



Walkwood

Church of England  Middle School

Living and Learning Together Policy

Governing Body Committee responsible:	Teaching, Learning and Curriculum		
Approval granted:	23 September 2019	Review date:	Autumn Term 2022

“We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves him. They are the ones God has chosen for his purpose.”

Romans 8:28

“Church of England Schools have at their heart a belief that all children are loved by God, are individually unique and that the school has a mission to help each pupil to fulfil their potential in all aspects of their personhood: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. Schools have a duty to try to remove any factor that might represent a hindrance to a child’s fulfilment. We want all pupils to want to engage in learning in a safe and welcoming ethos.”

Valuing All God’s Children, Church of England, 2014

“The core purpose of any Church school is to maximise the learning potential of every pupil within the love of God.”

SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) 2012



Living and Learning Together

1 Romans 13

Behave properly, as people do in the day. Don't quarrel or be jealous.

Let the Lord Jesus Christ be as close to you as the clothes you wear.

1 Corinthians 13

Love is kind and patient, never jealous, boastful, proud or rude. Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil.

Love is always supportive, loyal, hopeful and trusting. Love never fails!



Titus 3

People must always be ready to do something helpful and not say cruel things or argue. They should be gentle and kind to everyone.

God our Saviour showed us how good and kind He is.

Proverbs 14

It's a mistake to plan to do evil things, but you will have loyal friends if you want to do right.

Proverbs 15

Losing your temper causes a lot of trouble, but staying calm settles arguments.

Proverbs 14

Watch your words and hold your tongue; you will save yourself a lot of trouble.



Introduction

The school aims to promote education that is for

- the pupils' time within compulsory schooling,
- their learning for life in whatever context, and
- a life that embraces people and opportunities.

Consequently, we uphold an ideal that pupils will:

Love to Learn, Learn to Live, Live to Love.

We are a school that endeavours to:

- care for, nurture and value the people who are part of the school community;
- inspire and develop pupils who are confident and inquisitive;
- share and support values within, through and beyond the curriculum;
- be a faith community that celebrates religious, cultural and ethnic diversity by encouraging mutual understanding
- continually strive to deliver excellence.

Walkwood Church of England School has an outlook that holds:

- ✚ each person as a precious individual
- ✚ good character is to be supported and developed
- ✚ best rates of academic progress are to be aspired to
- ✚ care, happiness & love are engendered

The values that we chose to promote are ones that are shared across the different faiths represented within the school, and from the countries that our pupils and families have their background, be that in Britain or beyond:



“Remember your Creator in the days of your youth.” Ecclesiastes 12:1 NRSV

Pastoral care and personal development is taken very seriously, as we believe that these aspects allow pupils to achieve their personal best. The fabric of the curriculum encourages pupils to learn how to learn, to be inquisitive by asking challenging questions, and develop a robust sense of self while appreciating and respecting people and views from other cultures and perspectives. Furthermore, there are plenty of enrichment opportunities for pupils that take place within the school day and through the school year, with clubs and teams outside of the day, and also through trips and visits.



Through our curriculum and enrichments, we wish to:

- Nurture happy, determined and resilient children with a real sense of identity, pride and ambition.
- Provide vibrant, challenging and positive learning experiences to encourage creative and independent thinkers.
- Ensure that our children are adaptable to thrive in an ever changing world.
- Develop knowledge, understanding and respect for the local and global community.
- Promote the highest standards of behaviour and a strong work ethic.

In order to achieve our aims, we need to ensure that our children:

- Have firm foundations of basic skills that they can use and apply in all subject areas.
- Have a broad range of exciting and creative opportunities to discover and nurture their individual talents.
- Develop a set of core human values which underpin their SMSC development and their sense of uniqueness and self-worth as an individual.
- Have the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to become a life-long learner.

Pupils contribute to the well-being of each other, and of people they may never meet, in an array of ways. Through charity fundraising, we enact the words of John's Letter:

“My children, we should love people not only with words and talk, but by our actions and true caring.” 1 John 3:18, NCV

Rationale

We firmly believe that pupils enjoy a disciplined and happy atmosphere in which to work. This can only be established by staff, governors, parents and the pupils working together to create a relationship of mutual respect regardless of race, religion and culture.

Our expectations arise out of the need for both living and working together. They are designed to make sense to those who have to carry them out. They are to be upheld because they make sense, rather than because their breach will lead to sanctions.

We aim to encourage pupils to follow the Walkwood 'faith' values. Shared, consistent whole school values are likely to have a positive effect on individual behaviour.

We aim to encourage the pupils to increasingly apply their own self-discipline, as they grow older and more mature.

The curricular objectives of the school cannot succeed if they are impeded by poor discipline.

The opinions of parents and the community about the effectiveness of the school are strongly influenced by how the pupils behave.

This school believes that pupils who do not act for the common good are an important stress factor for both other pupils and staff.

Some pupils will behave in a challenging manner. The school will continue to value such individuals, while seeking ways to manage their behaviour so as to maximize their learning, whilst minimising their negative effects upon others.

The staff of this school are required to follow this policy which encourages a positive approach to behaviour management where possible.

Our success as a school is tested not by the absence of problems but by the way we deal with them.

Aims and Purpose

Walkwood Church of England Middle School shall endeavour to:

- recognise that each individual, pupil or member of staff, is a unique creation in the image of God, and deserves to be treated equally;
- actively promote equality irrespective of race, gender, age, sexuality, religion or disability;
- follow Christ's example by providing a living testimony to the goodness and presence of God and so to prepare our pupils for a greater participation in the life of their community;
- provide a positive and supportive environment in which staff and pupils can maximise their skills and to support them in fulfilling their potential for the benefit of themselves and the wider community;
- provide full opportunity for our staff and pupils to develop their individual talents and build a strong foundation for their future;
- develop effective leadership throughout all levels of the staffing structure and to use this to create a successful teaching environment where the high expectations of pupils, staff and governors are met;
- ensure that all at the school will feel safe and secure;
- eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment or bullying;
- ensure that positive, strong relationships exist throughout the School, which lead to the mutual respect between all members of our community that encourages good behaviour;
- enable leaders to lead, teachers to teach and pupils to learn.

Expectations

The Governing Body of Walkwood Church of England Middle School will expect that:

- all members of the School community, at all times, behave in a polite and considerate manner showing respect for themselves, each other and to the school itself;
- pupils behave in a manner which supports their own learning, and that of other pupils, and does not jeopardise the health and safety of any member of the school community;
- pupils and staff will not use offensive language, will adhere to the anti-bullying policy and will at all times promote tolerance and respect with regards to disability, age, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation and race;
- the school's Living and Learning Together Policy will be applied with consistency and fairness, with regard to each individual situation;
- the emphasis will be on encouraging positive behaviour through high expectations, the modelling of good behaviour, a focus on learning, and Praise and rewards;
- sanctions will be applied when necessary to enable the pupil to reflect on and learn from their behaviour and to make reparation wherever possible;



- each pupil will receive behavioural support according to their need;
- pupils will have a focus on positive behaviour, forgiveness and reconciliation that will significantly reduce the need for exclusion. However, when making decisions, the Principal will balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider school community and where pupil behaviour places others at risk, the safety of the pupil body as a whole is paramount.

Given our duty of care to the pupils, this written statement, and the policies that are influenced by it, will apply to all pupils when in School, when travelling to and from School, when engaged in school-organised extra-curricular activities such as educational trips and visits (residential and non-residential) and when being educated as a member of the Walkwood Church of England Middle School community off-site.

Roles and Responsibilities

Poor behaviour can affect the safety and welfare of members of our community, the ability of pupils to learn and of teachers to teach. It cannot be tolerated. Low level disruption, such as talking and shouting out, detracts from good learning and similarly should not be tolerated due to its unfairness on other learners.

Behaviour management is a whole school responsibility and all members of the school community have a part to play in ensuring that this policy is put into practice, so that all can learn happily.

Pupils should:

- understand and follow the school expectations and the Home-College agreement;
- take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning;
- try to learn from their mistakes so that they can develop and take their place as responsible adults in society.

Staff should:

- be aware of the policy and apply it in a consistent way and in keeping with the ethos of the school;
- have and maintain high expectations of all pupils;
- establish an atmosphere of Praise, encouragement and reconciliation between all members of the community;
- create an environment in which all can learn;
- inform parents when pupils are behaving well in addition to when behaviour is unacceptable

Parents should:

- access e-Praise to keep abreast of their pupil's progress and contact teachers as they need;
- familiarise themselves with the school ethos and policies;
- work in partnership with the school to promote and reinforce positive behaviour by supporting staff in respect of pupil behaviour management
- inform the school of any change in circumstance that may affect a child's behaviour or learning;
- show an interest in all that their child does at school;



- make efforts to attend Parents' meetings and other appropriate events to support their child's learning.

Positive Reinforcement and Rewards

Rewards are central to our behaviour policy. Full details of the schedule and programme are detailed in the Rewards and Sanctions Annex B.

- Teachers should praise readily.
- Teachers should give written positive comments in pupils' work.
- Pupils' work is displayed as much as possible in the school.
- The Principal, Senior Leadership Team, School Leaders and Pastoral Managers are pleased to praise pupils' good work or behaviour when it is brought to their attention.
- Self-assessment is in place within the school. The objectives are to encourage pupils to see themselves in a positive light, look for their successes and identify these strengths and talents. There is a variety of self-assessment within the school.

Above all, individual praise and encouragement is to be given to pupils regularly in lessons and about their conduct in and about the school. Pupils are encouraged to praise and look out for each other.

All staff, including Teaching Assistants will be given access to the e-Praise system in order to log points.

Vertical tutors have immediate access to each child's current total and are responsible for keeping their tutees up to date with their scores. The points will also be used to identify the top ranking College and the top ranking tutor group. Updates of these are displayed on school notice boards and celebrated in whole school and school assemblies. We also award prizes to the highest point scorers and most improved pupils in each school at the end of each term.

E-Praise also allows pupils to spend the points they have earned on rewards such as 'jump the queue', free school lunch, assembly seat – these will be reviewed within the Pupil Parliament and amended in light of feedback.

The rewards to pupils will include termly reward trips inside of school hours. The top ranking 20 pupils in each year group would be invited to go on a trip such as bowling, ice skating, cinema, etc. This trip is funded by parental contribution subsidised by the school. Although a running point total is kept throughout the year, termly totals are used to determine who is awarded a place on the trip. This ensures that all pupils are engaged with the reward system. Overall totals are used to give an accurate assessment of progress.

Staff responsible for organising a club or group event must complete the appropriate sheet for the activity and hand that to reception for administration as soon as possible after the event. This ensures that pupils can be rewarded for their participation.

Positive Postcards can be sent home and must be handed into reception for addressing and despatch. These are postcards identify something positive about a pupil that a member of staff has witnessed throughout the week, which can be of an academic or non-academic nature. Reception will record the pupil's names on the appropriate list and record this on e-Praise.



There will be a minority of pupils for whom this system does not work. For pupils who are struggling there will be the alternative system of lesson reports, playground reports, and Pastoral Support Plans. Any of these alternative systems will need to include the points system in their rewards and sanctions, even if the points themselves are not the main currency of the reward e.g., reading targets.

Parents and carers will be issued with access to e-Praise so they can monitor the rewards for their pupil. Parents are also able to send emails to the teachers of their pupils through e-Praise.

Discipline Procedures

A key consideration in disciplinary matters is the gravity and persistence of the offence. So much has to do with the personalities of both pupil and teacher, the age of the pupil and the conditions and context of a particular situation, that no one sanction can be said to be effective in every circumstance.

The Vertical Tutor is central to the behaviour management of the pupils in their care. Pupils are expected to have an age-related appreciation of the Walkwood 'faith' values, and the rewards and consequences that are used to reinforce positive deeds and sanction ill-disciplined behaviour.

Vertical Tutors are required to keep a Pastoral File in which they store the details related to pupils' pastoral care. They are also the first point of contact with the parents. Parents should contact the vertical tutor if they have any initial requests or issues regarding their pupil's educational progress, behaviour and pastoral care.

Vertical tutor's role also includes contacting the Pastoral Manager if they have any concerns or worries about a child in their class. Class teachers should in the first instance contact parents if they have an issue regarding a pupil's behaviour. They can use the planner as a method of communication. All contact regarding pupils' behaviour should be recorded onto SIMs. The Pastoral Manager will also provide help and advice regarding the use of behaviour modification techniques and strategies to help monitor behaviour and evaluate the impact of the strategy.

Monitoring techniques, including 'being on report', are initially the responsibility of the vertical tutor or the class teacher, depending from where the matter arises. The Pastoral Manager is the next responsibility holder for a pupil if the initial interventions are not producing the required outcomes across a number of subjects. If the concern is within one or two specific subject areas, then the Head of Department will monitor the pupil. Beyond that, the College Leader may become involved more formally. Involvement where the pupil's monitoring is the responsibility with a member of the senior leadership team is for serious and persistent non-compliance with the school expectations.

Lunchtime supervisors should record positive and negative playground behaviour. This will be passed on to the Tutor.

Incidences of poor behaviour in lessons will be recorded electronically by the subject teacher on the SIMs system. Demerits are recorded on e-Praise. Assertive discipline procedure is operated in the classroom with clear expectations and consistent steps clearly identified (Appendix B). The step-wise process for managing behaviour within the learning environment is as follows.

- A warning is given to the pupil, and the pupil has a choice as to what happens next. If corrective action is taken by the pupil, then there is no escalation.
- Further need for adult intervention will result in the pupil having their name written on the board. When good work (as defined by the teacher) follows this, the teacher can remove the name from the board.
- Additional poor choices by the pupil which prevent learning taking place for the individual pupil or for others, will result in the pupil's name being underlined on the board. When good work (as defined by the teacher) follows this, the teacher can remove the line, and additionally, the name from the board.
- If the behaviour persists and learning is still being interrupted, then the teacher will park the pupil in the nearest classroom. A demerit will be entered on e-Praise and 5/10 minutes will be lost by the pupil at break/lunch as the teacher follow ups in order for reconciliation.
- If after the second time of being parked in another room, a pupil should be put in a subject lunchtime detention and the pupil's parent/carer will be informed.

The pupil's record on the SIMs system will be monitored regularly by the Vertical tutor. If a pupil receives five or more negative behaviour logs the Vertical tutor must make contact with the pupil's parents and inform the Pastoral Manager. The pupil will then be supported to improve his/her behaviour and monitored more closely via report card.

Pupil Report

Pupils may be provided with a Pupil Report. This will highlight the major concerns and set targets and objectives that both the pupil and the school need to achieve in order to show progress. These will be reviewed by a specified responsibility holder within the school, alongside the pupil and parents over an agreed time span. If this fails to lead to an improvement in behaviour then pupils may be placed on a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) this involves meeting with parents every two weeks to discuss the progress being made against the targets set. It is necessary to implement a PSP before a permanent exclusion can be made. A referral to the Beacon or Forge for Behaviour Support Intervention will be made. (Appendix C).

After School Detentions

These may be issued for the following reasons:

- Serious incidents
- Repeated incidents of inappropriate behaviour
- Repeated failure to complete homework
- Persistent lateness
- Repeated failure to attend recreational time sanctions.

Subject teachers and Vertical tutors must inform a School Leader before issuing an after school detention. Parents will receive written, advance warning, or in exceptional circumstances may be notified by telephone call.



Principal's Detention

Principal's Detention is given after three school detentions. School leaders must liaise with Principal before issuing a Principal's Detention. Under normal circumstances these should only be given once After School Detentions have been issued, however, the Principal may authorise other detentions at his/her discretion. Parents will be given advanced written warning.

Reflection Room

This is used for extremely serious incidences of unacceptable behaviour and may be applied, if deemed appropriate by the Principal or Deputy Principal, without any prior sanctions having taken place. These include but are not limited to:

- acts of physical aggression involving other pupils;
- physical aggression towards staff;
- acts of severe, persistent defiance;
- acts of verbal abuse against staff;
- use of racist or homophobic language;
- bringing dangerous items into school;
- acts that compromise health and safety.

The Reflection Room involves the child being isolated from their peers. To prevent children in internal exclusion from coming into contact with their peers they are supervised. Specific staff will supervise the pupil while in the Reflection Room. The length of time for Internal Exclusion will be set by the Principal or the designated member of the Senior Leadership Team given the nature of the misdemeanour.

If a child is internally excluded a second time for a repeated offence the time in internal exclusion may well be extended.

Children who are unable to behave appropriately in the internal exclusion room will be excluded on a fixed term basis.

Physical Intervention

Using force to restrain or physically direct a pupil is regarded as a last resort. There may be situations in which there is no safer alternative.

DfES circular 10/98 sets out three categories in which staff may use reasonable force in order to control or restrain a pupil where:

- action is necessary in self-defence because there is an imminent risk of injury;
- there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property;
- a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline;
- a pupil is endangering their own health and safety or that of others.

Any force used will always be kept to a minimum in order to maintain good order.



Members of staff have been trained with regard to physical intervention in order to safely restrain pupils, should this be necessary.

In the unlikely event of this happening parents will be informed and a full record of the incident will be kept.

Exclusions

In some rare occasions exclusions need to be issued. These will be given after serious consideration by senior management and maybe for a fixed term or in extreme instances be permanent.

Fixed term exclusions may be issued for a range of reasons including acts of violence against other pupils or staff or the persistent use of inappropriate language.

Permanent exclusions may be issued in cases of extreme violence or persistent use of violence against other pupils or staff. They may also be issued when a pupil puts other individuals in extreme danger.

Exclusions will be issued by the Principal or the designated member of the Senior Leadership Team in the Principal's absence. The exclusion process will be fully explained in the accompanying letter that is sent to parents.

Specific note will be taken when applying the behaviour policy to children with recognised special needs. Where possible the school will ensure that appropriate support and provision has been put in place to support the child's needs.

Placing pupils in another school / pupil referral unit

In some cases, the relationships between pupil and school or parents and school do break down and whilst every effort will be made to repair these relationships the school may on occasions refer pupils to the Managed Moves Panel in order to place the pupil in another school. Pupils will also at times be recommended to attend behaviour improvement courses at The Forge. The purpose of these is to give pupils an opportunity to learn new strategies for improving their behaviour. The placement is normally shared between school and The Forge.

Searches of person or property

Authorised school staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees. However, the same staff have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item. Prohibited items are:

- knives or weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items



- tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used:
 - to commit an offence, or
 - to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil).

Authorised staff can also search for any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for. Authorised staff are members of the Senior Leadership Team and College Leaders.

Guidelines for the conduct of searches are available:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674416/Searching_screening_and_confiscation.pdf



Appendix 1

Policy into Practice

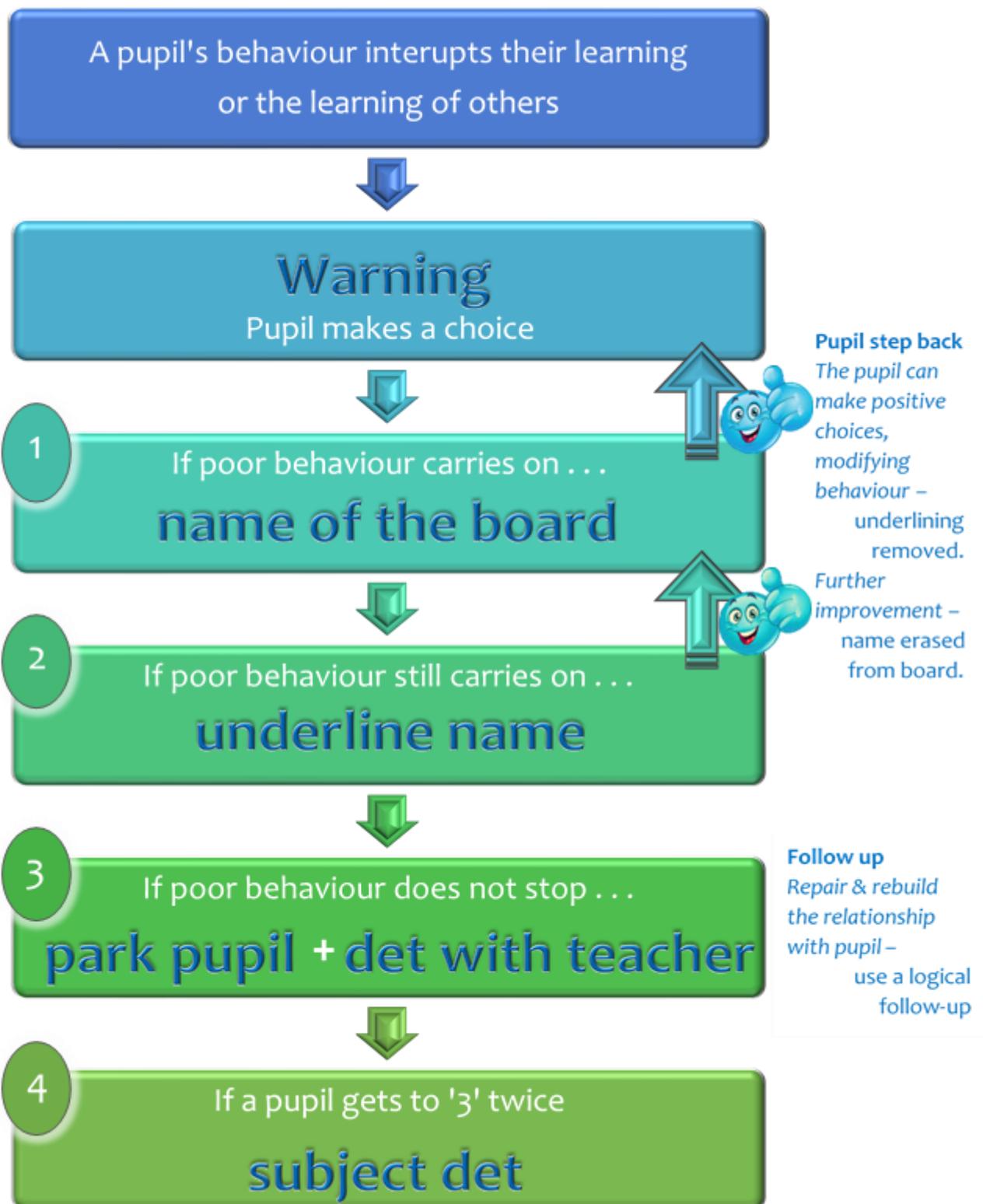
Code of Conduct	Step	Intervention Level and Action	Involvement	Actions
All pupils should strive to have a 'Positive Learning Attitude'.	1	Staff are delighted with your effort and your Positive Learning Attitude will be rewarded with positive points, certificates, postcards home and rewards activities.	All school members Parents Governors	Celebration of achievements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal Praise and discussion with staff or parents. • Whole school assembly • School Assemblies • Insider Articles • Classroom Displays • Local press • Parents informed via telephone, planner or postcard. • Reward activities • Principal Commendation
Staff have some concerns about your effort and/or behaviour as you are not adhering to the above guidelines.	2	There is a need to adapt behaviour to make a positive contribution to this school community.	Staff – Vertical Tutors/Subject Teacher/Pastoral Manager Pupils Parents	Verbal Warning Name on Board Name underlined Removed from Class Intervention Recording onto SIM's Conversations with Parents/Carers
Staff have increasing concerns about your effort/behaviour as you are not adhering to the above guidelines.	3	Behaviour is deteriorating - there is a need to improve behaviour.	Staff – Vertical Tutors/Subject Teachers/Pastoral Managers/School Leaders Pupils Parents Outside agencies	Sanctions (i.e. Detentions break → lunch → After school): Vertical Tutor/Subject Teacher/Pastoral Manager/School Leader Reports – Class teacher/Pastoral Managers

<p>Staff have major concerns about your effort as you are not adhering to the above guidelines.</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Escalation to higher level sanctions.</p>	<p>Staff – Vertical Tutors/Subject Teachers/Pastoral Managers/School Leaders/SLT</p> <p>Pupils</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Outside agencies</p> <p>Governors</p>	<p>Reports with School Leaders (PSP's)</p> <p>ELT Sanctions – Internal Exclusions</p> <p>SLT Sanctions – External Exclusions - following appropriate process</p> <p>Exclusions reported and consulted with Governors.</p>
---	----------	--	--	---



Appendix 2

Stepped Consequences



Appendix 3

Supporting the more complex pupil

It is imperative that any monitoring that takes place parents are informed.

Type of report	Reason	Who do they report to?	For what period of time?
Tutor	Three demerits recorded on E-Praise over a two week spell for disruptive behaviour	Form Tutor	2 weeks
Pastoral*	Pupil not responding to tutor report	Pastoral Manager	4 weeks
PSP**	Pupil not responding to Pastoral report	College Leader and parents every two weeks	8 weeks
Forge***	The systems above have been exhausted external help is required.	Caseworker will liaise with College Leader or Pastoral Manager	Depends on the pupil/s need.

*It is at this point where you need to involve the SEND Co just in case there may be any underlying problems that have not been detected.

**It is at this point where a meeting of professionals who may be involved with the pupil will need to meet and discuss how to ensure the pupil/s stay in school is more successful. Referrals will need to be made in advance for Forge or other agencies intervention if required.

***Reports from Forge will be given to help, make pupil/s stay in school more successful.

If all the support that has been put in place is unsuccessful then a Managed Move will be discussed with parents.



Appendix 4

Home / School agreement

Introduction

Telephones and email provide us with a quick and easy means of communication. As a result it is used for such a wide range of communications, it has also become increasingly difficult to distinguish between formal and informal communications.

The ease of communication has many advantages, but these are proving to have ever diminishing returns as the expectation for almost instantaneous reply, in a well-informed, considered and timely manner appears to be on the increase, with complaints following when this has not been possible.

As a school **our first priority is to deliver high quality teaching and learning**. The ability and ease of communication by telephone or email directly with a teacher of a parent's child is a privilege.

On any one day a teacher will have a plethora of demands on their time including up to five lessons teaching and tutor time, possibly lunch duties and activities, and maybe after school practices and clubs. Telephone messages for teachers are passed on quickly by staff in the Reception office. Teachers cannot, and are not expected to, monitor and manage their email inbox during lessons or at other times in the day when they should be planning and preparing for lessons, assessing pupils' work or carrying out school duties.

The school and parents expect teachers to be fully prepared, focused and engaged with pupils and supporting their learning. Whilst administration staff, some support staff and senior leaders may be able to access emails more routinely, their primary function is to support teachers and pupils.

As parents we may feel that it is perfectly reasonable to ask for updates about our child's progress or behaviour. Parents' Evenings and the annual report provide holistic information. Yet, there are times when some pupils need additional support and guidance which will be determined and arranged. However, we believe that parents cannot micro manage their child's education via email or through on-going requests for telephone contact and a response within the same day.

The school works hard to provide parents with timely and informative information concerning their child's progress throughout the year. In addition to this staff may also telephone, write or email a parent to inform them of a serious incident or serious ongoing concerns about a child's behaviour or attitude to learning. They would not be expected to maintain a running dialogue about such matters, unless it has been agreed as part of a Pastoral Support Plan.

We provide parents with an online system – ePraise - that enables them to view their child's attendance at lessons, behaviour and achievements by simply logging in. Parents are encouraged to use this facility.

Wherever the word 'parent' is used in the following sections, this applies equally well to a pupil's carer or carers.

Procedures and timescales



1. By the end of the **day after receiving the communication** - receipt of an email will be acknowledged (during term time but not over a weekend) and a request for a telephone call will be responded to. Messages given to the Reception staff by telephone are passed to staff members by email on the same day. Part-time staff may not work every school day.
2. Within **4 working school days** – the school shall provide a response by telephone or in writing (which may be an email). This may include informing the sender that more time is required to provide a full response. If this is the case staff should indicate a timeframe in which a response should be expected.
3. Staff will not be expected to monitor or respond to emails out of their normal working hours (including weekends and published school holidays, and days when staff are not in school as they work part-time). Whilst parents may compose emails at hours to suit their own needs, we ask that emails are not normally sent outside of a member of staff's normal working hours. Mobile phones and other electronic devices that enable staff to access their school emails when away from school can make it difficult to 'place into pending' a message from a parent, leading to unnecessary worry and anxiety on the part of the staff. Such devices belonging to staff are encrypted for data protection.
4. Whilst this is rare, if a member of staff receives an email which is of an aggressive tone, sets unreasonable demands or could otherwise be interpreted as harassing, they will refer this to a member of the Senior Leadership Team in the school, who will decide if consideration needs to be given to dealing with further communication.
5. Whilst it is rare, if a member of staff is contacting a parent by telephone and receives protractedly aggressive, abusive or threatening comments, then the staff member will caution the parent/carer that the call will not continue unless moderation of language occurs. If the parent/carer does not do so, the staff member will say that the conversation is terminating and will end the call. The staff member will report this to their line manager, copying in the Senior Leadership Team. The parent will not be entitled to a following call for at least 48 hours.

Guidance to staff

- Reply to the original sender – only 'Reply to all' when this is absolutely necessary which will be rare occasions. Only send or forward to colleagues that have need to read it.
- When addressing the parent or carer, use the correct title and surname, thus keeping matters formal.
- Write an appropriate title in the subject line.
- Staff have the opportunity to check emails at least once a day – before morning registration although it may be possible within the afternoon tutor time, although work with pupils is the priority.
- It is not usually appropriate for emails to be checked or replied to in lessons; they should never be visible to pupils.
- Consider having a conversation or a phone call instead of writing a long email. If the message is urgent, seek out the relevant party in person, or make contact by telephone.



- Use appropriate language in emails. Never send a message you would not want to be shown to others including parents and colleagues. Do not send emails when you are angry or upset; take care with your tone and do not use capitals as they are construed as ‘shouting’.
- Emails should be used to instruct or to share information, not to enter into debate.
- Before forwarding an email, check the email trail content is appropriate and relevant.
- Email length should be kept to a minimum.
- Telephone calls and emails should be responded to by the end of the day after the message was received, even if the response is brief and promises a fuller reply at a later date.

Other things to consider

When communicating with the school, parents are asked to bear in mind that a great many staff are putting their heart and soul, and many hours, into trying to help our pupils achieve well. We would never wish to discourage parents from communicating with staff, establishing a relationship and working together. Parental communication is essential: we do not always get it right and we need helpful feedback to help us to continue to improve but we constantly aim to do so.

On occasions staff face criticism over an activity which they may be doing entirely out of goodwill, be it running a trip, or a team, or a concert, or a play, and an ill-crafted email from an upset parent, even when the point is justified, can result in hurt being caused and a reluctance from staff to continue to go the extra mile, that we so much appreciate of them. Likewise, even when a communication is about a core school responsibility, communications need to be respectful. Couching a point as being ‘direct’, ‘blunt’ or ‘honest’ does not make it any less destructive to a relationship that should be based on trust and mutual respect. This applies to all communication and staff need to be just as careful in how we show they value our pupils and parents.

Many of parents will be facing the same challenges in their own workplace from an increasing expectation of ‘anytime, anywhere’ communications. Some readers may be of the view that this is simply the way the world works now. However, our school has a duty of care to staff, as it does to pupils. This includes a responsibility to ensure that the staff workload is manageable and does not unreasonably intrude in to their private life.



Appendix 5

Guidelines for a search

Schools can conduct a search if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item.

Schools' common law powers to search with consent

School staff can search pupils with their consent for any item. Schools are not required to have formal written consent from the pupil for this sort of search – it is enough for the teacher to ask the pupil to turn out his or her pockets or if the teacher can look in the pupil's bag or locker and for the pupil to agree.

Schools should make clear in their school behaviour policy and in communications to parents and pupils what items are banned. If a member of staff suspects a pupil has a banned item in his/her possession, they can instruct the pupil to turn out his or her pockets or bag and if the pupil refuses, the teacher can apply an appropriate punishment as set out in the school's behaviour policy.

A pupil refusing to co-operate with such a search raises the same kind of issues as where a pupil refuses to stay in a detention or refuses to stop any other unacceptable behaviour when instructed by a member of staff – in such circumstances, schools can apply an appropriate disciplinary measure.

Searching without consent

- What the law says the following can be searched for:
- Knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items; and
- Tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks and pornographic images; and
- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury, or damage to property; and
- Any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.

Conducting searches

Authorised staff can only undertake a search without consent if they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil may have in his or her possession a prohibited item. The authorised staff must decide in each particular case what constitutes reasonable grounds for suspicion. For example, they may have heard other pupils talking about the item or they might notice a pupil behaving in a way that causes them to suspect that the pupil is concealing a prohibited item.

The staff member conducting the search must be the same sex as the pupil being searched; and there must be a witness (also a staff member) and, if possible, they should be the same sex as the pupil being searched.

