



St Elphege's Catholic Schools

Mollison Drive, Wallington, SM6 9HY | Tel: 020 8669 6306 | www.stelphesrcschools.org.uk

Executive Head Teacher: Mr Martin Jones

Head Teacher: Mr Laurence Hawkes

Deputy Head Teachers: Mrs R Duffy & Mrs N Hawkes

Wednesday, 24 June 2026

Physical Chastisement: A London Borough of Sutton Agreement

Dear Parents and Carers,

There are many different views about physical chastisement, but it is widely accepted that hurting children is not an effective or appropriate way to teach them right from wrong - nor are methods that involve humiliating or threatening children, or destroying their confidence.

The school has a duty to report all incidents of suspected or confirmed physical chastisement to social care and the police; any punishment to a child which leaves visible bruising, grazes, scratches, swelling, cuts, or stress injuries from prolonged standing, position holding or squatting are banned by law in the United Kingdom. It is also important to understand that even where no injuries are visible, the physical chastisement of a child may be considered 'common assault' by the police.

Across Sutton, there is an increasing number of children coming to the attention of police and social care because they are victims of physical abuse as a result of inappropriate chastisement. The London Borough of Sutton have consulted with other Local Authorities to develop an agreement which outlines the law surrounding physical chastisement of children and the responsibilities of parents and schools.

More information about how concerns surrounding physical chastisement are handled by the school can be found in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures on the school website.

If you would like advice or support in managing your child's behaviour at home, please contact the pastoral support team - Mrs Michael - through the school office. The NSPCC also provide a 'Need-To-Know' guide on [Positive Parenting](#), which you may find useful.

Yours sincerely,

Laurence Hawkes
Headteacher

London Borough of Sutton

People's Directorate

Children's Social Care London Borough
of Sutton, Sutton Civic Offices,
St Nicholas Way
Sutton SM1 1EA www.sutton.gov.uk



Schools have a statutory responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children both in and out of school.

The law UK law protects every child up to the age of 18 years from cruel and abusive treatment by their parents and carers.

- It is against the law for a parent to use physical punishment on their child that causes marks.
- It is against the law to use an implement to hit a child.
- It is against the law for anyone who is not the child's parent to use ANY form of physical punishment.
- Parents who cause deliberate harm to their child could face criminal prosecution.

As a parent/guardian, I understand that I am responsible for disciplining my children or those under my care when they are not in school.

I am aware and fully understand that the use of physical force in disciplining them may be illegal in certain circumstances. This may include where an implement (e.g. belt, stick, slipper) has been used or where the use of that force has resulted in visible injury and the use of prolonged physical stress positions. This is where children are placed in a position of discomfort for a long period of time.

I understand that where the school has reason to believe a child has been harmed through physical chastisement or other means, the school has a statutory duty to report such incidents to Children's Social Care and that the police may be asked to investigate.

Child's Name: _____ DOB: _____

Child's Name: _____ DOB: _____

Child's Name: _____ DOB: _____

Parent / Guardian Name: _____ Signed: _____

Parent / Guardian Name: _____ Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please return your completed agreement form to your child's school.