



St Gabriel's CE Primary School

School Behaviour & Discipline Policy

Our Vision Statement:

Our aim is to nurture children with the confidence and self-belief to achieve their best;
to have the courage to think for themselves;
to be resilient in their learning and ambitious in their hopes and dreams;
to live in harmony, respecting others;
to search and question throughout life's journey;
to find personal faith;
and to learn about the Gospel of hope and love found in Jesus Christ.

Seeking to nurture:

Sel**F**-belief Cour**A**ge Res**I**llience Ambi**T**ion **H**armony

“Stand firm... be courageous” 1 Corinthians 16:13

Policy Revised: Summer 2023

To be reviewed by: Summer 2024

Our Written Statement of Behaviour Principles:

Good behaviour is central to all we do at St Gabriel's and is integral to our Vision Statement – living in harmony and respecting others.

Children flourish best within an orderly, supportive environment where they feel secure and where their individual needs are respected. High standards of behaviour will be expected and promoted at all times in lessons and throughout every aspect of the school's life.

All members of staff will set high standards and children will be given clear guidance on what is expected of them, in accordance with the school's Christian ethos and values.

The school's expectations and values will be shared with children in each class and with parents as appropriate. We will work in partnership with parents to ensure that the school's values become central to the lives of our children.

This school recognises its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010, in respect of safeguarding and in respect of pupils with special educational needs, to provide a safe and ordered environment in which all children can flourish.

1. Aims

We intend to provide an extremely high standard of education in a secure and caring Christian environment.

In order to achieve this, we aim:

1. To create an ethos of good behaviour in school in order to promote effective learning. This will ensure that children are happy, secure and safe.
2. To build a school community which upholds and demonstrates Christian values of love, caring, kindness and forgiveness.
3. To promote good relationships and to ensure that all are treated fairly and shown respect.
4. To foster a sense of community and self-discipline within the school where children and adults treat each other with respect and courtesy; and to encourage children to carry these skills and values with them beyond the school family.
5. To help children lead disciplined lives and to understand that good citizenship is based upon good behaviour, reflecting the principles of British Values upheld by the school (democracy, rule of law, liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs – please see 'Promoting British Values').
6. To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which is related to the needs of individual children.
7. To provide a lively, safe and stimulating learning environment enabling all children to grow in independence and confidence; and manage their own behaviour.
8. To establish positive links between home and school.
9. To ensure educational continuity through liaison with our pre-schools and secondary schools.
10. To encourage our children to take risks, aim high and challenge themselves to see the word 'fail' as their 'first attempt in learning'.

We trust our children and they know that with this comes responsibility for themselves and each other.

Objectives

- To ensure that all children are safe and happy
- To give children the opportunity to develop morally, socially and emotionally
- To encourage children to respect the school's rules regardless of whether an adult is present
- To encourage children to become polite and well-mannered to adults and to each other
- To develop self-esteem and provide opportunities for all children to experience success
- To provide help and support for those children with social, emotional or behavioural problems who find it difficult to respond to the school rules in a positive way

- To share the school's aims with parents and carers and seek their support in meeting these aims.

As a school, we have avoided setting a list of '**School Rules**', we aim to nurture and teach appropriate behaviour through example and expectation. As a church school, our ethos is based upon Christian teachings of love and respect including 'love your neighbour as yourself' - upon which hang most behaviour rules. This is also embodied in our school values, especially Harmony. Mutual respect and understanding are promoted and nurtured at every opportunity.

Our 'Pocket Book Guide to School' is written for children and explains all aspects of school life. The principles set out in this guide reflect the values, aspirations and achievements we actively promote for all children. The staff's desire to promote these values, along with the children's desire to uphold them, are clearly seen across school. Children are taught that school rules are issued in order to promote their safety, the efficient running of school and these values.

2. Legislation, statutory requirements and statutory guidance

This policy is based on legislation and advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff, 2016](#)
- [Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff 2022](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school 2018](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools 2022](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England 2017](#)
- [Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement - 2022](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)

It is also based on the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#).

3. Definitions

Examples of misbehaviour include:

Disruption in lessons and at break and lunchtimes, which may include:

- Non-completion of classwork
- Poor attitude/disrespect shown toward staff (eg answering back) or children
- Failure to follow reasonable instructions

Serious misbehaviour is defined as:

- Repeated misbehaviour and refusal to follow instructions
- Any form of bullying or child on child abuse such as: physical, verbal, cyber
- Sexual violence or assault (intentional sexual touching without consent)
- Sexual harassment, meaning unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, such as: sexual comments, sexual jokes or taunting
- Prejudiced based or discriminatory behaviour
- Vandalism
- Theft
- Fighting Possession of any prohibited items

4. Bullying

Please refer to schools' Anti-Bullying Policy, which includes measures to prevent bullying (including cyber bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).

Bullying will be defined by different people in different ways, therefore it is important to have a common definition on bullying, which everyone in school understands and accepts.

Bullying is a form of **child-on-child** abuse.

Bullying can be defined as “deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time and involves an imbalance of power, leaving the victim feeling defenceless.” The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

“The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power” (2015).

It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace (on-line, via social media or texting).

We make reference to the acronym below to help children understand that bullying is hurtful behaviour that happens:

Several
Times
On
Purpose

The main types of bullying can be identified as:

- **Physical** – kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings
- **Verbal** – name calling, taunting, making offensive comments
- **Indirect** – excluding people from groups, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- **Cyber bullying** – the use of text messaging, emailing, videoing and internet usage deliberately to upset someone else.
- **Sexual** – suggestive sexual comments or innuendo including offensive comments about a person's sexuality; or sexual language designed to humiliate or intimidate.
- **Prejudice-based and discriminatory** – against any protected characteristic eg racial, faith based, gender, disability
- **Emotional** – being unfriendly by excluding, tormenting

There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The school has a number of strategies for dealing with this situation at a group, class or whole school level. All children are encouraged to speak out and talk to an adult if they have any concerns, in the knowledge that all staff will listen and act swiftly in order to deal with such issues.

Cyber bullying via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying and will be managed through the same anti-bullying procedures.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for reviewing and approving the written statement of behaviour principles. They will also review this behaviour policy in conjunction with the Headteacher and monitor the policy's effectiveness.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for reviewing this behaviour policy in conjunction with the Governing Body. The Headteacher will ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff deal effectively with poor behaviour, ensuring that rewards and sanctions are applied consistently.

Teachers and staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the behaviour policy consistently
- Modelling positive behaviour
- Providing a personalised approach to the specific behavioural needs of particular pupils, including those who are vulnerable or have SEN
- Recording behaviour incidents promptly, using CPOMS

The senior leadership team will support staff in responding to behaviour incidents.

Parents and carers

Parents are expected to:

- Get to know the school's behaviour policy and reinforce it at home where appropriate
- Support their child in adhering to the school's behaviour policy
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with the class teacher promptly
- Take part in any pastoral work following misbehaviour
- Take part in the life of the school and its culture

The school will endeavour to build a positive relationship with parents and carers by keeping them informed about developments in their child's behaviour and the school's policy, and working in collaboration with them to tackle behavioural issues.

Pupils

Pupils will be made aware of the following during their induction into the behaviour culture of our school:

- The expected standard of behaviour they should be displaying at school
- That they have a duty to follow the behaviour policy
- The school's key rules and routines
- The rewards they can earn for meeting the behaviour standard, and the consequences they will face if they don't meet the standard
- The pastoral support that is available to them to help them meet the behavioural standards

Pupils will be supported to meet the behaviour standards and develop an understanding of the school's behaviour policy and wider culture.

Pupils will be asked to give feedback on their experience of the behaviour culture to support the evaluation, improvement and implementation of the behaviour policy.

Extra support and induction will be provided for pupils who are mid-phase arrivals.

6. St Gabriel's School – 'Behaviour Curriculum'

Children cannot do well unless good standards of behaviour are introduced and maintained. Opportunities for promoting positive behaviour strategies include:

- Whole school and class worship - where Gospel values and themes are discussed and applied to our everyday lives and to our relationships with one another.
- PSHCE opportunities throughout the curriculum, including themes on citizenship, friendship, anti-social behaviour, bullying, British Values etc. where children learn social skills and ways of communicating their thoughts and feelings in a positive, safe and nurturing environment.
- Year 6/Junior mentors – who support and help younger children across school eg promoting fair and fun play on the school yard, helping infant children with lunch time routines, operating as ambassadors of exemplary behaviour within the school family.
- Outside speakers such as the school nurse, the PCSO, the Life Education Van team and the Vicar.

Pupils are expected to:

- Behave in an orderly and self-controlled way
- Show respect to members of staff and each other
- In class, make it possible for all pupils to learn
- Move quietly around the school
- Treat the school buildings and school property with respect
- Wear the correct uniform
- Accept sanctions when given
- Refrain from behaving in a way that brings the school into disrepute, including when outside school or online

Mobile Phones

Children are not permitted to bring mobile phones into school, for use in school. However, should a child bring a phone to school for personal reasons (eg going to stay at a different address that day, a Y6 wishing to have a phone for safety if walking home alone), it should be handed into the school office for safe keeping and requested at the end of the day.

Staff Development and Support

All staff will be supported in their development and implementation of effective behaviour strategies in order to have a consistent and effective approach across school. A 'firm but fair' establishment of boundaries and use of rewards and sanctions will be introduced from the earliest days in Reception in order that children quickly recognise the high standards of behaviour which are expected and required.

Supervision

Effective supervision of children will ensure reasonable and orderly behaviour. Teachers or Teaching Assistants are on duty during break times. Supervision of children at lunchtime is undertaken by Welfare Assistants.

Children are encouraged to walk in and around school quietly and sensibly. It is important that children who are not walking or who are making excessive noise are challenged by members of staff. All adults have a part to play in ensuring an orderly and safe environment and that school's standards of behaviour are kept. If a teacher has to leave the class in an emergency, they should inform the teaching assistant or the teacher next door to cover for that brief period.

7. Responding to Behaviour

Classroom Management

Teaching staff (including teaching assistants) are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children in their direct care and will follow school's policy and guidelines on managing and promoting good behaviour. This will include the use of rewards and sanctions.

Children who display poor behaviour will be nurtured and supported in their understanding and respect for the types of behaviour which are expected in any given situation across school. This will most likely involve essential input from parents in supporting school's behaviour modification strategies and in replicating and extending these strategies for use at home.

Staff will ensure all children are aware of school's behaviour curriculum, routines and rules for class conduct.

Contact with parents

Where a child's behaviour is causing concern class teachers will try to contact parents informally at an early stage to seek their support in resolving the issue.

Where inappropriate behaviour persists, staff will contact parents to discuss other strategies. These may include:

- Setting up behaviour modification support programmes
- Involvement of outside agencies

Safeguarding

The school recognises that changes in behaviour may be an indicator that a pupil is in need of help or protection.

We will consider whether a pupil's misbehaviour may be linked to them suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Where this may be the case, we will follow our child protection and safeguarding policy, and consider whether pastoral support, an early help intervention or a referral to children's social care is appropriate. Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information

Responding to good behaviour

When a pupil's behaviour meets or goes above and beyond the expected behaviour standard, staff will recognise it with positive recognition and reward. This provides an opportunity for all staff to reinforce the school's culture and ethos.

Positive reinforcements and rewards will be applied clearly and fairly to reinforce the routines, expectations and norms of the school's behaviour culture.

Positive behaviour may be rewarded with:

- Verbal praise
- Communicating praise to parents
- Certificates and stickers
- Headteacher's Award

Responding to misbehaviour

When a pupil's behaviour falls below the standard that can reasonably be expected of them, staff will respond in order to restore a calm and safe learning environment, and to prevent recurrence of misbehaviour.

Staff will endeavour to create a predictable environment by always challenging behaviour that falls short of the standards, and by responding in a consistent, fair and proportionate manner, so pupils know with certainty that misbehaviour will always be addressed.

De-escalation techniques can be used to help prevent further behaviour issues arising.

All pupils will be treated equitably under the policy, with any factors that contributed to the behavioural incident identified and taken into account.

When giving behaviour sanctions, staff will also consider what support could be offered to a pupil to help them to meet behaviour standards in the future.

The school may use one or more of the following sanctions in response to unacceptable behaviour:

- A verbal reprimand and reminder of the expectations of behaviour
- Setting of written tasks such as an account of their behaviour
- Expecting work to be completed at break or lunchtime
- Loss or partial loss of break or lunchtime
- Loss of privileges – for instance, the loss of a prized responsibility
- School-based community service, such as tidying a classroom
- Referring the pupil to a senior member of staff
- Letter or phone call home to parents
- Agreeing a behaviour contract
- Removal of the pupil from the classroom
- Suspension
- Permanent exclusions, in the most serious of circumstances

Personal circumstances of the pupil will be taken into account when choosing sanctions and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, but with regard to the impact on perceived fairness.

Reasonable force

Reasonable force covers a range of interventions that involve physical contact with pupils. All members of staff have a duty to use reasonable force, in the following circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

- Causing disorder
- Hurting themselves or others
- Damaging property
- Committing an offence

Incidents of reasonable force must:

- Always be used as a last resort
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Never be used as a form of punishment
- Be recorded and reported to parents

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve:

- Physical interposing between pupils
- Blocking a pupil's path
- Holding
- Leading a pupil by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back

When considering using reasonable force, staff should, in considering the risks, carefully recognise any specific vulnerabilities of the pupil, including SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions.

Confiscation, searches, screening

Searching, screening and confiscation is conducted in line with the DfE's [latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#).

Confiscation

Any prohibited items found in a pupil's possession as a result of a search will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to the pupil.

We will also confiscate any item that is harmful or detrimental to school discipline or is causing distraction to the child or to other children. These items will be returned to pupils after discussion with senior leaders and parents, if appropriate.

Searching a pupil

Searches will only be carried out by a member of staff who has been authorised to do so by the Headteacher, or by the Headteacher themselves.

Subject to the exception below, the authorised member of staff carrying out the search will be of the same sex as the pupil, and there will be another member of staff present as a witness to the search.

Searching pupils' possessions

Possessions means any items that the pupil has or appears to have control of, including desks and bags.

A pupil's possessions can be searched for any item if the pupil agrees to the search. If the pupil does not agree to the search, staff can still carry out a search for prohibited items and items identified in the school rules.

An authorised member of staff can search a pupil's possessions when the pupil and another member of staff are present.

Informing the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

The staff member who carried out the search should inform the DSL without delay:

Informing parents

Parents will always be informed of any search. A member of staff will tell the parents as soon as is reasonably practicable:

- What happened
- What was found, if anything
- What has been confiscated, if anything
- What action the school has taken, including any sanctions that have been applied to their child

Support after a search

Irrespective of whether any items are found as the result of any search, the school will consider whether the pupil may be suffering or likely to suffer harm and whether any specific support is needed (due to the reasons for the search, the search itself, or the outcome of the search).

If this is the case, staff will follow the school's safeguarding policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Off-site misbehaviour

Sanctions may be applied where a pupil has misbehaved off-site when representing the school. This means misbehaviour when the pupil is:

- Taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity (e.g. school trips)
- Travelling to or from school
- Wearing school uniform

- In any other way identifiable as a pupil of our school

Sanctions may also be applied where a pupil has misbehaved off-site, at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, if the misbehaviour:

- Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- Poses a threat to another pupil
- Could adversely affect the reputation of the school

Sanctions will only be given out on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of a staff member (e.g. on a school-organised trip).

Online misbehaviour

The school can issue behaviour sanctions to pupils for online misbehaviour when:

- It poses a threat or causes harm to another pupil
- It could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- It adversely affects the reputation of the school
- The pupil is identifiable as a member of the school

Sanctions will only be given out on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of a staff member.

Suspected criminal behaviour

If a pupil is suspected of criminal behaviour, the school will make an initial assessment of whether to report the incident to the police.

Zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence

The school will ensure that all incidents of sexual harassment and/or violence are met with a suitable response, and never ignored.

Pupils are encouraged to report anything that makes them uncomfortable, no matter how 'small' they feel it might be.

The school's response will be:

- Proportionate
- Considered
- Supportive
- Decided on a case-by-case basis

The school has procedures in place to respond to any allegations or concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing. These include clear processes for:

Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information.

Malicious allegations

Where a pupil makes an allegation against a member of staff and that allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether to discipline the pupil in accordance with this policy.

In all cases where an allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the school (in collaboration with the local authority designated officer (LADO), where relevant) will consider whether the pupil who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help. If so, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.

The school will also consider the pastoral needs of staff and pupils accused of misconduct.

Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information on responding to allegations of abuse against staff or other pupils.

8. Serious sanctions

Removal from classrooms

In response to serious or persistent breaches of this policy, the school may remove the pupil from the classroom for a limited time.

Pupils who have been removed will continue to receive education under the supervision of a member of staff that is meaningful, but it may differ from the mainstream curriculum.

Removal is a serious sanction and will only be used in response to serious misbehaviour. Staff will only remove pupils from the classroom once other behavioural strategies have been attempted, unless the behaviour is so extreme as to warrant immediate removal.

Removal can be used to:

- Restore order if the pupil is being unreasonably disruptive
- Maintain the safety of all pupils
- Allow the disruptive pupil to continue their learning in a managed environment
- Allow the disruptive pupil to regain calm in a safe space

Pupils will not be removed from classrooms for prolonged periods of time without the explicit agreement of the Headteacher.

Pupils should be reintegrated into the classroom as soon as appropriate and safe to do so. The school will consider what support is needed to help a pupil successfully reintegrate into the classroom and meet the expected standards of behaviour.

Parents will be informed on the same day that their child is removed from the classroom.

The school will consider an alternative approach to behaviour management for pupils who are frequently removed from class, such as:

- Use of teaching assistants
- Behaviour plans and diaries to update parents
- Pupil support units
- Multi-agency assessment

Staff will record all incidents of removal from the classroom along with details of the incident that led to the removal on CPOMS

Suspension and permanent exclusions

The school can use suspension and permanent exclusion in response to serious incidents or in response to persistent poor behaviour, which has not improved following in-school sanctions and interventions.

The decision to suspend or exclude will be made by the Headteacher and only as a last resort.

School will follow the local authority guidance and procedures on exclusion.

9. Responding to misbehaviour from pupils with SEND

Recognising the impact of SEND on behaviour

The school recognises that pupils' behaviour may be impacted by a special educational need or disability (SEND).

When incidents of misbehaviour arise, we will consider them in relation to a pupil's SEND, although we recognise that not every incident of misbehaviour will be connected to their SEND. Decisions on whether a pupil's SEND had an impact on an incident of misbehaviour will be made on a case-by-case basis.

When dealing with misbehaviour from pupils with SEND, especially where their SEND affects their behaviour, the school will balance their legal duties when making decisions about enforcing the behaviour policy. The legal duties include:

- Taking reasonable steps to avoid causing any substantial disadvantage to a disabled pupil caused by the school's policies or practices ([Equality Act 2010](#))
- Using our best endeavours to meet the needs of pupils with SEND ([Children and Families Act 2014](#))

If a pupil has an education, health and care (EHC) plan, the provisions set out in that plan must be secured and the school must co-operate with the local authority and other bodies.

As part of meeting these duties, the school will anticipate, as far as possible, all likely triggers of misbehaviour, and put in place support to prevent these from occurring.

Any preventative measures will take into account the specific circumstances and requirements of the pupil concerned.

Adapting sanctions for pupils with SEND

When considering a behavioural sanction for a pupil with SEND, the school will take into account:

- Whether the pupil was unable to understand the rule or instruction?
- Whether the pupil was unable to act differently at the time as a result of their SEND?
- Whether the pupil is likely to behave aggressively due to their particular SEND?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, it may be unlawful for the school to sanction the pupil for the behaviour.

The school will then assess if it is appropriate to use a sanction and if so, whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to the sanction.

Considering whether a pupil displaying challenging behaviour may have unidentified SEND

The school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) may evaluate a pupil who exhibits challenging behaviour to determine whether they have any underlying needs that are not currently being met.

Where necessary, support and advice will also be sought from specialist teachers, an educational psychologist, medical practitioners and/or others, to identify or support specific needs.

When acute needs are identified in a pupil, we will liaise with external agencies and plan support programmes for that child. We will work with parents to create the plan and review it on a regular basis.

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

The provisions set out in the EHC plan must be secured and the school will co-operate with the local authority and other bodies.

If the school has a concern about the behaviour of a pupil with an EHC plan, it will make contact with the local authority to discuss the issue. If appropriate, the school may request an emergency review of the EHC plan.

10. Supporting pupils following a sanction

Following a sanction, the school will consider strategies to help pupils to understand how to improve their behaviour and meet the expectations of the school.

This will involve building relationships with parents to both support the maintenance of good behaviour in school and for school to help parents in their possible dealings with behaviour issues outside of school.

11. Pupil transition

Inducting incoming pupils

The school will support incoming pupils to meet behaviour standards by explaining school's values, ethos and expectations.

Preparing outgoing pupils for transition

To ensure a smooth transition to the next year, pupils have transition sessions with their new teacher(s). In addition, staff members hold transition meetings.

To ensure behaviour is continually monitored and the right support is in place, information related to pupil behaviour issues may be transferred to relevant staff at the start of the term or year.

12. Training

All staff are expected to be familiar with school's behaviour policy and wider approach to pupil discipline. Staff will be informed and receive training in the following, as appropriate:

- The use of de-escalation strategies and restraint (eg Team Teach)
- How SEND and mental health needs impact behaviour

Behaviour management will also form part of continuing professional development as appropriate.

13. Monitoring arrangements

Monitoring and evaluating school behaviour

All behaviour incidents (serious and low level) will be recorded on CPOMS – enabling analysis of incidents across school and the ability to monitor incidents for an individual child.

Monitoring this policy

This behaviour policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and full Governing Body at least annually.

14. Links with other policies

This behaviour policy is linked to the following policies:

- Exclusions policy – Local Authority
- Child protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Appendix A

Guidance for the Use of Reasonable Force

This guidance is taken from the document *Use of reasonable force Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE July 2013)*

What force is 'reasonable'?

'Reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions, used by most teachers at some point in their career, which involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.

Force is considered **reasonable** when:

- It is in proportion to the consequences it's intended to prevent
- The level and duration are the minimum necessary to achieve the desired result

Force is usually used either to **control** or **restrain** pupils.

Using force to control pupils includes:

- Passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path
- Active physical contact, such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom

Restraint is typically used in more extreme circumstances, such as when 2 pupils are fighting and refuse to separate. This might include:

- Holding a pupil back physically
- Bringing a pupil under control

Staff should try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases this may not always be possible.

Who can use reasonable force?

All members of school staff have the legal power to use reasonable force.

It can also be used by anyone who's been put in charge of pupils temporarily by your Headteacher, such as:

- Unpaid volunteers
- Parents accompanying students on a school trip

When can reasonable force be used?

Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from:

- Hurting themselves or someone else
- Damaging property
- Causing disorder

It can **never** be used as a form of punishment.

It's up to staff's professional judgement to decide whether to physically intervene. This decision should always depend on the individual circumstances.

Situations where force can be used

- You may use reasonable force to:
- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to leave the room

- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- 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
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or stop a fight in the playground
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts
- Conduct a search for a set list of prohibited items which includes knives and weapons

This list of examples isn't exhaustive.

Pupils with SEND

Reasonable force can be used on pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), but when deciding whether this is appropriate, you should know and understand the needs of the pupil concerned.

If a pupil is displaying a pattern of behaviour that means you need to use reasonable force repeatedly, consider making a plan to deal with this situation that sets out the types of physical interventions that will be used in extreme circumstances.

Use of reasonable force should acknowledge school's legal duty to make [reasonable adjustments](#) for pupils with SEND.

How to use reasonable force

- Warn the child of what you are going to do. Offer them the chance to avoid the use of force by stopping the behaviour
- Carry out the physical intervention using no more force than necessary
- Stay calm and do not react to any abusive or highly-emotional language from the pupil
- Allow the pupil to calm down, and once you feel the restraint is no longer necessary begin to release your hold on the pupil
- Discuss the behaviour that triggered the situation with the pupil
- Complete an incident report and inform parents (if necessary)

Note that certain techniques are unacceptable

The following restraint techniques present an unacceptable risk when used on children, and should **not** be used:

- The 'seated double embrace' – 2 members of staff forcing an individual into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing
- The 'double basket-hold' – holding an individual's arms across their chest
- The 'nose distraction technique' – a sharp upward jab under the nose