



Physical Intervention Policy

February 2016

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Mission Statement

The Becket is a Catholic school. Our mission is to work in partnership with parents and carers to provide an outstanding Catholic education for all our young people. This means:

- *Inspiring and motivating young people to achieve their full potential academically, spiritually, socially and in a full range of extra-curricular activities*
- *Helping young people to grow in the love and knowledge of Jesus Christ*
- *Developing in young people a deep knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith*
- *Practising Gospel values, such as forgiveness and helping those in need, within our school community and in society as a whole.*

2 Timothy 2:24-25

As the Lord's servant, you must not quarrel. You must be kind toward all, a good and patient teacher, who is gentle as you correct your opponents, for it may be that God will give them the opportunity to repent and come to know the truth.

1. The Purpose of this policy:

To provide a framework for the management of physical interventions that is legal, effective, safe, appropriate and proportionate.

2. Positive Physical Contact

There are occasions where there may be physical contact between staff and pupils other than when adults are physically intervening to prevent serious misbehaviour.

Staff and adults need to be aware of sensitivities of any form of physical contact with pupils. However, contact between pupils and adults might be appropriate for a variety of reasons, including:

- Calming/reassuring/comforting contact with a child that upset or injured
- A gentle touch on the arm to re-focus attention
- Guiding (without force) a pupil away from a situation or location.
- Any physical contact has to be managed in order to make sure that it is appropriate and leaves neither party vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Factors to consider might include:
- Knowledge of the child, e.g. history/background
- Age (and age difference) – of child and adult
- Context – where, when, why
- Gender

3. What the law says about restrictive physical intervention:

School staff can use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- Committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil him/herself); or
- 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.

4. Definitions of 'school staff':

- Any teacher who works at the school; and
- Any other person whom the head has authorised to have control or charge of pupils. This. Includes;
 - support staff whose job normally includes supervising pupils, such as teaching assistants, learning support assistants, learning mentors and lunchtime supervisors.
 - can also include people to whom the head has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge of pupils, such as paid members of staff whose job doesn't normally involve supervising pupils (e.g. catering or premises staff) and unpaid volunteers (e.g. parents accompanying pupils on school-organised visits). It does NOT include prefects or any other pupils .
 - Physical intervention may be used where a pupil (incl. one from another school) is on school premises or in the lawful control or charge of the member of staff – e.g. on a school visit.

5. Reasonable Force:

- There is no legal definition of when it is reasonable to use force. That will always depend on the precise circumstances of individual cases. To be judged lawful, the force would need to be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent.
- The degree of force should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.
- Use of force could not be justified to prevent trivial misbehaviour. However, deciding whether misbehaviour is trivial also depends on circumstances e.g. running in a corridor crowded with small children may be considered dangerous.
- Proper account must always be taken of any particular special educational need and/or disability that a pupil might have – there are 2 key duties under the Disability Discrimination Act:
 - Not to treat a disabled pupil less favourably, for a reason relating to his/her disability, than someone to whom that reason does not apply, without justification; and
 - To take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage to pupils who are not disabled (reasonable adjustments).
- The statutory power described above is in addition to the common law power of any citizen - in an emergency - to use reasonable force in self-defence, to prevent another person from being injured or committing a criminal offence. NB There is NO legal requirement for practical training in techniques of physical intervention. When dealing with an emergency, any adult who is lawfully placed in charge of pupils by a Head Teacher can use reasonable and proportionate physical intervention even if he/she has had no prior training.
- Reasonable force may also be used to search pupils, without their consent, for weapons, however, schools are strongly advised not to search pupils where resistance is expected, but to call the police.
- It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

6. Pupils with SEN and/or disabilities:

- Where a school is aware that an individual pupil may be at greatest risk of needing restrictive physical interventions, it should be planned for in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents, following an individual risk assessment.
- The positive handling plan should set out the techniques that should be used, and those that shouldn't normally be used.
- The plan should be compatible with the pupil's statement and properly documented with the pupil's records.
- As far as practically possible, make staff who come into contact with the pupil aware of the relevant information in the plan, i.e.
 - Triggers known to provoke difficult behaviour, preventive strategies & what de-escalation tactics most likely to work
 - Triggers known to provoke a violent reaction, including relevant information relating to similar incidents in the past
 - Where physical intervention likely to be needed, detail specific strategies & techniques that have been agreed by staff, parents and pupil.
 - Decide which staff members should be called for the individual pupil concerned – not necessarily to take the action, but to be involved in the follow-up process.
 - Pupils known to be at risk should be taught how to communicate in times of crisis and what strategies they can use. All staff working with the pupil should be made aware of these strategies.

7. Situations where staff should not normally intervene without help

- Help may sometimes be needed in dealing with a situation involving an older pupil, a large pupil, more than one pupil, or if the authorised member of staff believes s/he may be at risk of injury. For such situations, staff must contact the office who will summon help quickly.
- The member of staff should also take steps to remove other pupils who might be at risk.

8. Recording and Reporting Incidents

- The staff member must record down any incident in which force has been used. Such records can be used to provide evidence of defensible decision-making in case of a subsequent complaint or investigation.
- When recording such incidents, staff should bear in mind that, if this information is passed to the police, it may be included in a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure. Schools should retain records of such incidents until the member of staff involved has reached retirement age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.
- After any recordable incident, parents are to be informed as soon after the event as possible. Governors should also be informed in due course.

Implemented on: 2nd Feb 2016

Reviewed on:

Approved by Full Governing Body: 2nd Feb 2016

Next review date: