

## **St Thomas à Becket Catholic College**

### **School Behaviour Policy ~ December 2011**

#### **Suggested governors' statement of principles**

This policy reflects our distinctive Christian approach to discipline and behaviour and is founded on the Christian principles of Justice, Reconciliation and Forgiveness.

Every member of our college community is considered responsible for her or his own behaviour; we must, therefore, provide opportunities for all members to develop their understanding of individual responsibility.

Good behaviour, work and discipline are essential to the success of our College community. This policy aims to:

- **encourage good behaviour, self-discipline and respect**
- **prevent bullying**
- **ensure that pupils complete assigned work to the best of their ability**
- **regulate the conduct of our pupils so that they present the best of themselves and our community**

#### **Review**

This policy will be subject to regular evaluation, and, as appropriate, to review, involving all levels of our College Community.

#### **Home-School agreement**

The Home School agreement describes the behaviour we expect of our pupils. We expect that the agreement be signed by parents annually to remind themselves of our expectations – in addition, pupils are expected to read and commit to the agreement which is also found in the college planner.

#### **Pupil Rights**

The behaviour policy enshrines two key rights of pupils whatever their social background, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, intellectual or physical capabilities: -

to be taught and to learn;

to mix with others in a Catholic, caring, well-ordered and supportive atmosphere.

In order to achieve these aims our Catholic College accepts its responsibility for:

well-informed and effective behavior management so that, as far as possible, discipline problems are minimized and pupils are free and keen to work;

providing work and experiences which meet our pupils' needs;

recognising the value of encouragement and praise;

fostering constructive relationships with parents/guardians;

careful consideration and review of decisions about the groups in which pupils are placed;

liaising effectively with our partner primary schools;

liaising, as appropriate, with support agencies, e.g. Education Welfare (attendance/welfare issues) Child Protection, Safeguarding, Educational Psychologists (learning/ behaviour issues), Social Services, Police;

fulfilling its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and in respect of pupils with SEN;

operating a disciplinary code which is fair, and which is clear to all college members.

### **Our expectations**

It follows that our College has high expectations of all its members, and insists on the following:

regular and punctual attendance at College and at all lessons;

polite and considerate behaviour, and respect for the rights of others;

willingness to work;

acceptance of the authority of all teaching and non-teaching staff, and of older pupils under their directions,

to supervise activities in and around the building;

co-operation with the College's rules and care of its environment.

Awareness that pupils are responsible for their behaviour outside the school gates and that school may discipline them for behaviour that could adversely affect the school's reputation.

**Supporting, rewarding and encouraging good behavior**

## Rewards

St Thomas à Becket Catholic College believes that encouraging pupils to work hard, behave well and take responsibility for the way they act in College and outside are key elements in achieving good discipline. Every teacher will promote good behavior by stamping a pupil's planner in every lesson where good progress has been made.

## Stampers

All teachers are asked to stamp a pupil's planner when he/she has the correct equipment, and makes good progress in a lesson.

Stamp totals are collected each week and a certificate awarded to the form of the week in both key stages.

Each term a cash prize of #50 is awarded to the form of the term in each key stage; individual prizes of #10 are also awarded to pupils in every year group who collect most stamps.

**Subject Departments** will look for appropriate opportunities to praise pupils and, where pupils are performing well, to contact their parents/carers. To this end:

we encourage each department to use the Credit System and, where appropriate, to offer praise for effort, improved work or behaviour, or achievement during a half-term;

where there is a particularly marked improvement the Head of Department will pass on details to the Academic Tutor;

the same will apply where a pupil is being praised by a number of departments during a single half-term; this information will be passed on by the Form Tutor to the Academic Tutor;

where there is consistent good work in a subject for more than one half-term, the Head of Department will again refer the pupil to the Academic Tutor for praise;

Teachers are encouraged to reward particularly good effort by entering information on the e-portal pupil page under "pupil events".

some subject departments also use postcards to credit good progress.

**House Teams** will encourage the wider commitment of pupils, allowing opportunities to develop further the notion of personal responsibility, these opportunities will include:

*the development of the team ethos* through a variety of House activities;  
the recognition of the responsibility of older pupils towards those younger than themselves;  
*the responsibility of all to contribute to those aspects of college life*, which are beyond the individual and reflect a commitment to the development of the whole college community.

**College Planners, the Credit System and termly Celebration assemblies** provide opportunities for rewarding good behaviour and developing the notion of individual responsibility. Staff should, therefore, ensure that the College Planner is used to good effect and that good work and good behaviour are rewarded through the Credit System and stampers whenever this is appropriate.

# Pupil Support Systems

As a Catholic college and mindful of our mission, we feel that we are best able to provide for the children in our care. We shall endeavour to provide pastoral care for all our pupils based on Christ's example and ensure that all relationships in the college will provide each individual with experience of her or his dignity and value as a unique person in God's creation.

We recognise that we are able to make a difference to a pupil's behaviour, social interaction and relationships with others whatever that pupil's prior experience or background may be.

Schools and colleges with a strong sense of community and teacher collaboration have better behaviour.

We also understand that when behaviour is inappropriate, it is the behaviour which is bad not the child. We recognise that the pupils are children and will sometimes behave inappropriately, whereas, as staff, we are the adults and will teach good behaviour by example, as well as through other strategies.

In order to enable effective teaching and learning to take place, good behaviour in all aspects of college life is necessary. We seek to create a caring and learning environment within the context of our Catholic college by:

- ❑ promoting good behaviour and discipline;
- ❑ promoting self-esteem, self-discipline, proper regard for authority and positive relationships based on mutual respect;
- ❑ ensuring fairness of treatment for all;
- ❑ encouraging consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour;
- ❑ promoting early intervention;
- ❑ providing a safe environment free from disruption, violence, bullying and any form of harassment;
- ❑ actively avoiding confrontation with pupils;
- ❑ working in partnership with parents and carers in the implementation of our policies and procedures.

## **Tutors**

The role of the tutor is a most responsible one and vital to the accomplishment of the school's mission – to help children grow in Knowledge and Faith. The role also forms an integral part of the home – school – parish partnership and, as such, the tutor is the first person to whom the student would turn for help and advice as well as being the first point of contact for parents.

## **Catholic Ethos**

The Form Tutor and Link Tutor encourage the Catholic ethos of the College by ensuring that daily prayers are said with the form group, to attend assemblies giving students the opportunity to participate in them, liturgical celebrations, masses with their tutor group and supervise their movement and general behaviour.

## **Home College Link**

**The Form Tutor** is the **first point of contact** between home and college, after consultation with the Academic Tutor and subject teachers, fostering this relationship in accordance with College policies attending parents' evenings and meetings and contributing to the completion of reports and references.

## **Ensuring and maintaining Basic Standards**

**The Form Tutor** works alongside the Attendance Officer to record and monitor students' attendance in accordance with the College's registration procedure and policies on attendance and punctuality.

He/she monitors personal organization including the use of school planners and equipment by ensuring a thorough weekly inspection, completing and signing all planners.

**He/she** maintains the highest standards of appearance and behaviour in accordance with the College policy on Uniform and Discipline including associated rewards and sanctions.

**The form tutor** also has the overview of the welfare, behaviour, attendance, academic progress of students and as such will attend tutor- team meetings chaired by the Academic Tutor reporting on the attendance, punctuality, behaviour and academic progress of individuals.

## **Pupil Safety and Safeguarding**

Pupils behave best when they are safe and it is essential that we are able to respond quickly if there are concerns over a pupil's safety.

Pupils are reminded of the need to look out for each other and to tell someone if they feel that they or someone else may be unsafe.

The school's Safeguarding procedures are straight-forward – any member of staff who has a concern about a pupil is required to fill in an orange form or, if there is immediate concern, speak directly to one of the college's safeguarding officers.

## **Investigating the causes of poor behaviour**

If college suspects that poor behavior is the result of a pupil suffering from significant harm or neglect, the college safeguarding policy and guidelines should be followed.

## **AB Counselors**

A team of anti-bullying counselors from Year 10 provides support for pupils who may be bullied.

**Pro-active approaches to behaviour management**

We adopt a proactive approach to behaviour as we know that reactive approaches are not effective. By reactive approaches we mean any approach, which focuses on action after an incident; applying a tariff of punishments; systems of referral which research has established as counter-productive. **In schools and colleges with low levels of disruptive behaviour, class teachers are discouraged from passing problems to other staff.** Indeed, the over use of hierarchical referrals is a characteristic of high excluding schools and colleges:

### **A consistent approach to behavior management - Roles and Responsibilities**

Every individual member of staff will ensure the provision of a behavioural environment conducive to personal, social and educational development for each and every child in their care. This provision will be ensured through effective classroom management and the monitoring of pupil behaviour when outside the classroom.

**All staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for ensuring that the policies and procedures are followed and consistently and fairly applied. Mutual support amongst all staff in the implementation of our policies is essential. Staff training will be made available as necessary and when identified through Performance Management .**

All members of staff have responsibility, with the support of the Headteacher, for creating a high quality-learning environment, for teaching good behaviour and implementing the agreed policies and procedures consistently.

All staff and the Headteacher recognise that the avoidance of confrontation is necessary if we are to help pupils to focus on appropriate behaviour.

### **Behaviour Strategies and the Teaching of Good Behaviour by all staff including cover, support, supply and cover supervisors**

It is understood that each teacher will ensure that the curriculum offered is sufficiently differentiated to allow for each pupil's individual needs; an inappropriate curriculum can lead to poor behaviour.

Appropriate behaviour has to be taught; poor behaviour will occur. As we are dealing with children, however adult they may be on occasions, they will inevitably behave like children sometimes. The way in which we manage our classrooms can contribute to the learning and reinforcement of good behaviour.

Consistency of approach is all-important in reinforcing what is acceptable and what is unacceptable. We need to remember that it is the poor behaviour we do not like and not the child; if we forget this we may encourage or reinforce a child's low self-esteem. If a child feels threatened that child will retreat into the reptilian area of the brain where the only alternatives are fight or flight – irrational confrontation or running away from the member of staff; escalation will result. It is up to us to try to keep the situation calm. It is only when the child is calm and capable of rational thought that we are able to teach and reinforce good behaviour; sometimes it may be necessary to allow the child the opportunity to calm down for ten minutes

and then to discuss the incident, or inappropriate behaviour, in a non-threatening way. Shouting at or confronting a child aggressively will threaten that child.

### **Classroom Management**

Successful behaviour management relies on the willingness of the whole staff to support a consistent approach in dealing with incidents as and when they occur. The following are guidelines, which are recommended:

- ❑ Establish rules and specific directions which clearly define the limits of acceptable and unacceptable pupil behaviour in your classroom.
- ❑ Teach your pupils to consistently follow these rules and directions and to choose to behave responsibly at all times when they are in your classroom.
- ❑ Provide pupils with consistent, positive encouragement and recognition when they behave. Young people are eager for your positive words of encouragement and praise, even if they do not always show it.
- ❑ Adopt a positive, assertive manner when responding to pupils. Pupils trust and respect the calm, consistent and caring presence of an assertive teacher. They know that the teacher has set limits and that he or she will follow through appropriately whenever a pupil chooses not to behave. There is no confusion, no second-guessing, no hostility or anger.

### **Head of Department/Teacher in Charge of Subject responsibilities**

- ❑ It is a departmental responsibility and, hence, the responsibility of the Head of Department or Teacher i/c the subject to ensure that the curriculum offered to each individual pupil is sufficiently differentiated for that pupil's needs.
- ❑ Heads of Department and Teachers i/c subjects are responsible for the discipline within their own subject areas; they are the person to whom discipline problems should be referred if they occur within a classroom or when in the care of a member of their subject teaching staff. When a member of staff is covering within a subject other than their own, if necessary, reference should be made to the Head of Department in whose department the member of staff is covering. Members of staff within departments should feel confident in asking their line manager for help, advice and support in dealing with difficult cases; every effort should be made to support the class teacher in the maintenance of their own classroom and discipline management.
- ❑ Where single person departments are concerned, clusters of departments may be established to provide mutual support; some clusters already exist historically – these may or may not be appropriate. (If there are difficulties in this respect, please refer to Deputy Head and/or Assistant Head (Pastoral)).
- ❑ Departments will use their own systems of dealing with poor behaviour based on whole college principles. It is understood that departmental systems must recognise that each Head of Department has a teaching responsibility and is, therefore, unable to deal with a constant stream of referrals; strategies established within a department, or cluster of departments, should take account of this.
- ❑ Every member of staff has a named 'discipline buddy.'

- ❑ If a pupil needs to be removed from a classroom due to a failure to follow the classroom code, he or she should be removed to the discipline buddy.
- ❑ If the pupil misbehaves in the 'buddy' room then the Senior Leadership Teacher/Academic Tutor on call is contacted and the pupil issued with a daily report.
- ❑ When all departmental disciplinary measures have been exhausted, the Head of Department may refer the pupil to the appropriate Academic Tutor.

### **Pastoral Team**

- ❑ Pastoral Teams are organized in Year Groups. Each Team includes the Form Tutors within that Year under the Team Leadership of the Academic Tutor.
- ❑ The KS3 and KS4 Team Leaders are responsible for overall pastoral care.



**Systems to Manage and Improve Behaviour**

## Sanctions and Disciplinary Procedures

Effective classroom management techniques should reduce the need for sanctions. However, we will always need a system of responding to misbehaviour.

**If possible, the sanction should follow misconduct as rapidly as possible and be implemented by the teacher concerned.**

All staff needs to have a common understanding of 'bad behaviour'. Some types of conduct may be irritating and less than ideal but of no great importance; other conduct might be highly dangerous. We need to distinguish between different behavioural problems and use sanctions appropriately, to demonstrate the bounds of acceptable behaviour and to show that misconduct is noted by **all** staff.

To this end college staff agreed on a **Sanctions Hierarchy** to provide clarification for teachers and to guide how they are to respond to inappropriate behavior.

Actions, which the College may take, follow a 'ladder' of response according to the seriousness or frequency of the misbehaviour. The pattern of response is as follows:

*most incidents* will be dealt with by the member of staff on the spot, who will arrange a punishment e.g. a simple talking-to, extra work, keeping a pupil in (with 24 hours' notice for periods of more than a few minutes);

*more serious, or repeated misbehaviour* may be referred to the subject Head of Department. These will be recorded on e-portal.

Measures might include College Detention or temporary removal to the discipline buddy. If the Academic Tutor, is subsequently involved, as may be the case, the pupil's parents/carers might be contacted to agree further steps, e.g. placing the pupil on a report, referral to a support agency;

However, this action will be implemented only if the Academic Tutor considers it appropriate; more serious or repeated behavior is recorded on e-portal for parents and other school staff to see.

## Behavior Buddies

All teachers "buddy up" with a colleague to offer mutual support with pupils who may be behaving inappropriately.

Buddies do not have to be in the same department – choose someone who has a room close to you though!

If a pupil is causing persistent disruption in your classroom, and has refused to follow your instructions, please remove the pupil to your "buddy" classroom. Do not send the pupil directly to the PSU unless there is an immediate health and safety risk.

At the end of the lesson, a note is then placed in the planner of the pupil concerned by the receiving teacher.

The teacher from whom the student has been removed then applies an appropriate sanction such as a detention, and informs HoD and AT and **records the incident on e-portal using the students events screen.**

If the pupil fails to behave for the “buddy” teacher, the buddy should contact the Attendance and Behaviour Officer who will ensure that the “on-call” teacher comes to the buddy’s classroom.

### **The “On-call” Teacher**

A member of SLT or an Academic Tutor is available “on-call” every lesson.

He/she collects the report clipboard from the Attendance and Behaviour Office at the start of each on-call lesson and returns it at the end of each lesson.

The “on-call” teacher **immediately** issues a day report to any pupil to whom they are called and records the name of the pupil on the record sheet – information is transferred to e-portal by the Attendance Officer and e-mailed to Academic Tutors and to JF and TW each day.

The “on-call” teacher also puts a note in the pupil planner – “Day report issued to .....by .....following..... Please ensure that report is signed this evening. Thank you.”

The pupil is put on report for rest of day and returns report to the Attendance Officer at the end of the day before taking it home.

Attendance Officer sends home standard letter.

Any further disruptive behaviour (as recorded on report) results in next day sanction-

**Attendance Officer Records on e-portal** and e-mails AT, JF and TW as appropriate.

Any further “on-call” incidents on that day, pupil is placed immediately into the IEU.

### **Internal Exclusion Unit**

The IEU is used as a last resort and a serious sanction. **A pupil will only be admitted to the IEU if he/she is brought by a senior member of staff or if the pupil poses a serious health and safety risk.**

To ensure consistency and fairness, the Sanctions Hierarchy agreed between staff is used to guide staff response to incidents.

At this stage the Head of Department will decide on appropriate action, e.g. departmental detention. However, if there are indications of persistent misbehaviour, there could be referral to the Academic Tutor who will log the referral and may decide upon further action, including consultation with other agencies.

Very serious misbehaviour may lead to exclusion –either external or internal. External exclusion involves the pupil working away from the school environment; pupils under internal exclusion work in the IEU following the protocols established in November 2011.

If the pupil is externally excluded, he/she must complete work provided by the school under supervision provided by the parent.

The decision for exclusion can only be taken by the Headteacher. However, the Headteacher will only make this decision in the light of evidence provided by the Assistant Head (Pastoral) who will have consulted the relevant personnel involved in the referral.

Statements should be taken from all involved, preferably using the Statement Form, and forwarded to the Headteacher.

After any decision has been made regarding exclusion or any other consequence, statements are to be kept in the appropriate student file and a brief summary of action taken recorded on e-portal.

### **The College Behaviour Support Plan**

Whenever a serious breach of discipline occurs, the pupil and if possible the parent, should be given sight of the College Behaviour Plan and the appropriate stage identified.

The pupil may then be placed on a Behaviour Support Plan which will set targets for improvement and identify any support to be provided by the school. The parent's responsibilities will also be identified and a time scale for review provided.

The Behaviour Support Plan is stored in the student file.

The Assistant Heads (Pastoral) may, dependent upon circumstances, look for ways of preventing exclusion usually in consultation with the Academic Tutor and the pupil.

If exclusion occurs, the college will provide work for the pupil to complete at home; this is a legal requirement and departments will be expected to provide this work; if the exclusion exceeds the required period then education will be arranged elsewhere for that pupil.

If a pupil reaches 15 days of exclusion, either internal or external in one calendar year, the parent of the pupil and the pupil will be required to attend a meeting of the Governors' Behaviour and Discipline Committee.

## **The Inclusion Panel**

Pupils who have a second exclusion will be required to attend a meeting of the college Inclusion Panel together with a parent/guardian.

Meetings of the Inclusion Panel are called by the appropriate KS Pastoral Leader. Targets for the improvement of behavior are set and a date for review agreed. The inclusion Panel meeting also considers ways in which the pupil can be supported by college and agrees the areas of responsibility which the parent will provide.

A named member of the governing body is informed of the meeting and of any follow up action.

The college will endeavour to prevent permanent exclusion and alternatives will always be considered. However, if it is considered that permanent exclusion is the only option, this step will be recommended to the school governors.

**Discipline in School – Teachers’ Powers**

## Confiscation

We will confiscate property, such as mobile phones, if college Basic Standards are not adhered to. ( Ref: DFE Guidelines 2011)

## Detentions

We will detain a pupil if he/she breaks college rules and if the protocols for placing pupils in college detention have been followed.

We will usually give 24 hours notice of detention after school has ended.

However, an immediate detention can be given to a pupil **if college has received express written permission** from the pupil's parent/guardian. (Ref: DFE Guidelines 2011)

Late detention, which takes place at lunchtime, is given to pupils who are late to college or to lesson.

If a pupil fails to attend a late detention, the pupil is placed in Whole School Detention on a Wednesday evening for 30 minutes. Parents are written to several days in advance by college.

Any pupil failing to attend a WSD is automatically placed in Headteachers' detention on a Friday evening for one hour and parents informed via phone.

**Detention will only be given in circumstances that are reasonable.**

## Searching Pupils

### Searching with consent

School staff can search a pupil for any item banned under the school rules if the pupil agrees

School will not ask for written consent from the pupil before asking him or her to turn out his pockets or empty her bag.

Banned items are specified in the Basic Standards

If a pupil refuses to co-operate with a request made for a pupil to turn out his pockets or empty her bag, he/she will be referred to a senior member of staff as a member of urgency and where appropriate disciplinary penalties will be applied.

### Searching without consent

The headteacher will specify which members of staff will be authorized to search without consent. These will be volunteers and receive training.

Staff authorized by the head may search pupils or their possessions without consent where they have reasonable grounds to suspect the pupil has certain prohibited items. These items are:

Knives or weapons  
Alcohol  
Illegal drugs  
Mobile phones  
Stolen items

If a search is undertaken without the pupils consent, the search will: -

Be carried out by a member of staff of the same sex

Be witnessed by another member of staff who is of the same sex – if possible.

Take place on school premises or another place where a member of staff has lawful control of a pupil such as on a school trip.

School staff can seize any banned or prohibited item found as a result of a search or which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

School staff will not ask a pupil to remove clothing other than outer clothing- hats, shoes, boots, gloves and scarves.

A pupil's possessions will only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff. ( Ref: DFE Guidelines 2011)

### **Seizing Items**

School will seize anything that it has reasonable grounds of suspecting is a prohibited item or is evidence in relation to an offence.

School will dispose of alcohol

Controlled drugs, or items believed to be controlled drugs, will be delivered to the police as soon as possible

Any other item which is seized and considered detrimental to good order will be confiscated.

Stolen items will be delivered to the police – or returned to their owner

We will contact the police if school judges it appropriate to do so if valuable items such as iPods or phones are stolen or recovered.

Any weapon or items which are evidence of an offence will be passed to the police as soon as possible.

( Ref: DFE Guidelines 2011)

School will inform parents where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found.

## **Screening**

School can require pupils to undergo screening by a walk-through or hand-held metal detector even if they do not suspect them of having a weapon and without the consent of the pupil.

Any member of staff can screen pupils – in most cases this duty will be carried out by the Headteacher or by a member of staff delegated by him.

If a pupil refuses to be screened the school will refuse to have him/her on the premises.

If the pupil refuses to comply he will not be readmitted until he does so. He is not excluded – any absence is to be recorded as unauthorized.

## **Complaints**

Schools are not required to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child.

There is no legal requirement to make or keep a record of a search

Schools should inform the individual pupil's parents or guardians where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found, though there is no legal requirement to do so.

Complaints about screening or searching will be dealt with through the usual school complaints procedure.

## **Reasonable force**

This school does **not** operate a no contact policy (Ref: DFE Guidelines 2011)

All members of staff can use reasonable force. **This includes unpaid staff or parents acting as volunteers.**

School expects the staff member to use his or her professional judgment in the particular circumstances when deciding whether to intervene

Staff can use reasonable force to: -

Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where to allow the pupil to leave would risk their safety or the safety of others

Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil

Stop a fight in the playground

Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

School will record the use of force through a statement made by the member of staff after force has been used

School will also communicate with parents about serious incidents when reasonable force has been used.

### **Making malicious accusations against school staff –DFE Guidance 2011**

#### **Pupil complaints**

Any allegations against staff will be dealt with thoroughly and speedily.

Where a member of staff has acted within 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.

The onus will be on the complainant to prove his/her allegations – 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. Schools should refer to the “Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff” guidance where an allegation of using excessive force has been made against a teacher. This guidance makes clear that a person must not be suspended automatically or without careful thought.

Schools must 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.

If a decision is taken to suspend a teacher, the school should ensure that the teacher has access to a named contact who can provide support.

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 the teacher.

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

Members of staff will not be automatically suspended or suspended without careful thought.

## **Other physical contact**

School considers the following as appropriate occasions when physical contact with a pupil is both proper and necessary: -

When comforting a distressed pupil.

To demonstrate the use of a musical instrument or a practical skill

When a pupil is being congratulated or praised

To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

To give first aid

When supervising a lunch or bus queue

## **Use of reasonable force – frequently asked questions**

**I'm worried that if I use force a pupil or parent could make a complaint against me. Am I protected?**

Yes, if you have acted lawfully. If the force used is reasonable all staff will have a robust defence against any accusations.

## **How do I know whether using a physical intervention is reasonable?**

The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgment 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 SLT when they have used force.

## **What about school trips?**

The power may be used where the member of staff is lawfully in charge of the pupils, and this included while on school trips.

## **Can force be used on pupils with SEN or disabilities?**

Yes, but the judgment on whether to use force should not only depend on the circumstances of the case but also information and understanding of the needs of the pupil concerned.

**I'm a female teacher with a Year 10 class – there's no way I'd want to restrain or try to control my pupils. Am I expected to do so?**

There is a power, not a duty, to use force so members of staff have discretion whether or not to use it. However, teachers and other school staff have a duty of care towards their pupils, and it might be argued that failing to take action (including a failure to use reasonable force) may in some circumstances breach that duty.

**Are there circumstances in which a teacher can use physical force to punish a pupil?**

No. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment. This is because it would fall within the definition of corporal punishment, which is illegal.