of behaviour and good relationships are also supported by rewarding positive behaviour and attitudes. Indeed, we recognise that many children display positive behaviours and attitudes to learning as a matter of course, and we actively seek to acknowledge and reward these children. We will do this in a variety of ways:

* ALL children will gain House Points for work, behaviour and achievement in their classes and throughout school. These will be added to the class totals regularly.
* Classes will gain House Points for good attendance and punctuality.
* In-class incentives will be given to the class as a whole, with rewards such as extra playtime when collective targets (such as ‘marbles in the jar’) are met.
* Each Friday the Headteacher’s Vision and Values Award will be given to one pupil for going above and beyond in a particular area or value that week.
* Each week, in rotation, a writer, mathematician, or reader for each class will receive a certificate recognising their excellence in the given area. We will celebrate these successes on the website and in the Hall displays.

Alongside these rewards, appropriate positive behaviour choices, good work, effort, and care and consideration for others will be rewarded in a variety of everyday ways:

* immediate praise by an adult – teaching assistant, lunchtime supervisor etc.
* approval by peers or other members of staff – e.g. sharing work
* instant rewards – stickers, postcards home etc.
* conferring responsibilities – special helper etc.
* displaying children’s work

**Continued Promotion of Good Standards of Behaviour**

In order to promote good standards of behaviour throughout the school community, the school will:

* always work to gain consensus among staff, pupils, parents and governors on issues of behaviour, sanctions and rewards
* actively seek parental support for maintaining standards by explaining the school policy before children join the school.
* explain the policy of behaviour management, including the concepts of choice, emotional **regulation** and consistent sanctions, to pupils and parents, setting out our behaviour standards in the context of maintaining a safe, purposeful and happy environment
* use Collective Worship, circle time, PSHE and rewards and responsibilities to promote shared values and respect for each other, and to celebrate children’s positive attitudes to learning and behaviour
* undertake regular reviews of the behaviour policy and provide effective behaviour management training for staff.

**Recording Behaviour and Involvement of Parents**

All incidents of a higher order (i.e. if pupils repeatedly upset others, behave in an unsafe way, hurt someone physically or causes damage~~,~~ will be recorded using the CPOMS system. All records of wellbeing, parental contact and safeguarding concerns are also collected in this way and reviewed daily by the DSL team. This enables patterns of behaviour and need to be highlighted and appropriate support put in place.

We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and poor behaviour can often be symptomatic of additional emotional need. By combining our records electronically, we can review and support children and families consistently and fairly and enable children to develop reflective, restorative practice as well as emotional resilience and a strong work ethic.

Parents will be kept informed about matters relating to their child’s behaviour through:

* informal meetings and telephone calls between teacher and parent (e.g. at the end of the school day)
* attitude-to-learning grades three times a year (Appendix 2) – presented at parent teacher meetings or via the written school report
* scheduled, whole-school parent-teacher meetings
* behaviour logs (Appendix 3) for high level needs
* formal meeting of the teacher, parent and Headteacher or other member of SLT

The child may be included at any stage in these meetings, at the discretion of the teacher and with the agreement of the parent.

Parents of children hurt by inappropriate behaviour of another child will also be informed of what happened and of the consequences imposed by the school.

If poor behaviour is serious enough a pupil may be excluded from school, either for a fixed period or permanently. The Department for Education documents:

* *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England (June 2012)*
* *School discipline (Pupil exclusions and reviews) (England) Regulations 2012* sets out the criteria for exclusion.

**Special Educational Needs and Behavioural Difficulties**

In managing behavioural difficulties, the school will have regard to the Code of Practice for children with Special Educational Needs, and will strive to ensure that children’s special learning needs are identified and met. The school will endeavour to work with parents of those children with additional needs in order to provide an inclusive and supportive environment.

Support will be sought from external agencies (e.g. Educational Psychology, Social Inclusion Team, Early Help Workers, CAMHS, etc.) for all children identified as having additional needs that result in social emotional and mental health needs.

Support will devise an individual programme including elements such as building self-esteem, behaviour recovery, taking responsibility, and being included as part of the school community.

Some children, such as those who display extreme behaviour in association with a learning disability and/or autistic spectrum disorder, or a social, emotional or mental health difficulty, present different challenges with regard to the use of force (see below).

In such cases a positive handling or behaviour management plan should be developed for the individual pupil in consultation with the pupil, his or her parents, the SENCO and the class teacher. The proforma for assessing and managing foreseeable risks for children who present challenging behaviours can be used for this purpose. (Appendix 2)

Any specific strategies or techniques that are agreed will be shared with all staff and acted upon.

**The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Children**

This school makes use of DfE guidance: *Use of reasonable force in schools (2013)* - *Guidance for Staff on the Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils* (Appendix 4)*.* This document includes guidance on:Reducing the likelihood of situations arising where force is required; deciding if force is appropriate; examples of situations where the use of force may be reasonable and using force safely.

All incidents which require the use of force or restraint should be reported to the Headteacher immediately and a written record kept. Parents must be informed of any incident where force or restraint has been employed in regard to their child.

# **Bullying**

Bullying is a form of unacceptable behaviour, and is dealt with in our Anti-Bullying Policy. Bullying includes all forms of bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to a child’s race, religion, sexuality or disability.

Instances of bullying, racial, homophobic or other notable incidents of poor behaviour will be included in the Headteacher’s Reports to the Governing Body.

The records of pupil behaviour incidents are monitored by the DSL team on a regular basis and priority areas for development are included in the School Development Plan as well as in individual pupil provision plans.

**Appendices:**

1. **Attitude to Learning grades**
2. **Supporting Behaviour Risk Assessment**
3. **Behaviour log**
4. **Guidance for Staff on the Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils**

**Appendix 1**

**Attitude to Learning**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1. Exemplary -  Above Expectations | 2. Good  Meets Expectations | 3. Room for Improvement  Inconsistent in Meeting Expectations | 4. Unacceptable  Fails to Meet Expectations |
| Attention/Effort | Listens to and follows instructions. Approaches tasks with enthusiasm and consistently completes work.  Takes pride in their work and accepts challenges and keeps on trying to succeed. | Generally pays attention and follows directions. Is usually on task. Completes work set and tries their best.  Asks for clarification when needed. | Effort can be inconsistent, depending on their own interests. Often needs encouragement or reminders to stay on task. Sometimes fails to complete expected work. | Often fails to pay attention and is easily distracted by others. Needs support in order to get started on tasks. Gives up easily or won’t try activity at all. Complains and makes excuses for unfinished work. |
| Participation | Participates fully – always usefully contributes to lessons.  Co-operates with adults and classmates in group work and has a positive effect on the learning of other pupils. | Usually participates in activities. Generally co-operates well and is rarely disruptive. | Contributes occasionally but sometimes contributions are inappropriate or attention seeking. Is usually co-operative with adults and friends, but not necessarily with other classmates.  Occasionally challenges authority. | Rarely participates appropriately in group activities. Often fails to co-operate and is disruptive during classroom activities. Can have a negative effect on the learning of other pupils. |
| Respect for Self and Others | Always takes turns and can resolve conflict peacefully.  Goes out of their way to be kind and helpful to others. Is always polite and takes care of equipment and materials. Takes responsibility for their actions. | Rarely has trouble taking turns and can resolve conflicts with limited support.  Is generally respectful of others and is encouraging and positive in their relationships. Usually acts responsibly within the environment. | Sometimes needs support to work effectively with others and resolve disputes with peers. Has friends with their peer group, but can be argumentative towards others.  Sometimes needs reminding to treat school equipment with respect. | Shows little respect for others.  Often needs adult intervention to reduce the incidence of poor behaviour and to resolve conflict with peers.  Fails to take responsibility for actions towards others and property and demonstrates little remorse for bad behaviour. |

**Appendix 2**

**Supporting Risk Assessment**

**Pupil:**

**Influencing Factors**

Risk Assessment also involves an analysis of the ‘hazards’ – the environmental factors which influence the probability of the behaviour causing concern. In a school situation, these ‘hazards’ are likely to include features of the daily timetable, and interaction with other pupils, and even the skills that adults demonstrate when working with the pupil. Use the table below to show the factors that are associated with the behaviours causing concern.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Possible Influencing Factor | Tick |
| 1. Periods of unstructured activity |  |
| 1. Transition times. |  |
| 1. Availability of dangerous equipment. |  |
| 1. Periods of increased pressure. e.g.   a. Home factors (change of home circumstances).  b. School factors (being given a task – mostly writing tasks).  c. Other (please specify). – being asked to use the toilet and/or change pull-ups |  |
| 1. Spaces which involve close physical proximity. |  |
| 1. Particular pupils / adults (please specify). |  |
| 1. Other (please specify). |  |

Some influencing factors will be particularly closely related to particular behaviours. You may choose to show this by recording the number relating to each influencing factor in the final column of the table above. This will enable you to plan your preventative measures more specifically.

**Known Triggers**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Known ‘Triggers’** | **Tick if applicable (previous history)** | **Comments** | **High Medium Low risk?** |
| Inability to cope with structured group activities |  |  |  |
| Does not accept rules / instructions |  |  |  |
| Unable to accept change in routine |  |  |  |
| Interaction with specific member of staff |  |  |  |
| Interaction with specific pupil  Male classmates – CC, TH, in particular. |  |  |  |
| Specific time of day / day of the week  Before Collective Worship or lunch time  Afternoon sessions  Friday mornings (dictation) |  |  |  |
| Other (please specify)  Being asked to go to the toilet/ change his wet clothes. |  |  |  |
| Other (please specify) |  |  |  |

**Preventative Measures**

A range of common preventative measures can be taken to reduce the risk associated with challenging behaviour. Use the table over to show whether these are:

* Currently in place (**P**)
* Currently being actioned (**A**)
* Felt to be inappropriate to the particular risks presented (**I**)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Preventative Measure** | **P**  In Place | **A**  Being Actioned | **I**  Inappro-priate |
| *Proactive Measure* | | | |
| Eliciting pupil view in planning and review |  |  |  |
| Providing regular feedback and pastoral support to pupil |  |  |  |
| Involving parent / carer in decision making and planning |  |  |  |
| Involving outside agencies (e.g. EP, BSS, A&ES, SENSS, Social Services etc.) |  |  |  |
| Establishing an individual plan |  |  |  |
| Providing regular supervision to staff working with pupil |  |  |  |
| Adapting curriculum arrangements to reflect challenge, choice and structure levels which are appropriate to the pupil’s needs |  |  |  |
| Adapting group arrangements to promote positive peer models and minimise inappropriate contact |  |  |  |
| Arranging furniture and other equipment to minimise movement and disruption |  |  |  |
| Providing frequent rest or change of activity opportunities |  |  |  |
| Establishing a positive teaching programme to increase the pupil’s range of appropriate skills |  |  |  |
| Providing a range of rewards which the pupil can earn by demonstrating skills defined in the teaching programme, and through other appropriate behaviour |  |  |  |
| Identifying the message communicated by the pupil’s behaviour |  |  |  |
| Agreeing key reactive strategies for handling incidents of challenging behaviour with all staff likely to be in contact with the pupil, and ensuring that these plans are shared with parents |  |  |  |
| Providing staff support at difficult times, such as start of day, changeover between lessons, break times and specific lessons |  |  |  |
| Systematically reviewing difficult incidents in order to improve upon practice and learn from experience |  |  |  |
| Other proactive measures |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Preventative Measure** | In Place | Being Actioned | Inappro-priate |
| *Reactive strategies to respond to early warning signs or an escalating situation* | | | |
| Active listening |  |  |  |
| Environmental adaptation (removing triggers, changing peer / staffing arrangements) |  |  |  |
| Diversion / distraction to a preferred activity (please specify) |  |  |  |
| Assistance in the use of an agreed strategy such as a particular communication symbol, or an exit card (please specify) |  |  |  |
| Physical intervention \*(Specify the planned technique)  Shepherding technique |  |  |  |
| Other (please specify) |  |  |  |

**Key Actions for staff**

It is expected that any pupil whose behaviour is challenging will have an individual behaviour management plan. This will already record many of the preventative and reactive strategies designed to reduce the level of risk presented by the pupil’s behaviour. There is no need to repeat these below. Instead, note the date when this plan was initially drawn up, and its proposed new date, and use the space available below to record any additional measures to be employed to reduce risk and the person responsible for implementing changes.

**Date of current Personal Intervention Plan:**

**Proposed date for review of current plan:**

Appendix 3

Behaviour Log Date:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Fully engaged, followed instructions |  |  | Not engaged but not disrupting others |  |  | Unexpected behaviours shown |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 8.40 – 9 | Independent work/register/ breakfast |  |
| 9.10 – 9.40 | Guided reading |  |
| 9.40-10.40 | Maths |  |
| 10.40-10.55 | Break |  |
| 11-12 | English |  |
| 12-1:00 | Lunch |  |
| 1-1:45 | Number knowledge |  |
| 1:45 – 2:45 | Project |  |
| 2:50-3:15 | Worship |  |

Appendix 4

**Guidance for Staff on the Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils**

***This Guidance is based on Section 93 of the 2006 Education and Inspections Act, Use of Reasonable Force – advice for headteachers , staff and governing bodies (DfE 2013) and LA guidance.***

**A note on the law**

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from:

* Committing any offence (or what would be an offence in an older child)
* Causing personal injury to or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself)
* Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

This power applies to teachers and any other person the head teacher has authorised to have control or charge of pupils (e.g. teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors)

The power may be used where the pupil is on school premises or elsewhere, where the child is in the lawful control of a member of staff (e.g. school trips).

There is no statutory definition of when it is reasonable to use force, but the DfE document Use of Reasonable Force Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (July 2013) states:

*Q: How do I know whether using a physical intervention is ‘reasonable’?*

*A: The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the teacher concerned. Whether the force used is reasonable will always depend on the particular circumstances of the case. The use of force is reasonable if it is proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent. This means the degree of force used should be no more than is needed to achieve the desired result. School staff should expect the full backing of their senior leadership team when they have used force.*

The precise circumstances of each individual case are always relevant. The degree of force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Use of force could not be justified to prevent trivial misbehaviour.

**It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.**

**Reducing the likelihood of situations arising where force is required**

Staff should always regard the use of force as a last resort and should work to reduce the likelihood of situations arising where force is required by:

* creating a calm orderly and supportive school environment that minimises the risk and threat of violence of any kind
* developing effective relationships between pupils and staff
* adopting a whole school approach to developing social and emotional skills – helping pupils to develop skills to manage strong feelings etc. (i.e. through the PSHE Curriculum)
* a structured approach to developing staff skills for positive behaviour management, and support for staff during and after an incident
* recognising that challenging behaviours are often foreseeable
* effectively managing individual incidents (e.g. non-threatening verbal and body language, removing the incident to a quiet setting, using a member of staff well known to the pupil)
* where practicable, warning a pupil that force may have to be used before using it

**Deciding if force is appropriate**

The judgement on whether to use force and what force to use should always depend on circumstances of each specific case and information about the individual - taking into account the particular characteristics of the pupil, including age, understanding and any SEN or disability he or she may have.

Though decisions typically have to be made quickly, staff should make the clearest possible judgements about:

* the seriousness of the incident. The greater the potential for injury, damage or serious disorder, the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
* the chances of achieving the desired result by other means. The lower the probability of resolving the situation by other means the more likely it is that using force may be justified.
* the relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with other strategies. The smaller the risks associated with physical intervention compared with other methods the more likely it is that using force may be justified.

**Examples of situations where the use of force may be reasonable:**

* a pupil attacking a member of staff, or another pupil
* pupils fighting, causing risk of injury to themselves or others
* a pupil is committing, or on the verge of committing deliberate damage to property
* a pupil causing, or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
* a pupil absconding from a class or trying to leave school other than at an authorised time. Refusal of a pupil to remain in a particular place is not enough on its own to justify use of force.
* a pupil persistently refusing to follow an instruction to leave a classroom
* a pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson
* a pupil is behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school sporting event or school visit

**Examples of occasions when physical contact is proper and necessary:**

Current guidance states that:

*It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary.*

*Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:*

* *holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school*
* *when comforting a distressed pupil*
* *when a pupil is being congratulated or praised*
* *when demonstrating how to use a musical instrument*
* *when demonstrating exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching*
* *when giving first aid.*

**Guidance on Using Force**

All school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline.

In schools force is generally used for two different purposes – to control pupils and to restrain them.

* **Control** can mean either passive or 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. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.

Staff should not intervene in an incident without help, unless it is an emergency. If a member of staff believes they may be at risk of injury they should take steps to remove any pupils who might be at risk and then summon help from other staff or, where necessary, phone the police.

Staff should communicate in a calm and measured manner throughout any incident. Staff should avoid giving the impression of acting out of anger or frustration or to punish a pupil, and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary.

Types of force could include:

* passive physical contact e.g. standing between pupils or blocking a pupil’s path
* leading a pupil by the hand or arm
* ushering a pupil by placing a hand in the centre of the back
* in extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds, which may require specific training

In high or immediate risks of death or serious injury (a pupil running into a road, or a pupil armed with a dangerous object) staff would be justified in taking any necessary action consistent with the principle of seeking to use the minimum force required to achieve the desired result.

Staff should make every effort to avoid acting in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.

Staff should always avoid touching or restraining a pupil in a way that could be interpreted as sexually inappropriate conduct.

**SEN and Behavioural Difficulties**

Some children, such as those who display extreme behaviour in association with learning disability and/or autistic spectrum disorders or behavioural emotional and social difficulties, present different challenges with regard to the use of force.

In such cases a positive handling or behaviour management plan should be developed for the individual pupil in consultation with the pupil, his or her parents, the SENCO and the class teacher. The *Proforma for assessing and managing foreseeable risks for children who present challenging behaviours* can be used for this purpose.

Any specific strategies or techniques that are agreed should be shared with all staff and acted upon.

**Recording incidents**

All incidents which require the use of force or restraint should be recorded on an incident record form.The governing body is responsible for ensuring that a procedure is in place for recording and reporting *significant* incidents to parents.

Significant incidents could include:

* an incident where unreasonable force is used on a pupil
* any incident where substantial force has been used e.g. physically pushing a pupil out of a room
* the use of a restraint technique
* an incident where a child has been genuinely very distressed

A report to the parent should include:

* when and where the incident took place
* why it was decided that force had to be used
* strategies used to try to avoid having to use force
* what force was used
* whether there were any injuries
* what follow-up action was being taken in relation to their child

**Handling Complaints and Allegation about Use of Force**

Schools should refer to the Guidance on *Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff* where an allegation of excessive force is made against a teacher.

Where a member of staff has acted in the law, that is they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder, this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.

When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.

Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. School will consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved, or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate.

Governing bodies should always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against a teacher.

As employers, schools and local authorities have a duty of care towards their employees. It is important that schools provide pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident.

Staff are advised to approach the use of force with the following principles in mind:

* **Force should always be the last resort.**
* **Summon other adult help where possible.**
* **Always warn pupils that you are about to use force and always use the minimum force required to achieve the desired result.**
* **Restrictive holds should not be employed unless you are trained to use them and have prior agreement to employ them.**
* **Incidents should be recorded as soon as possible after the even**