



The Village School

POLICY ON BEHAVIOUR, DISCIPLINE AND EXCLUSION

School Ethos

The Village School expects the school to be a place where

- all individuals are respected and their individuality valued
- where pupils are encouraged to achieve
- where self-discipline is promoted and good behaviour is the norm
- where rewards and sanctions are applied fairly and consistently.

Statement of Care

At The Village School we feel that it is important

- To respect others regardless of age, race or background
- To treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves
- To act positively against bullying, recognising when teasing ceases to be fun and becomes vindictive
- To rejoice in the successes of others and give support in times of disappointment
- To provide a caring environment where the relationship between pupils and staff is open and friendly
- To value extra-curricular achievement as much as academic success
- To have conviction in our own beliefs and to appreciate those of others
- That every girl leaves having had ample opportunity to become a well-rounded individual looking forward to the future with confidence, humour and compassion.

Responsibilities

The Head's role is to determine the detail of the standard of behaviour acceptable to the school. The Head has the day-to-day responsibility for maintaining discipline in the school, which will include making rules and provision for enforcing them.

The Head is expected to:

- promote self-discipline and proper regard for authority among pupils;
- encourage good behaviour and respect for others, and to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils;
- secure that the standard of behaviour is acceptable and
- otherwise regulate the conduct of pupils.

The Deputy Head is expected to:

- support the responsibilities of the Head
- ensure that all staff are familiar with the contents, and practice of this policy.

All staff are expected to encourage good behaviour and respect for others in pupils, and to apply all rewards and sanctions fairly and consistently. Well planned, interesting and demanding lessons make a major contribution to good discipline.

Standards of Behaviour

The school has high standards of behaviour and endeavours to encourage good habits of work and behaviour from the moment a child enters the school. All staff are expected to promote self-discipline amongst pupils and to deal appropriately with any unacceptable behaviour. Punctual attendance at school and lessons is required. All absence from lessons must be explained and unexplained absence will be followed up.

It is understood that there will be variations in staff acceptance and tolerance of pupils' behaviour in class depending on the nature of the class and content of the lesson, but behaviour which does not allow constructive teaching and learning is totally unacceptable and all staff have a duty to ensure that such behaviour is not tolerated.

Through regular discussions at staff meetings the school endeavours to ensure that staff apply all standards consistently and fairly.

REWARDS AND SANCTIONS

All rewards and sanctions must be applied fairly and consistently. None of the school's punishments will be degrading or humiliating.

Rewards

We feel that it is important to acknowledge and praise good work and a pleasing attitude. We therefore have a system of reward through house points/stars and prizes throughout the school, which seeks to recognise and reward girls who have made positive contributions in a variety of ways.

Housepoints /Stars

These are awarded in recognition of good work, effort or service to the school. They can be given in all areas of school life, including extra-curricular and house activities.

A card system has been introduced in the following denominations:

- Bronze - 1 housepoint
- Silver - 3 housepoints
- Gold - 5 housepoints

Each member of staff has his/her own set of cards to be awarded to the girls. The girls hand their cards in to their form teacher at the end of the day. This system has proved very popular with the girls.

Prizes

Three categories of prizes are awarded:

- Academic Prizes are awarded to those girls in the year that have achieved the highest academic standard throughout the year.
- Progress Prizes are awarded to those girls in the year who it is thought have made the most conspicuous progress.
- Special Named Prizes are awarded to IIIrd Form girls for specific achievement in various areas of school life.

Sanctions

Although rewards are central to the encouragement of good behaviour, realistically there is a need for sanctions to register the disapproval of unacceptable behaviour and to protect the security and stability of the school community. In an environment where respect is central, loss of respect, or disapproval, is a powerful punishment.

The use of punishment should be characterised by certain features:

- It must be clear why the sanction is being applied.
- It must be made clear what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future punishment.
- Group punishment should be avoided as they breed resentment.
- There should be a clear distinction between minor and major offences.
- It should be the behaviour rather than the person that is punished.

Sanctions range from expressions of disapproval, through withdrawal of privileges, to referral to the Headmistress, letters to parents and, ultimately and in the last resort, exclusion (following guidelines from the Dept of Education website: 'SCE exclusion Guidance 2013').

Most instances of poor behaviour are relatively minor and can be adequately dealt with through minor sanctions. It is important that the sanction is not out of proportion to the offence.

Where anti-social, disruptive or aggressive behaviour is frequent sanctions alone are ineffective. In such cases careful evaluation of the curriculum on offer, classroom organisation and management, and whole school procedures should take place to eliminate these as contributory factors. Additional specialist help and advice from the Educational Psychologist or Child Guidance Service may be necessary. This possibility should be discussed with the Headmistress.

The housepoint card system described above also applies to housepoints deducted, of which there are two denominations:

- Red/White Stripe – 1 housepoint lost
- Red – 5 housepoints lost

Should a girl receive three red cards in a term she will be brought before the Headmistress.

These sanctions will also apply to pupils' conduct outside the school gates, including all non-criminal behaviour and bullying which occurs off the school premises and which is witnessed by a member of staff or reported to the school. See <https://www.gov.uk-school-discipline-exclusions> (Feb 2017)

EXCLUSIONS

Only the Headmistress can exclude a pupil. Pupils may be excluded for one or more fixed periods or permanently.

Fixed Periods

For serious but relatively minor breaches of the school's behaviour/discipline policies, pupils can be excluded for one or more fixed-term periods not exceeding 45 school days in any one school year. These periods of exclusion, subject to severity and circumstance (to be decided upon by the Headmistress), may range from 1 to 10 school days.

A decision to exclude a pupil permanently will only be taken as a last resort when a wide range of strategies for dealing with disciplinary offences has been employed to no avail or if an exceptional 'one-off' offence has been committed, e.g.:

- serious violence, actual or threatened, against a pupil or member of staff
- sexual abuse or assault
- supplying an illegal drug
- carrying an offensive weapon.

Alternatives

Before resorting to exclusion the school will normally try alternative solutions:
For example:

- a restorative justice process (whereby the harm caused to the 'victim' can be redressed);
- internal exclusion (removal from class, but not the site).

Inappropriate Exclusion

The school does not see exclusion as normally appropriate in the following cases:

- minor breaches of discipline
- poor academic performance
- truancy or lateness
- non-compliance with uniform regulations.

Parental Co-operation

Parental co-operation forms part of the contract between the school and all parents of pupils at the school. A refusal to abide by the terms of an exclusion may be considered a breach of contract.

Appeals

Parents are entitled to appeal to the Proprietor against any exclusion. A letter stating the intention to appeal should be sent to the Headmistress at the school. A hearing will be set up as quickly as possible, but within 10 working days at the latest.

The Proprietor's decision is final.

Continuing Education

The School will continue to provide education for a pupil who remains on roll and in the case of an exclusion of more than 15 days, the school will consider:

- how the pupil's education will continue;
- how her problems might be addressed in the interim; and
- reintegration post-exclusion.

Corporal Punishment and Restraint

In accordance with the law there is no corporal punishment allowed by the school. However, if authorised by the Headmistress, a teacher, or other member of staff, may use 'reasonable force' to prevent a pupil from:

- committing an offence
- causing personal injury or damage (including to themselves)
- engaging in any activity prejudicial to the maintenance of good order, whether during a lesson or at any other time.

The Headmistress has authorised all teaching staff to use reasonable force in the above circumstances.

Involvement of Parents

Parents will be involved in discipline cases as appropriate. Individual staff should not involve parents in discipline issues without first informing the Deputy Head and Headmistress.

Parents are also encouraged to support good behaviour and positive habits in their children.

Involvement of Staff

The working of the school's policies and procedures will be discussed regularly at staff meetings. Staff will also be involved in discussions with pupils in form/tutor group time.

Staff will also be called upon from time to time to identify problems that may be behind any bad behaviour, and to suggest possible courses of action.

Involvement of Pupils

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child allows children who are capable of forming views the right to express those views. *(The government's Circular 10/99 also suggests that pupils can help to reinforce behaviour policies by contributing to them.)*

Discussions in Form/PSHE time will allow for the positive contribution of pupils.

In particular, the Deputy Head as Special Educational Needs co-ordinator (SENCO) in conjunction with the Form teachers will ensure that the needs of SEN pupils are properly taken into account, and that they participate in these discussions.

Equal Opportunities

All rewards and sanctions must be applied fairly and consistently and in accordance with the school's Equal Opportunities policy.

Publication

A summary of the policy will be given to all parents and prospective parents of pupils at the school.

Links with Other Policies

The Policy should be read alongside the following:

- the school's statement of ethos and aims
- the attendance policy
- the anti-bullying policy
- the complaints policy
- behaviour and discipline in schools (DfE 2017).

Achieving positive behaviour

Children within pre-prep and preparatory

- When children under five behave in inconsiderate ways we recognise that strategies for supporting them will need to be developmentally appropriate and differ from those for older children.
- We recognise that very young children are unable to regulate their own emotions, such as fear, anger or distress, and require sensitive adults to help them do this.
- Common inconsiderate or hurtful behaviours of young children include tantrums, biting or fighting. Staff are calm and patient, offering comfort to intense emotions, helping children to manage their feelings and talk about them to help resolve issues and promote understanding.
- If tantrums, biting or fighting are frequent, we try to find out the underlying cause, such as a change or upheaval at home, or frequent change of carers. Sometimes a child has not settled in well and the behaviour may be the result of 'separation anxiety'.
- We focus on ensuring a child's attachment figure in the setting, their key person, is building a strong relationship to provide security to the child.

Rough and tumble play, hurtful behaviour and bullying

Our procedure has been updated to provide additional focus on these kinds of inconsiderate behaviours.

Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying, although it may be inconsiderate at times and may need addressing using strategies as above.

- We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.
- We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.
- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violently dramatic strategies, blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.
- We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

Hurtful behaviour

We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying', and strategies for this behaviour is included in within our policies. For children under five, hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous and often without cognisance of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt.

- We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them.
- We will help them manage these feelings as they have neither the biological means nor the cognitive means to do this for themselves.
- We understand that self-management of intense emotions, especially of anger, happens when the brain has developed neurological systems to manage the physiological processes that take place when triggers activate responses of anger or fear.
- Therefore we help this process by offering support, calming the child who is angry as well as the one who has been hurt by the behaviour. By helping the child to return to a normal state, we are helping the brain to develop the physiological response system that will help the child be able to manage his or her own feelings.
- We do not engage in punitive responses to a young child's rage as that will have the opposite effect.
- Our way of responding to pre-verbal children is to calm them through holding and cuddling. Verbal children will also respond to cuddling to calm them down, but we offer them an explanation and discuss the incident with them to their level of understanding.
- We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. "Adam took your car, didn't he, and you were enjoying playing with it. You didn't like it when he took it, did you? Did it make you feel angry? Is that why you hit him?" Older children will be able to verbalise

their feelings better, talking through themselves the feelings that motivated the behaviour.

- We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions impact on others' feelings. "When you hit Adam, it hurt him and he didn't like that and it made him cry."
- We help young children develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. "I can see you are feeling better now and Adam isn't crying any more. Let's see if we can be friends and find another car, so you can both play with one."
- We are aware that the same problem may happen over and over before skills such as sharing and turn-taking develop. In order for both the biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.
- We support social skills through modelling behaviour, through activities, drama and stories. We build self-esteem and confidence in children, recognising their emotional needs through close and committed relationships with them.
- We help a child to understand the effect that their hurtful behaviour has had on another child; we do not force children to say sorry, but encourage this where it is clear that they are genuinely sorry and wish to show this to the person they have hurt.
- When hurtful behaviour becomes problematic, we work with parents to identify the cause and find a solution together. The main reasons for very young children to engage in excessive hurtful behaviour are that:
 - they do not feel securely attached to someone who can interpret and meet their needs – this may be in the home and it may also be in the setting;
 - their parent, or carer in the setting, does not have skills in responding appropriately, and consequently negative patterns are developing where hurtful behaviour is the only response the child has to express feelings of anger;
 - the child may have insufficient language, or mastery of English, to express him or herself and may feel frustrated;
 - the child is exposed to levels of aggressive behaviour at home and may be at risk emotionally, or may be experiencing child abuse;
 - the child has a developmental condition that affects how they behave.
- Where this does not work, we use the Code of Practice to support the child and family, making the appropriate referrals to a Behaviour Support Team where necessary.

Confiscation of inappropriate items

What the law allows:

There are two sets of legal provisions which enable school staff to confiscate items from pupils:

1. The general power to discipline (as described in the bullets under the heading "Discipline in Schools – Teachers' Powers" on pages 3 and 4) enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a punishment and

protects them from liability for damage to, or loss of, any confiscated items. The legislation does not describe what must be done with the confiscated item and the school behaviour policy may set this out; and

2. Power to search without consent for “prohibited items” including:

- Knives and weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property
- Any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.

The legislation sets out what must be done with prohibited items found as a result of a search.

Weapons and knives and extreme or child pornography must always be handed over to the police otherwise it is for the teacher to decide if and when to return a confiscated item.

More detailed advice on confiscation and what must be done with prohibited items found as a result of a search is provided in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation> (advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies).

Power to use reasonable force

The legal provisions on school discipline also provide members of staff with the power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom.

Head teachers and authorised school staff may also use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search without consent for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm. Force **cannot** be used to search for items banned under the school rules.

Separate advice is available in:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

This policy has been drawn up with the assistance from guidance issued by the Department for Education <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-strategies-for-preventing-and-tackling-bullying> and will be reviewed against any new government guidance issued from time to time.

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