



Our School Vision

In our school:

we love deeply, respecting everyone and treating them with dignity;
we aspire with confidence, working hard and embracing challenge;
we serve God and our community, following the example of Jesus, to create a better world.

"Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us."

Ephesians 5:2 (NLT)

Our School Values: Love, Aspiration, Service

Latymer All Saints C of E Primary School Use of Reasonable Force Policy 2026 (adopted)

Rationale

Latymer All Saints C of E Primary School believes that physical contact with pupils is at times, proportional and necessary.

Examples of this would be holding the hand of a child at the front or back of a line when walking to assembly or in the playground, when comforting a distressed child, when congratulating or praising a pupil, to demonstrate a technique such as how to use a musical instrument, to demonstrate or support exercises in PE/Sports and to give First Aid.

Circular 10/98 (Section 550A of the Education Act 1996) clarified the powers of teachers and other staff who have lawful charge of pupils, to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing a crime, causing injury or damage, or causing disruption.

This has been further clarified by Government Guidance on the 'Use of Reasonable Force' 2013, which states:

- (i) School staff have a legal power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
- (ii) Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.
- (iii) Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.

This policy does not authorise the use of corporal punishment, nor does it encourage the use of inappropriate force.

Education Act 550A allows staff to use such force as is reasonable in all circumstances to prevent a pupil doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- a) Committing a criminal offence:
- b) Injuring themselves or others
- c) Causing damage to property (including their own)
- d) Engaging in any behaviour that is against the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among pupils

The law covers staff whether at school or when they have lawful control elsewhere e.g. on a field trip or visit

Action in self-defence: everyone has a right to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so.



What is reasonable force?

- The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most educational staff at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
- Force is usually used either to control or positively hold. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be held to prevent violence or injury. · 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- Force is generally used to regulate pupils and to restraint them. Regulate means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention. ·

Who does this duty apply to?

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. It can also apply to people who have temporary charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers / parents/ students on a school organised trip. (This is especially so in the case of where a pupil is putting themselves in danger.)

Pupils with Special Needs or Disabilities

Staff must always be aware of the reasonable adjustments that need to be made for pupils with Special Educational Needs or/and needs related to other Disabilities. The SENDCo needs to be involved in such decisions. The SENDCo also needs to make individual risk assessments where it is known that force is more likely to be necessary to hold an individual pupil where their need is associated with extreme behaviour, or their impairment leads to, making them less responsive to communication.

Examples of situations where reasonable force may be used from DFE 2013

Guidance (not exhaustive)

- to prevent a pupil attacking a member of staff or another pupil
- to stop pupils fighting
- to remove a disruptive child from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others · restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

At no time will any member of staff use force as a punishment as this is always unlawful.

Examples of 'reasonable force'

- Physically interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Holding
- Pushing



- Pulling
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the small of the back

In extreme circumstances, using a more restrictive hold may be necessary, unless in extreme circumstances this should only be carried out by members of the Senior Leadership Team; this is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

Examples of unreasonable force

- holding a child around the neck or collar
- slapping, punching or kicking a child
- tripping up a pupil
- holding or pulling a pupil by the hair or ear
- holding a pupil face down on the ground

Guidelines for the use of physical intervention

- Always try to use other strategies before using physical intervention
 - **Verbal de-escalation:** Calm, clear instructions and reassurance
 - **Distraction:** Redirecting the pupil to another activity or task
 - **Positive reinforcement:** Recognising small steps towards compliance
 - **Offering controlled choices:** Giving pupils agency to reduce tension
 - **Time-out or safe spaces:** Allowing the pupil to calm in a designated area
 - **Removing triggers:** Temporarily moving objects or pupils contributing to escalation
 - **Non-verbal guidance:** Gestures, hand signals, or presence to encourage compliance
 - **Staff presence:** Involving additional adults to reduce risk and support the child
- Follow the guidance on appropriate use of reasonable force as listed above
- Always use the minimum force necessary for the circumstances – use your professional judgement
- Summon assistance as soon as possible
- Hold onto the pupils for the minimum time necessary
- Do not put yourself at risk by being alone with one or two children in a situation where physical intervention may be necessary. If it is of paramount importance, ensure the door is open and that other adults are close by.
- Report the incident immediately to the Headteacher and DSL, and complete an incident log on Smoothwall.

Parents will be informed whenever there is an incident reported, and if the initiating incident is severe a formal meeting with may be sought to consider appropriate actions and support for the child.



Right of Complaint

Parents have a right of complaint if they feel inappropriate actions have been undertaken by staff and they would follow the school procedures of 'Handling Allegations against Staff'

Minimising the need to use force

Latymer All Saints CofE Primary School strives to maintain a calm environment, where learning engages all individuals and their value and feeling of self-worth is promoted through the organisation of the classroom, the behaviour approach, the use of PSHE Jigsaw materials and trauma inform approaches.

Should an incident arise, a calm approach is best and force should only be used when the risks involved are outweighed by the risks of not doing so.

Monitoring and Review

Reviewed and Approved

Ratified by Full Governing Board

Next review due:

Date: January 2026

Date: April 2026

Date: April 2028

Latymer All Saints C of E Primary School is committed to the safeguarding of our pupils and staff.



Reviewed and Approved
Ratified by Full Governing Board
Next review due:

Date: April 2026
Date: April 2026
Date: July 2028

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