



St Mary
Magdalene
Academy

POLICY ON THE USE OF FORCE TO CONTROL OR RESTRAIN STUDENTS

St Mary Magdalene Academy is a Christian community of learning. We aim to nurture young people to become high achievers and to discover their vocation in the global society.

“Show by a good life that your works are done by gentleness born of wisdom”
James 3.13

POLICY ON THE USE OF FORCE TO CONTROL OR RESTRAIN PUPILS

1 Introduction

This policy has been constructed to conform to the 1996 Education Act as it has been amended through the inclusion of Section 550A on 1st September 1998.

This policy presents guidelines for staff with regard to use of force to control or restrain all or any students and also identifies the Academy's response in situations where staff have used force. (See Inclusion Policy).

This policy is written with the understanding that staff have always been able to use reasonable force when they defend themselves against attack or when intervening in any emergency. DfES circular 10/98 attempts to clarify when a member of staff may use force in order to restrain or control students.

2 Situations in which Staff may use Physical Intervention to Control or Restrain Pupils

In all circumstances involving the use of force it is only appropriate "for reasonable force" to be used. There exists no legal definition of "reasonable force", however, all staff should be aware that force should only be used in specific circumstances and that the degree to which force is used will always depend on the age of the students, the understanding of students and the sex of students and that the degree of force used must always be in proportion to the circumstances of the incidents.

In the following situations it may be appropriate for a member of staff to use reasonable force. When:

- A student attacks a member or staff or another student,
- Students are fighting,
- A student is engaged in or about to commit deliberate damage or vandalism to property,
- A student is causing or is at risk of causing injury or damage by accident,
- A student is running on a corridor or stairway in a way that might cause an accident or injury,
- A student persistently refuses to obey an order to leave the classroom,
- A student is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting the lesson, if they are kept there.

In all situations teachers should take a calm and measured approach. Initial intervention should always be without force. Any physical intervention must follow other appropriate actions.

3 **The Application of Force**

If a member of staff judges that it is appropriate to apply force in any given situation then extreme care should be taken when applying force. The following are examples of acceptable use of force;

- Physically interposing between students or blocking a student's path;
- Touching, holding, pushing, pulling or leading a student by the arm;
- Shepherding a student away by placing a hand in the centre of the back;
- In extreme circumstances it may be acceptable to use restrictive holds on individuals.

4 **Recording Incidents where Staff have used force.**

An incident form will be available from either Academy office on which to report the occasions in which physical force is used by a member of staff against a pupil. On completing an incident form it should be submitted to the Principal as soon as possible.

5 **Reporting to Parents/Carers**

The Principal will decide whether it is appropriate or not to inform parents/carers of any specific incident. On making this decision any such report to parents/carers must be in writing and a copy of the communication will be given to the member of staff involved with the specific incident.

NB: The existence of this policy does not limit a parent/carer's right to complain about the use of physical force. All staff should be aware of the legal position under which they operate should physical force be used against a student. In extreme circumstances parents/carers may well wish to take civil action or pursue a criminal prosecution.

Change History

Date	What Changed	Committee Date Approved
Derivation	Policy derived from DfES	
Revision Policy		