

## USE OF REASONABLE FORCE AND SAFE HANDLING POLICY

We feel that the need to use reasonable force to restrain or control a pupil in St Patrick's Academy, will rarely occur.

Our pastoral care policy aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment in which all our students can learn and develop their full potential. The application of reasonable force to restrain or control a student is to be used as a last resort, only when other behaviour management strategies have failed, and when the pupil, other pupils, members of staff or property are at risk, or the pupil is seriously compromising good order and discipline.

Who may use reasonable force?

Article 4 of the Education (N.J.) Order 1998 authorises teachers to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from

- committing an offence
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of any person (inc. the student himself/herself)
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Other members of staff authorised by the Principal, are also authorised to use reasonable force.

The right of a member of staff to use reasonable force applies where the pupil concerned is on the school premises and when he/she has been authorised to have lawful control in charge of the pupil concerned elsewhere e.g. supervision of pupils in bus queues, on a field trip or out of school activity.

### **What is meant by reasonable force?**

The law regards reasonableness as "enough force to stop whatever was about to happen from happening".

- the use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it.
- any force used should always be the minimum.
- the degree of force might depend on the age, level of understanding and any physical disability the student may have.

### **Reasonable force should only be used where other behaviour management strategies have failed.**

Staff should always try to deal with a situation through other strategies before using reasonable force.

Staff should never act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.

Staff should also avoid touching or holding a pupil in any way that might be considered indecent.

All incidents involving reasonable force must be recorded in the incident book.

Parents will be informed of an incident (involving the use of force) with their child but not of any trivial incident.

The Designated Teacher for child protection shall provide guidance for all staff on the use of reasonable force - Code of conduct for staff