



A School Partnership In Rural England

**Motto : 'We Aspire to Inspire'**

**Our Values** – using the initials of the names of the schools.

**K** – Kindness

**U** – Understanding

**P** – Patience

**H** – Honesty

**L** – Love

**B** – Boldness

### **Reasonable Force Policy**

#### **Document History**

New Policy written by EHT March 2025, reviewed and approved by Federation GB 20 May 2025  
Bi-annual review

*The term 'school' refers to the schools in the ASPIRE Federation: Kingswood Primary, Ulcombe CE Primary, Platts Heath Primary and Leeds and Broomfield CE Primary. The term may refer to them jointly or individually.*

At our two Church of England schools this policy will be delivered through strong links made to our Christian values:

### **Leeds & Broomfield Church of England Primary School**

At Leeds & Broomfield we build strong foundations for all; to learn, flourish and fill their hearts with God's love. Everyone is important, valued and needed to make L&B grow. We give a quality all round nurturing education which develops the whole child; If the rain came we would not fall.

*"As many hands build a house, so many hearts make a school."*  
(Matthew Ch 7 24-27)

**RESPECT      RESILIENCE      EMPATHY      CURIOSITY      HONESTY**

Our school Christian Values support the development of the children and all within the school and local community, giving the children and staff a positive outward looking view. The pupils and staff support and help each other and the local community enabling all to flourish.

We have explored the story of Matthew (Ch 7 24-27) showing curiosity, and the children felt empathy for the builder of the house on the sand, but said they must be resilient to try again. Jesus was honest with his followers and people followed and trusted him. The story continues showing how Jesus respected all and everyone who wanted to listen and learn could – no one was turned away. This high level of inclusion and respect is what makes Leeds and Broomfield a great school community to be part of 'many hearts make a school'.

### **Ulcombe Church of England Primary School**

Ulcombe Church of England School is a nurturing, inclusive learning space, where our uniqueness inspires trust and welcomes diversity. Our children all flourish (for however long they are with us), in an environment where learning through making choices (good or bad) is not only embraced but discussed and, when needed, forgiven. This allows our learners to become positive role models in their wider communities. The whole school community works together in unity to ensure that our practice fully reflects the passage of Corinthians 12:12-14. The children and adults feel included and appreciated as one body with diverse cultures learning, working and flourishing together to accept everyone and nurture their aspirations for the future.

*"One body, many members, learning together surrounded by God's inclusive love."*  
(Corinthians 12:12-14)

**TRUST      RESPECT      HOPE      ENDURANCE**

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## Aspire Federation - Reasonable Force Policy

**Purpose of the Policy:** This policy is designed to ensure that all staff at Aspire understand when and how reasonable force can be used to maintain safety, order, and discipline in the school. Our commitment is to provide a supportive environment for children and staff while ensuring that force is used only when absolutely necessary.

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### 1. Definition of Reasonable Force

Reasonable force refers to the minimum physical intervention necessary to prevent a child from harming themselves, others, or property. It should be used only as a last resort when all other de-escalation strategies have failed or would be inappropriate.

Examples of situations where reasonable force might be necessary include:

- Preventing a child from running out of the school or into dangerous situations (e.g., traffic).
- Preventing physical harm to another child or adult.
- Removing a child from a situation where they are at risk of causing serious damage to property or disrupting the learning environment.

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### 2. Legal Framework

Under UK law, staff at schools are allowed to use reasonable force to:

- **Prevent harm** to the student or others.
- **Prevent damage** to property.
- **Maintain order** in the classroom or on the school premises.

Relevant legislation includes:

- **Education Act 1996** (Section 550A) – gives teachers the power to use reasonable force in situations where it is necessary to maintain order.
- **Children and Families Act 2014** – includes provisions on physical restraint and the rights of children with special educational needs or disabilities.
- **The Human Rights Act 1998** – ensures that children's dignity and human rights are protected.

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### 3. Principles for Using Force

- **Minimal Force:** Staff should use only the minimum force necessary to prevent harm or to manage a situation safely.
- **Proportionality:** The force used should be proportionate to the situation, considering the age, development, and specific needs of the child.
- **Age and Sensitivity:** Staff should be particularly sensitive to the age and developmental stage of the child. Physical intervention should be avoided where possible for younger children.
- **Dignity and Respect:** The use of force should always be respectful of the child's dignity and should not be used for punishment.
- **Training:** All staff must receive training in de-escalation techniques, appropriate behavior management strategies, and how to safely apply reasonable force when necessary.

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### 4. When Force Can Be Used

Staff should only use force in situations where:

- **There is an immediate risk of harm** (e.g., a child is about to run into traffic).
- **The child is causing or about to cause injury** to themselves or others.
- **The child is causing significant property damage**.
- **The child is engaging in behavior that disrupts the school environment** in a way that affects the safety or well-being of others (e.g., physical altercation).

#### 4.1 Non-Physical Alternatives

Before resorting to physical force, staff should try other strategies such as:

- **Verbal de-escalation:** Calm, clear, and positive communication with the child to understand their needs and manage behavior.
- **Time-out:** Offering the child space to calm down in a designated area or sending them to a different classroom.
- **Restorative discussions:** Encouraging the child to reflect on their behavior and repair harm with others involved.

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### 5. Types of Force Not Permitted

The following types of force should **never** be used:

- **Punitive force:** Force used as punishment or in retaliation.
- **Excessive force:** Force that causes unnecessary pain or distress to the child.
- **Hitting, slapping, or striking** a child in any way.
- **Force used to humiliate** or demean a child.

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## 6. Staff Responsibilities

- **Staff should intervene only when necessary:** Staff should avoid using force unless there is a clear, immediate need for it. Verbal interventions and calming strategies should always be tried first.
- **Document incidents:** Any use of force should be recorded, including the nature of the incident, the reason for intervention, and the type of force used. This record should be stored securely and reviewed by senior leaders. All incidents will be recorded on an aspire overview form - a copy of the Aspire reasonable force log is in Appendix 1. In addition to this the incident will be reported on my concern - online safeguarding record. It is here that it will be reviewed by senior leaders/ DSLs and the lessons learnt tool will be used to review and make decisions about training or how the incident could be handled differently.
- **Parental Notification:** Parents should be informed if their child has been involved in an incident where force was used. A meeting may be arranged to discuss the incident and the child's well-being. A form will be sent home as a written record. A copy of the pupil log form is in Appendix 2.
- **Ongoing training:** All staff will receive training in how to manage challenging behavior, including non-physical de-escalation strategies and appropriate methods of physical intervention.

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## 7. Recording and Reporting Use of Force

- **Incident Reports:** Every incident where force is used must be documented in writing by the staff member involved. The record should include:
  - The name of the child involved.
  - The date, time, and location of the incident.
  - A description of the incident leading up to the use of force.
  - The type and level of force used.
  - The outcome and whether the child was injured.
  - The staff involved and any witnesses.
- **Parental Notification:** Parents or guardians will be informed as soon as possible after an incident where force has been used, and they will have an opportunity to discuss the

matter with the school.

- **Review of Incidents:** The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team will review all reports of force used to ensure that it was reasonable and necessary, and to identify any patterns that may require further intervention or changes in practice. This will be documented on my concern using the lessons learned feature.

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## 8. Special Considerations

- **Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN):** For children with special educational needs, including those with physical disabilities or behavioral challenges, additional care and consideration should be taken. This might involve adapting approaches to behavior management and ensuring that any physical intervention is tailored to the child's individual needs.
- **Training in Restraint:** For those staff who may need to use physical restraint (such as for children with SEN), training in specific, safe restraint techniques may be necessary. However, these techniques should only be used when absolutely necessary and after all other options have been exhausted.

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## 9. Conclusion

At Aspire, we are committed to providing a nurturing, safe, and supportive environment for all of our pupils. The use of reasonable force will always be a last resort, and it will only be applied to protect the child or others, prevent harm, or maintain order. We will ensure that all staff are properly trained and supported in managing challenging behavior in ways that are fair, respectful, and aligned with our school's values.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it meets the needs of our school community and complies with all relevant laws and guidelines.

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## Appendix 1 - School log - Use of Reasonable force



### Record of use of reasonable force

School:

Academic year 2024-2025

Please use the below to record a summary of every incident where reasonable force had to be used to restrain a child or move them to a safe place.

The pupil form must then also be completed and emailed/given to the parent.

The post incident form must also be completed.

Both the pupil form and the post incident review form must be placed in the pupil/s file.

### Record of use of reasonable force

Number of incident	Date	Member/s of staff involved - initials	Leader/ DSL reported to/ present	Pupils involved and year groups	Brief details of the incident	Reason reasonable force was used - ie keeping pupil/others safe
1	Example	EH, FS	EH was present	Sarah C year 2 Betsy year 3	<p><i>Sarah and Betsy fighting - repeated verbal instruction to stop was ignored.</i></p> <p><i>EH then stood between them but the girls continued to be aggressive</i></p> <p><i>FS then bear hugged Sarah from behind to stop the punches. EH took Betsy in the same hold. Both girls were told that if they walked away to calm the adults would move away.</i></p> <p><i>Both followed this and the restraint was in place for nor more than two minutes</i></p>	<p><i>Fighting</i></p> <p><i>Verbal instructions to stop ignored</i></p>

Number of incident	Date	Member/s of staff involved - initials	Leader/ DSL reported to/ present	Pupils involved and year groups	Brief details of the incident	Reason reasonable force was used - ie keeping pupil/others safe

**Appendix two - Pupil record**

Pupil record - Use of Reasonable force

School :

Academic year: 2024- 25



A leader/ DSL should complete this form. It must be given to parents and placed on the child's file.

NB: it only needs to be completed for pupils to whom reasonable force was used

Date:	
Pupil Name:	
Year group:	
Parents:	
Parents contacted by telephone:	
Members of staff present:	
Leader/ DSL completing this report:	
Brief explanation of incident:	
Type of reasonable force used:	
Reason for use of reasonable force:	