USE OF REASONABLE FORCE POLICY

1. Purpose

This document outlines the policy and guidance for the appropriate use of *reasonable force* by staff and volunteers at **Roots and Rise (M.A.D) ALP** , in line with the **Department for Education (DfE) guidance: "Use of reasonable force – advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies" (DfE, 2013 and updates 2023).**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that staff understand when and how reasonable force may be used to prevent harm, maintain safety, and uphold a safe and positive environment for all participants.

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2. Definition of Reasonable Force

- **Force** means the use of physical contact with the intention of restraining, moving, guiding or preventing a person from harming themselves, others, or causing damage.

- **Reasonable** means using *no more force than is necessary* in the circumstances.

- The decision to use force must always depend on:

    - The individual circumstances,

    - The seriousness of the behaviour,

    - The potential risk of harm,

    - The age, size, understanding, and vulnerability of those involved.

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3. When Reasonable Force May Be Used

Reasonable force may be used to:

- Prevent a child or adult from injuring themselves or others.

- Stop behaviour that risks the safety or wellbeing of others.

- Prevent serious damage to property.

- Prevent a participant from leaving the premises if doing so would put them at risk.

- Maintain order during incidents where safety is compromised.

Force **must never** be used as a punishment or to enforce compliance with instructions unrelated to safety or order.

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4. Authorised Persons

All staff and volunteers working directly with children, young people, or vulnerable adults are authorised to use reasonable force where necessary and appropriate.
Each person must:

- Have completed safeguarding and behaviour management training.

- Be aware of de-escalation techniques and alternative strategies before physical intervention.

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5. Principles for Using Reasonable Force

- Use only when *absolutely necessary* and as a *last resort*.

- Use the *minimum amount of force* required to achieve the intended outcome.

- Act with *care, control, and respect* at all times.

- Consider the *age, gender, and needs* of the individual involved.

- Aim to *de-escalate* the situation verbally before any physical contact.

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6. Post-Incident Actions

After any use of reasonable force:

1. **Ensure safety first** – check for injury or distress and provide first aid or support as needed.

2. **Report the incident immediately** to the safeguarding lead or line manager.

3. **Record the incident** in writing within 24 hours using the organisation's incident/behaviour log.

   ○ Include: date, time, names of those involved, witnesses, reason for intervention, and description of actions taken.

4. **Inform parents/carers** where appropriate (particularly if the individual is a child or young person).

5. **Review and reflect** on the incident to determine if changes to policy, training, or environment are needed.

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7. Training

All staff and volunteers should:

● Receive induction training on behaviour management and safeguarding.

● Be familiar with DfE guidance and this policy.

● Undertake additional physical intervention training where roles require it.

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8. Safeguarding and Accountability

Any use of force that results in injury, distress, or complaint will be reviewed by the safeguarding lead and, if necessary, reported to:

● The designated safeguarding officer,

● The local authority safeguarding team,

● Or the police (if appropriate).

Misuse of reasonable force may result in disciplinary action.

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9. Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

- Behaviour and Conduct Policy

- Health and Safety Policy

- Equality and Diversity Policy

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10. Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually** or following any significant incident or change in legislation.

Approved by: _____
 Position: _____
 Date: _____