

Hulme Hall Grammar School Behaviour & Discipline Policy

Importance of Good Behaviour & Discipline

Good behaviour & discipline are vital parts of school life and are necessary both for pupils to be able to learn and for their safety and well-being. The school believes that good behaviour and discipline instils the correct values into pupils, namely, respect for others and their property, honesty, trust, fairness, self-respect and self-discipline. In turn, this helps young pupils to develop into responsible adults.

Effective discipline is an important feature of personal and social development and has a positive influence upon pupil : teacher relationships. It serves to enhance the quality of learning in a school.

Our ground rules for behaviour & discipline are :-

- All pupils have a right to learn.
- All teachers have a right to teach.
- Everybody has the right to fair treatment.
- Everybody has the right to safety.
- It is the responsibility of all members of the school's community to ensure that they behave in a manner that enables all to enjoy these rights.
- Good discipline is promoted by purposeful learning.
- Unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated, but can be changed.

While discipline is essential for the well-being of the school and all its members, it is also important for the public image of the school. Pupils are therefore expected to behave in a manner worthy of the school at all times.

The vast majority of pupils respond to encouragement. We should aim to be positive and to highlight good behaviour. All sanctions are only useful if applied sparingly. Their deterrent effect is reduced if over-used.

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has a key role in promoting the ethos and values that the school holds as important.

Role of the Headmaster

The Headmaster is directly responsible to the Governing Body for ensuring that good behaviour and discipline are an integral part of the way in which the school and its pupils are managed. The Headmaster must lead by example in these areas to ensure that the school can attain its aims.

Role of the Teacher

The subject teacher is responsible for the behaviour of the class during lessons and for ensuring that work is completed to the required standard.

All teachers should have consistent expectations about the way in which pupils should behave. A key ingredient of good discipline, is having a positive teacher : pupil relationship. Staff can help to sustain a school's discipline policy by accepting responsibility for pupil behaviour outside the classroom as well as inside and by accepting responsibility for all pupils, not simply those of their own form or teaching groups. Most importantly, there must be consistent standards of discipline throughout the school (punctuality, lining up procedures, movement between lessons), and common strategies for dealing with problems as and when they arise.

Teachers must be reflective practitioners. If a teacher is experiencing difficulty in maintaining effective classroom management, it is important for him / her to reflect upon their teaching strategy, consult a line manager or observe another teacher in action. Often, a few simple changes in approach can remove the source of the problem.

Teachers should try to avoid :-

- humiliating pupils - this breeds resentment;
- over-reacting - the problems will grow;
- over-using sanctions - their deterrent effect will be reduced;
- being inconsistent - children need to know where they stand;
- issuing vague instructions - this can lead to misunderstanding

It is the role of teachers to ensure that all pupils adhere to the Codes of Conduct as detailed in :-

- (i) The Senior and Junior School School Guides;
- (ii) The Staff Handbook.

Any member of staff who identifies a pupil as misbehaving, has a responsibility to draw the child's attention to this fact.

Any incident involving misbehaviour resulting in some form of punishment will be recorded in the pupil's file and the Year Head's pastoral file (see Staff Handbook for procedure regarding Incident Sheets).

Any conversation or meeting between a member of staff and a pupil's parent/guardian, on matters of behaviour, must be minuted in writing and entered into the pupil's file and the Year Head's pastoral file (see Staff Handbook for procedures relating to Interview Sheets).

The following types of behaviour will result in the application of appropriate sanctions and will be recorded in the pupil's personal and pastoral files :-

- physical assault

- bullying (see also the Anti-Bullying Policy for details)
- misbehaviour in class
- theft
- bad language
- persistently disregarding an instruction

This list is not exhaustive.

Pupils who persistently misbehave in class and who fail to heed the warnings issued by their teacher, will be reported in the first instance to the Head of Year and/or a member of the SLT. An appropriate sanction will be applied. If a pupil is sent out of a lesson, the Headmaster will be informed (see Staff Handbook for procedures relating to pupils sent out of lesson).

The Role of Parents

The vast majority of parents are interested in their children's education and are supportive of the school's aims in promoting good discipline amongst its pupils. Parents and teachers are key partners in education. Good communication and co-operation between the two is essential. Parents are therefore advised to bring any concerns to the attention of the teaching and/or pastoral staff immediately. It is expected that parents will respect the authority of the school and its representatives.

School Rules

Rules must lie at the heart of the school's discipline policy. The rules are a means of introducing parents and pupils to the values that the school considers to be important. The Codes of Conduct will be discussed and reinforced regularly by form tutors, subject teachers and in assemblies.

Rewards and Sanctions

(a) Rewards

The Merit System operates in both the Junior & Senior School in order to recognise attainment, effort and the general contribution that a pupil makes to the life of the school. The Merit and House Points System is our current method of promoting good behaviour and positive attitude to school life.

Bronze Award (20 Merits) - certificate + letter of commendation

Silver Award (40 Merits) - certificate + letter of commendation.

Gold Award (70 Merits) - certificate + letter of commendation.

Platinum Award (120 Merits) - as for Gold but awarded at Presentation Evening.

Each Merit converts into a point for the pupil's House.

In the Junior School, 'Golden Time' operates for the final 30 minutes on Friday afternoons. Pupils who have qualified for 'Golden Time' by virtue of their effort and behaviour during the week, may follow a recreational activity of their choice during this session.

(b) Sanctions and Punishments

The behaviour of the vast majority of our pupils is excellent. Therefore, the issue of behaviour must be kept in perspective. We should aim to work positively with the minority of pupils persistently misbehave.

Generally, a few words to the offender is sufficient and certainly, in the first instance, any sanctions (assuming that the offence was not of a more serious nature), should be administered by the teacher. Consistency is vitally important.

There are a range of sanctions that can be applied as appropriate to the seriousness of the offence :-

- change of seating position in the classroom
- withdrawal of privileges
- carrying out a useful task in school
- extra work, either school or home-based
- inform parents of behaviour (telephone, meeting or through homework diary)
- formal behaviour report for a prescribed period of time, to be completed on a daily basis by parents and teachers
- withholding participation in school trips or sports events that are not part of the National Curriculum (in some circumstances, the school will reserve the right to withhold participation in visits connected to the National Curriculum if it is felt that the pupil's behaviour may endanger the safety of the group)
- lunchtime detention and Headmaster's detention (end of term) in Senior School
loss of playtime, loss of 'Golden Time' in Junior School
- sending out of lesson
- referral to Year Head and SLT /or Headmaster for Behaviour Action Plan
- formal interview with Parents, Year Head and Headmaster
- fixed term exclusion (suspension) at the discretion of the Headmaster
- permanent exclusion (expulsion) – Headmaster's recommendation to the Governing Body.

Under no circumstances will corporal punishment be used.

In the event that physical restraint is required to prevent pupils harming themselves or others, an incident report will be immediately written for the pupil's file. **(see Appendix 1 for guidance regarding the restraint of pupils).**

The Headmaster or Senior Leadership Team (SLT) should be informed of any serious breaches of conduct. Serious breaches of conduct may involve :-

- repeated verbal or physical abuse of another
- threatening behaviour (toward another pupil or a member of staff)
- repeated bad language
- serious disruption of lessons
- refusal to obey instructions issued by a teacher, disrespectful behaviour toward a member of staff
- theft

Where a serious incident has occurred or is alleged to have occurred, the Headmaster or SLT may immediately seek to involve the parents of those concerned.

The Headmaster or SLT will deal with serious breaches directly, particularly when a matter is brought to their attention which seems to have been ongoing for some time and where, other strategies have been unsuccessful.

All incidents reports and records of sanctions will be entered into the pupil's file.

The Headmaster's decision on an issue of misconduct may result in the temporary or permanent exclusion of the child from school. An exclusion will only be imposed after a full investigation into the incident has been conducted. The Headmaster is the only member of staff with the authority to exclude a pupil from school.

Fixed –Term (Temporary) Exclusion.

This is generally awarded for ongoing repetition of an offence and where other guidance, warnings or sanctions have been unsuccessful.

Alternatively, such an exclusion could be applied to a more serious, single offence that merits suspension.

Such exclusions are for a short and 'fixed' period of time ie, normally up to a maximum one week .

There is no right of appeal against a Fixed Term Exclusion.

Permanent Exclusion

This is very much the last resort and will only be implemented for single or cumulative offences that are so serious as to merit this action.

In the event of permanent exclusion, the Headmaster will provide a 'Request for Review' form to the parents outlining the procedure to be adopted. In such a situation, it is envisaged that the majority of parents would wish to lodge an appeal against exclusion to the Review Panel.

The Headmaster will forward a report to the Governing Body recommending the permanent exclusion of the pupil. The Headmaster may not permanently exclude a pupil from school without authorisation from the Governing Body.

After consideration of the evidence, the Governing Body may choose to uphold or overturn the Headmaster's recommendation. The pupil will remain excluded from school until such time that the Governing Body has delivered its final decision.

The decision of the Governing Body is final and will not be subject to further review.

[For further details see the **Exclusion and Appeals / Review Policy**].

Appendix 1 Guidance on Restraining Pupils

There have been a number of cases in recent years of teachers facing internal disciplinary charges or even criminal charges, arising out of allegations of assault against pupils. Despite the fact that teachers may subsequently be exonerated or acquitted when their actions are scrutinised formally, the overall process creates anxiety and uncertainty amongst staff about the boundaries of acceptable behaviour when controlling pupils.

The Law

The law governing a teacher's powers to control or restrain pupils is contained in s.550A of the Education Act 1996 and is amplified by DfES Circular 10/98. The 1996 Act makes it clear that corporal punishment by way of sanction is forbidden. But this does not prevent the use of *reasonable force* against a pupil to prevent them from :-

- committing a criminal offence, whether or not the child has reached the age of criminal responsibility;
- injuring themselves or others;
- damaging property, including their own property;
- behaving in a way that is prejudicial to the good discipline and order of the school, whether in the classroom or elsewhere where the teacher has lawful control of a pupil.

These powers apply to members of the school staff, which means any teacher who works at the school and any other person who, with the authority of the Headmaster has lawful control or charge of pupils at the school.

DfES Circular 10/98 gives examples of situations which fall into the categories above, when the use of 'reasonable force' might be justified. They include :-

- violent behaviour by a pupil such as, fighting or attacking a member of staff or another pupil;

- acts of vandalism;
- behaviour by a pupil such as, rough play, the misuse of objects or running in corridors, which is likely to lead to personal injury or damage to property;
- refusal by a disruptive pupil to leave a classroom; (in such a situation, the teacher should seek help from their line manager or a member of the SLT)
- defending themselves against a violent attack.

Reasonable Force

There is no legal definition of what constitutes ‘reasonable force’ and this will vary depending upon the circumstances. However, the use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant it. Thus, the use of force to prevent some trivial misdemeanour, such as dropping litter, is not warranted.

Teachers should always exercise great caution in the use of force and always try to use other means to resolve a situation. Whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could be reasonably employed, will also depend upon the pupil’s age, understanding, physical maturity and sex.

Where physical intervention is unavoidable, the degree of force should be in proportion to the circumstances and seriousness of the behaviour or consequences that it is intended to prevent. The level and duration of force should be the minimum necessary to achieve the desired result, such as to restore safety. If the teacher uses excessive force, this could be viewed as a form of punishment rather than a necessary measure of control or restraint.

In some circumstances, it could be inadvisable for a teacher to intervene without help, such as where a number of pupils are involved, where the pupil is older and more physically mature, and where the teacher might be at risk of injury.

DfES Circular 10/98 stresses that staff should not act in a way that might cause pain or injury, such as by striking or holding a pupil around the neck, nor should they pull hair or ears in any way which might be considered indecent.

The use of force should be regarded as a final resort when other means of resolving the situation have failed. The following points should be considered :-

- will the use of force exacerbate the situation and result in further injury to the teacher, pupil or other pupils;
- will it set a poor example for other children;
- will it stress and/or distress the pupil or other pupils?

While it is good advice for a teacher to err on the side of caution, in some situations, such as where safety is at issue, doing nothing or taking too little action, may not be the correct reaction and may open the teacher up to accusations of negligence by omission. This can be as bad as an over-reaction by the teacher and be deemed as a breach of their duty of care.

Reporting and Recording

In the event of an accident where a teacher has used force to restrain a pupil, it is crucial that the following steps are taken :-

- 1/ The teacher should inform the Headmaster or a member of the SLT immediately.
- 2/ The teacher should make a full written report of the incident. This record should include the following details:
 - The names of the pupil(s) involved and any witnesses, together with the location and time when the incident occurred.
 - The reason why the use of force was necessary in that situation.
 - A description of the incident, including the steps taken to calm the situation before force was deemed to be necessary and the nature of the force used.
 - The pupil's response to the teacher's action.
 - The outcome of the incident (following the teacher's intervention).
 - Details of any injury suffered by any of the parties, or of any damage to property (school or personal).

The written report should be completed at the time of the incident and be sufficiently detailed as to assist with any subsequent investigation or complaint.

- 3/ Where possible, either the Headmaster or SLT will inform the parents of the incident before the pupil returns home.

INCIDENT REPORT

Please note that this form is only to be used in the event of an incident during which a member of staff has been required to use **physical force to restrain a pupil**. In all such cases, this form should be completed as soon as possible after the event and forwarded without delay to the Headmaster or member of the SLT.

Date of incident Time/Period

Location

Name(s) of pupil(s) involved

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Witnesses

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Description of incident, including steps taken to resolve the situation before physical force was used.

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Turn over

Why did it become necessary to use physical force?

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Describe the nature of the force used

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How did the pupil(s) respond?

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Please provide details of any injuries or damage to property (school or personal)

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Teacher Signature Date