

ST. JOHN'S Primary School



Use of Reasonable Force School Policy

St. John's Primary School, Coleraine

Principal: Mrs H. McDonnell

SENCO & Child Protection Teacher: Miss A. McNicholl

Chairman of the Board of Governors: Mr L. McQuillan

Work hard



Give everything a try

Enjoy the rewards



Through the development of a positive ethos to aim to significantly reduce the need for such unfortunate action.

Our teaching staff will develop such ethos through:-

- *A child-centred focus;*
- *The Principal, Senior Management Team and Staff promoting collectively an atmosphere of care and respect;*
- *A positive atmosphere based on a sense of community within the school and on values which all its members share;*
- *A commitment to the school by the pupils and their parents;*
- *Effective, well planned teaching;*
- *A stimulating and well differentiated curriculum;*
- *The development of the whole child;*
- *By our pastoral policies and practises (see Pastoral Care Policy).*

Risk Assessment:-

Problems may arise from time to time; a small number of pupils may exhibit disturbed or distressing behaviour which may require some form of physical intervention by staff. To minimise the risk of incidents escalating unnecessarily due to lack of foresight, planning and training, schools may carry out a risk assessment under two headings:-

- *Environmental Risk Assessment; and*
- *Individual Risk Assessment.*

Environmental Risk Assessment:-

- *Identify situations or locations where there is increased risk of incidents happening;*
- *Analysis of past incidents to identify medium-to-high risk locations;*
- *Staff and pupils consulted;*
- *Decide the appropriate type and level of supervision;*
- *Principal and SMT to make recommendations to Governors on type and level of supervision to minimise risk;*
- *Implement plan; and*
- *Review plan.*

Individual Risk Assessment:-

Where we are aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force/safe handling, the school will plan its response by:-

- *Consulting the parents - discuss and record specific action that we as a school may need to take;*
- *Briefing staff - what action they should be taking (this will require guidance and training);*

- *Managing the pupil – e.g. reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict;*
- *Ensuring that additional support can be summoned wherever possible; and implanting plan and review.*

Records of such incidents will be recorded on our school Pastoral Care central records along with appropriate actions taken or to be taken, and in addition to records of meetings or discussions with pupils, parents or relevant outside agencies.

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Aims for our policy on the use of Reasonable Force:-

By the implementation of this policy the Staff and Governors of St John's Primary School aim to:-

- Create a learning environment in which young people and adults feel safe;*
- Protect every person in the school community from harm;*
- Protect pupil's against any form of physical intervention, which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful; and*
- Put in place guidance for staff so that they are clear about the circumstances in which they might use reasonable force to restrain pupils and how such reasonable force might be applied.*

Definition of reasonable force:-

The Education (NI) Order 1998 (Part 2 Article 4 (1) states:

“A member of staff of a grant-aided school may use in relation to any pupil at the school, such force as is reasonable in circumstances for the purpose of preventing the pupils from doing or continuing to do any of the following, namely:-

- Committing any offence;*
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of any person (including the pupil himself); and*
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs during a teaching session or otherwise.*

We at St John’s believe that reasonable force should be limited to emergency situations and used only as a last resort, e.g. a pupil attacks a member of staff or another pupil, or a pupil is causing injury or damage by accident, rough play or misuse of dangerous materials or substances.

Policy Review:

St. John’s Primary School will update this Policy in the light of any further guidance and legislation and review it annually.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

Ratification: May 2019

Review Due: Term 3 2020