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THE CARDINAL VAUGHAN MEMORIAL SCHOOL

Amare et Servire

THE CARDINAL VAUGHAN MEMORIAL SCHOOL TRUST

POLICY ON THE USE OF FORCE TO CONTROL AND RESTRAIN PUPILS

This policy and procedure was approved and adopted by The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School on 1 February 2021 and is reviewed annually.

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RATIONALE

We are a Catholic community, committed in our Mission Statement to the vision of the School as a spiritual building whose cornerstone is Christ and whose foundations are the Apostles and Prophets. It follows that our community must be one of love, all of whose members honour the Christ they find in one another. **Each person in the School, no matter his or her worldly status, deserves to be treated with the respect and, indeed, reverence due to one created in the image of God and redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ.** This belief is at the heart of the School's policy on the use of force to control and restrain pupils.

CONTEXT

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing an offence;
- causing personal injury or damage to the property of any person (including the pupil himself/herself);
- 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.

Departmental advice (Use of reasonable force: advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2013) further states that 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 trip or 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, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

These powers apply to:

- any teacher who works at the School;
- any person whom the Head of School has authorised to have control or charge of pupils (this includes support staff whose job normally involves supervising pupils, such as Learning Support Assistants and Learning Mentors);
- people to whom the Head of School has given temporary authorisation to have control or charge over pupils, such as paid members of the staff whose job does not normally involve supervising pupils (for example, catering or premises-related staff);
- unpaid volunteers such as, for example, parents accompanying pupils on school visits.

DEFINITION OF REASONABLE FORCE

The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain pupils. Reasonable in these circumstances means 'using no more force than is needed'. Three criteria, established for guidance, should be borne in mind:

- the circumstances of the particular incident must warrant it; that is to say the misdemeanour must not be trivial;
- the degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances and the minimum possible to achieve the desired result;
- the age, understanding and sex of the pupil must be considered.

Minimum force should only be used and never as a punishment. Staff should always consider carefully whether, and if so when, physical intervention is right; they should therefore always try to deal with a situation through other strategies before using force. The following are examples of what might be considered reasonable force:

- physically interposing oneself between pupils;
- blocking a pupil's path;
- holding, pushing or pulling;
- leading or shepherding a pupil away from an incident by the hand or arm or by gentle pressure on the centre of the back;
- (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds.

Where possible the person administering the force should ask the pupil to stop what he or she is doing and warn him or her what will happen if he or she does not obey. In all but exceptional circumstances, for example where a pupil is about to run into a road in front of a car, force should not be administered in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.

When using reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving children with SEND or with medical conditions, the School recognises the additional vulnerability of these groups.

RECORDING INCIDENTS INVOLVING THE USE OF FORCE OR RESTRAINT

The Head of School or any other member of the Senior Leadership Team should be informed after any incident involving force. A written report should be made as soon as possible after the event and a copy kept by the School and the person administering the force. The form should include details of:

- the name(s) of the pupil(s) involved and where the incident took place;
- the names of any staff or pupils who witnessed the event;
- the reason that force was necessary (e.g. to prevent injury to the pupil, to another pupil or to a member of staff);
- how the incident began and progressed, including details of the pupil's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how it was applied and for how long;
- the pupil's response and the outcome of the incident;
- any injury suffered by any party and any damage to any property.