

*'...those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.'* Isaiah 40:31

**connect | nurture | aspire | learn | excel | hope**



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Policy Statement on the use of Ear Defenders

Date: 04/01/2019

Date of next Review: 04/01/2020

Date Adopted by Local Governing Body:

### **Rationale:**

Ear defenders can offer children with sensory processing difficulties, such as those with an autism spectrum diagnosis, the ability to manage sensory overload and to reduce resulting anxiety levels.

The ability to manage sensory input for children with an ASD diagnosis allows them to develop the confidence to manage the sensory aspects of the classroom and school, meaning these children can reduce their anxiety to enable them take part in a range of class and school based activities, allowing them to feel a part and included in all aspects of the school's community.

However, using ear defenders should be used with caution and only under the strict guidance of a professional.

The use of ear defenders does not stop sound from entering the ear and instead muffles it. This muffling can have a detrimental impact on children's developing literacy and language skills and their independence in the classroom. Phonics is taught through helping children identify the sounds within words. If children cannot hear the sound properly they find it hard to spell and read these words using phonic cues.

It can also affect their inclusion in the social aspects of the school because they will find it hard to hear the conversations in class meaning they miss out on important social learning opportunities

### **Policy:**

Overall, good practice says that when ear defenders are used, they are only used under certain circumstances to limit their impact on the above so that children can be fully included within the school's community

At Reculver School, our policy is that all ear defenders should be placed in a box in the classroom. When children need them, and only under the strict guidance of the class teacher, they go to the box and they can put them on.

Ear defenders should not be worn during any whole class, group or one-to-one input sessions led by an adult as this could inhibit important learning opportunities. The only exception to this is when the child would be unable to access the learning intention due to the extreme anxiety brought on by loud noises. The professional leading the session will know if loud noises are likely to occur in their session. However, children may choose to request to wear them when working individually on a set task within the classroom, as needed.

Ear defenders should not be routinely worn to Collective Worship sessions. However, it is accepted that some elements of collective worship can, on occasions include incidences where sensory overload may be a problem: for example in the school dinner hall or during celebration worship where loud clapping may occur. On these occasions, ear defenders may be brought to the hall under the guidance of the class teacher and worn as necessary.