



Firs School Behaviour Policy

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DISTRIBUTION

Please note that 2 copies of this document are printed as standard and distributed to the following areas.

- 1) The Staff Room
- 2) The Top Floor Study Room

If you would like a personal copy of the handbook please ask the school office and a personal copy can be printed or an electronic copy can be e-mailed to you. You will then be automatically sent an electronic copy every time an update occurs.

The electronic version of this document is available on the school server in the location identified above. (The Y drive is "Company Documents")

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1. CONDUCT

Children need to be trained to be responsible for their own behaviour and when it is not acceptable, to be made aware of this. It needs to be reinforced that bad behaviour is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Children and parents need to be aware of the procedure that will be followed.

Most problems arise out of the classroom:

- in dinners;
- in assembly;
- at playtime; and
- at lunch break.

1.1.1 THE FIRS WAY

The school has adopted a set of behaviours which it believes that both children and staff should follow. This has become known as the Firs Way and is set out below.

- We do our best to be our best
- We treat others as we would like to be treated
- We are kind and helpful
- We are honest and truthful
- We listen respectfully
- We share
- We forgive
- We learn from our mistakes

If children are observed not following these principles or breaking school rules they will be warned that their behaviour is contrary to the Firs way and if they continue they will lose Golden time. Golden time is scheduled every week for 30 minutes and is a chance for the child to do an activity they enjoy doing as set by the teacher.

1.1.2 ACTION

In the first instance warn the child of the unacceptable behaviour and that if they continue they will lose a minute of golden time. If they repeat/continue then inform the child they will lose a minute of golden time and report the child to class teacher – if serious enough take the child and state the problem. Both adults to reinforce that this behaviour is not acceptable and if the problem continues it will be reported to the Head teacher.

If problem behaviour continues, report to Head teacher – again take the child, state problem. Name and problem entered in book. Both adults to reinforce that behaviour is unacceptable and if the problem continues, the child is to be brought back to the Head teacher.

If the child is taken to the Head teacher, it needs to be entered into the book and the staff informed. Again, reinforce problem and tell the child that his/her parents will be informed and asked to come into the School to discuss the problem. The child would be present at this discussion.

Hopefully, the parents will be co-operative and the child responsive. If not, then refer to the proprietors for review of possible options:

- exclusion from some events;
- parents to take responsibility at certain events; and
- exclusion/removal.

If the misdemeanour is very serious such as violence, theft etc, anyone in the chain can refer immediately to the Head teacher.

1.1.3 CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND REASONABLE RESTRAINT

The Firs does not allow any form of corporal punishment.

Corporal punishment is defined as doing anything to a child, for the purpose of punishment, which would constitute battery.

However, anything done to avert an immediate danger of personal injury or damage to property would not be considered to be corporal punishment.

POWER TO RESTRAIN PUPILS

Under certain circumstances teachers are allowed to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils.

Teachers should:

- only use reasonable force in very specific circumstances
- remember that there is no legal definition of reasonable force
- consider the examples of circumstances where it may be appropriate to apply reasonable force
- exercise caution in the use of force
- make accurate records of incidents when force is used
- remember that complaints about the use of force may lead to disciplinary action against them.

USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

Although teachers may not use corporal punishment as a disciplinary sanction, they and others, if authorised to do so by the Head, may use such force as is reasonable to prevent a pupil from:

- committing a criminal offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil)
- injuring themselves or others
- damaging property, including their own

- behaving in a way which 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.

Guidance is given in DCSF Circular 10/98, Section 550A of the Education Act 1996: The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils and also in Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

DEFINITION OF REASONABLE FORCE

Circular 10/98 points out that there is no legal definition of what constitutes "reasonable force". Therefore, it does not attempt to validate when it might be used.

It is the circumstances of a particular incident which warrant the use of force. To use physical force to prevent a trivial misdemeanour or when other means would be appropriate could not be justified.

The degree of force must be in proportion to the incident and the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

RECORDING WHEN FORCE IS USED

Systematic records should be kept of every significant incident. This record should include:

- different versions of the event
- where the incident took place
- which members of staff were involved directly
- why they decided that force had to be used
- what force was used
- whether there were any injuries
- what follow-up action was taken.

Parents should be informed of any recordable incident. The Head should report on the number and types of incidents to the proprietors.

POST-INCIDENT ACTIONS

Following the use of force the following actions should be completed:

- support provided for the member of staff involved
- liaison with parents
- punishment for the pupil where appropriate
- review of the incident and assessment of how to avoid a repeat in future
- support for other individuals who may have been affected by the incident.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT USE OF FORCE

The implementation of this policy on the use of force and the involvement of parents will help to avoid complaints from parents. It is acknowledged, however, that such

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complaints might be received which could invoke staff disciplinary procedures or even the involvement of the police or social services.

2. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Aims and objectives of an anti-bullying policy:

- To reduce and, if possible, prevent bullying so that pupils can learn in a supportive caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied;
- To deal with bullying when it occurs; and
- To build on the school discipline policy.

This policy follows the DCSF “Safe to Learn” guidance.

2.1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Although much of what follows may seem to be obvious, it is worth setting down as a starting point.

There are many definitions of bullying, but most have three things in common:

- It is deliberately hurtful behaviour;
- It is repeated over a period of time; and
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

Perhaps these can all be summarised in the following definition:- **Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt or threaten or frighten someone else.**

Bullying can take many forms but three main types are:

- physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings;
- verbal – name-calling, insulting, racist and cultural remarks, sexual, religious, homo-phobic, disability; and
- indirect – spreading nasty stories, excluding someone from social groups, directly or by mobile phone, social networks, blogs or some other internet medium.

Once again, in summary:- All bullying is aggression, either physical, verbal or psychological, although not all aggression is necessarily bullying.

There are a number of very important reasons for challenging bullying behaviour in school:

2.1.1 THE SAFETY AND HAPPINESS OF CHILDREN.

When children are bullied, their lives are made miserable. They may suffer injury, either physical, emotional or psychological and this may even result in self-harm, in extreme cases suicide. They may be unhappy about coming to school. Over time they are likely to lose self-confidence and self esteem. Some may blame themselves for ‘inviting’ the bullying behaviour.

2.1.2 EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

The unhappiness of bullied children is likely to affect their concentration and learning. Some children will avoid being bullied by not coming to school.

2.1.3 PROVIDING A MODEL FOR HELPFUL BEHAVIOUR

If they observe bullying behaviour going unchallenged, other children may learn that bullying is a quick and effective way of getting what they want. Those children who are being bullied may interpret our inaction as condoning unacceptable behaviour. They will feel badly let down by adults in authority.

2.1.4 PERPETUATING OUR REPUTATION AS AN EFFECTIVE CARING SCHOOL

No school can claim with confidence that “there is no bullying here”. Every school has some degree of bullying even if only slight or infrequent. Parents know this. They will be impressed and reassured by a school, which demonstrates both through policy, and action that it will respond positively and effectively to bullying.

2.2. WHAT CAN WE DO?

It has been discovered in various studies that the introduction of a policy, almost whatever that policy contains, results in a reduction in bullying. The raising of awareness of the issue seems in itself to have a beneficial effect. There is a slightly worrying corollary in that in the largest of these studies, although there was an overall reduction in bullying, there was an increase in bullying among girls.

Secrecy is exactly what the bully seeks, so a policy of openness from the earliest days is necessary. Bullying should be discussed openly, along with feelings and the way we treat others. Most children will become involved in bullying at some stage in their school careers probably both as victim and as perpetrator, so it is important not to paint the picture of a bully as the typical ‘thug’. This will tend to push the problem underground and not ease our task of helping both bullies and victims. If children realise that all will have to face this temptation and we are all here to help them overcome it, the problem is much more easily tackled.

This can be done in a variety of ways, but all should:

- raise awareness through the curriculum, particularly PSHE and also through assemblies anti-bullying workshops and initiatives (e.g. NSPCC activities and drama);
- give children opportunities to talk about bullying in general;
- think about supervision in key areas of the school;
- develop procedures for investigating incidents; and
- provide guidelines for listening to victims, witnesses and bullies.

Staff awareness of the seriousness of bullying and strategies to deal with both bully and victim will be raised through informal discussion, staff meetings and INSET training.

2.2.1 POLICY

At any suitable opportunity in the curriculum at all ages there should be time for children to discuss bullying openly, and to express their feelings about bullying. Even at an early age most children can see that bullying is not only physical, but that there are all sorts of ways in which one can hurt another.

Again, at an early age, children need to be persuaded that bullying is something that needs to be brought out in the open – it is all right to 'tell'. Either the victim or bystanders need to feel comfortable about coming forward if they are concerned about the way someone is being treated. This again is something that can be openly discussed in the classroom.

The most likely time for bullying to occur is during breaks, particularly the lunch break. We need to be aware of areas where perhaps supervision is not so great and where the potential bully might ply his or her craft. If necessary, we might have to increase supervision levels, though at present we consider them adequate.

If an incident is reported one must take it seriously otherwise reporting will cease. Separating truth from fiction is often quite difficult in such circumstances, and then other witnesses will have to be asked for their opinions. A danger here is that it may turn into an inquisition – something that we want to avoid at all costs. Usually if one starts from the standpoint that no one is in the wrong the truth will be arrived at.

There are so many ways of dealing with an incident dependent on the incident itself that it is difficult even to offer guidelines. It has been found that a non-punitive response, known as the 'no blame approach', has been successful in curbing bullying. However it is important to listen to both victim and bully and get them to give reasons for the incident. Sometimes, it is good to have them chat it through together with yourself acting as listener, but the incident may have gone too far for this to be effective. One general rule that can be given is that it is often unwise to apportion blame at an early stage. There may be countless reasons for the incident; many not even realised by either victim or bully that may be the real cause.

If you think that there has been an incident of bullying it is important that it is recorded and investigated and placed in the child's confidential file. The KS1 coordinator, assistant-head or Head teacher should be informed. If a pattern is being established i.e. continued physical / verbal abuse or threats / exclusion from play then the head and the child's parents must be informed.

In the final analysis, if you are unsure in any situation, refer the problem to the Head teacher.

We use The Firs way as our role for living this states that we will treat others as we wish to be treated and fosters respect for self and others. Bullying will not be tolerated. All incidents of bullying will be treated severely and severe and persistent bullying can result in exclusion.

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