



St Edmund's Pre-Prep Physical Restraint and Contact Policy

(In this policy, the term 'Pre-Prep' includes Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and 'Nursery' includes Ladybird and Butterfly classes.)

This Policy includes the Early Years Foundation Stage, Before and After School Provision and Holiday Club.

Statement of Intent

St Edmund's School fully recognises the contribution it makes to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting our pupils from harm.

All staff believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child. The school recognises the importance of working within the framework for Every Child Matters: Change for Children and the five outcomes outlined within it:

To Be Healthy
To Stay Safe
To Enjoy and Achieve
To Make a Positive Contribution
To Achieve Economic Well-Being

This policy has been written using information from Dfe Guidance on Handling Children.

Corporal punishment is never used or threatened at St Edmund's Pre-Prep.

Physical Restraint

In exceptional circumstances, where there is immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of 'reasonable force'. Before intervening physically, staff should wherever practicable, tell the pupil who is misbehaving to stop and what will happen if they do not. The staff member 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. In such cases only the minimum force necessary will be used whilst maintaining a calm and measured approach.

Staff should not put themselves at risk of injury. In these circumstances, the teacher should remove the other pupils who may be at risk and seek assistance from a colleague or colleagues and if necessary, telephone the police. Staff should inform the pupil(s) that they have sent for help. Until assistance arrives, staff should continue to attempt to defuse the situation orally and try to prevent the situation from escalating.

Types of Incidents

There are a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate, or necessary, to control or restrain a pupil. They will fall into three broad categories:

- Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property

- Where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Examples of situations that fall within one of the first two categories are:

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

Examples of situations that fall into the third category may include:

- A pupil persistently refuses to respond to instructions to stay with the class or teacher
- A pupil is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

Application of Force

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

- physically interposing between pupils
- blocking a pupil's path
- holding
- pushing
- pulling
- leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back

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.

In other circumstances staff should not:

- Hold a pupil by the neck or collar, or in a way that may restrict their ability to breathe
- Slap, punch or kick the pupil
- Twist or force limbs against a joint
- Trip up a pupil
- Hold or pull a pupil by the hair or ear
- Hold a pupil face down on the ground

The Range of Interventions: How May Pupils be Restrained?

In the unlikely event of a staff member needing to use restrictive physical intervention, the following points should be noted:

- Restrictive physical intervention must be consistent with the concept of reasonable force.
- The circumstances must warrant the use of force
- The degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the minimum to achieve the desired result.
- Avoid causing pain or injury
- Avoid holding or putting pressure on joints
- In general hold long bones
- Do not hold a pupil face down on the ground or in any position that might increase the risk of suffocation

Do not use objects

Recording Incidents

Any member of staff involved in an incident requiring physical intervention or restraint must inform the Head of Pre-Prep and write a detailed report in the Incident Report Book to help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the situation. Parents will be informed as soon as possible.

SEND

If the school is aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a way that may require physical control or restraint, for instance those with Social, Emotional, Behavioural Disorder, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or Medical needs etc, it will plan how best to respond in the situation. This may involve a risk assessment, provision map, health care plan or pupil support plan depending on the child's needs. Management of these pupils will be agreed by parents. Other agencies may be involved in this process. Staff will be given training and additional support if necessary.

Physical Contact

Physical contact may be misconstrued by a pupil, parent or observer. Touching pupils, including well-intentioned gestures, can if repeated regularly lead to serious questions being raised.

Where Physical Contact may be Acceptable

There are occasions when physical contact with a pupil may be necessary, for example to demonstrate exercises or technique during PE lessons or when providing first aid. Young children and children with special educational needs may need staff to provide physical prompts to help.

There may be occasions where a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance, which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same pupil over a period of time. Staff should use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of emotional support and should reflect the child's needs, age and level of maturity. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, they should seek the advice and guidance of the Head of Pre-Prep.

General Guidelines

As a general principle staff must not make gratuitous physical contact with their pupils. It is particularly unwise to attribute touching to their teaching style or as a way of relating to pupils.

There may be some children for whom touching is particularly unwelcome. For example, some pupils may be particularly sensitive to physical contact because of their cultural background or special needs or because they have been abused.

Where appropriate, staff should receive information on these children, whilst ensuring that all matters of confidentiality and sensitivity remain of paramount importance. In addition, there should be a common approach where staff and pupils are of different sexes.

If a child initiates contact, for comforting or reassurance reasons, it is necessary to respond appropriately. Staff should avoid lifting and carrying children unless in an emergency and the child cannot walk themselves. If giving first aid, putting on sun cream, helping children change after PE or swimming, assisting with toileting needs or sickness ensure another member of staff is aware what you are doing and if possible be within eyesight of them. Children will be encouraged to develop independence in personal care but if support is necessary will be told how the member of staff is going to help, to seek their permission.

If a teacher is concerned about the extent to which they have to clean a child after a toileting accident they should ask another member of staff to be present.

If a child leaves the school site during the school day without permission the police will be called to find and restrain them if necessary. School staff will follow at a distance if they can, so as not to cause the child to run further away or onto roads etc. A child will not be restrained by school staff off site.

SEND

If a child needs help with intimate care, due to medical needs parents will be involved in agreeing procedures and a discreet area for this will be found. An intimate care plan will be written for them.

(Refer to other policies such as Safeguarding, Intimate and Personal Care policy, Nappy Changing and Toileting Policy, Health and Safety policy etc)

Reviewed

SLB August 2025