



# The Abbey

## Behaviour and Discipline Policy

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### The Abbey School, Reading

Reviewed by:	Assistant Heads Junior School Deputy Heads Senior School	August 2023
Ratified by:	Whole School Leadership Committee and Governor Audit	September 2023
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## Aims and Ethos

The Abbey School aims to provide a compassionate, supportive, civilised and friendly environment in which each student is able to realise their full potential in every sphere. Our behaviour policy can be summed up in one key word - **respect**: respect for oneself; respect for learning; respect for other people; respect for property and belongings; and respect for The Abbey School. Values that can guide choices and behaviours are promoted and discussed in age-appropriate ways across the school.

**Please note that The Abbey School does not under any circumstances use corporal punishment.**

In all matters concerning behaviour we aim to:

- create a 'virtuous circle' of modelling expectations and behaviour within our students which is self-regulating as far as possible
- promote the safety and welfare of our students
- ensure high standards of conduct
- ensure that all students are aware of the standards expected
- ensure that the conduct of a student does not adversely affect others
- help to create a working environment in which all students are responsible for their actions and can thrive
- foster an environment in which poor behavioural choices can give the opportunity for development
- ensure that every student is given fair treatment
- encourage students to understand how their actions impact upon others and as a result to behave towards others with understanding, kindness, politeness and respect
- ensure the effective running of the school.

Above all, the School's ethos and culture are essential in maintaining a positive learning environment, which aims to cultivate in students an acceptance and recognition of responsibility for their own decisions and actions, and for the consequences. The School recognises the importance of developing students' own self-discipline and of giving them responsibility appropriate to their age and maturity; where students learn to think for themselves and appreciate the code of behaviour that characterises a caring and purposeful community, within which they can develop in integrity, self-confidence and consideration for others. This is at the heart of the School's behaviour curriculum: the learned ways in which we demonstrate mutual respect for one another.

This policy should be read alongside other guidance, including Staff Handbooks on promoting good behaviour and rewards, and the Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti-Bullying Policies and Online Safety Policies. It also has reference to the DfE's non-statutory guidance: *Behaviour in schools – advice for headteachers and school staff (September 2022)*.

## Staff responsibilities

Every member of staff is responsible for ensuring orderly behaviour in lessons and around school and promoting the welfare of children. All staff share responsibility for exemplifying and maintaining the ethos of respect at the heart of this policy. Staff are trained on behaviour management as part of induction and receive regular updates from the pastoral teams about how to promote positive behaviour formally and informally.

Clear expectations are a vital part of this behavior curriculum. The Abbey maintains a humane and individualised approach to behavior. Staff members will have their own approaches and

every incident of negative behaviour is handled in an individual way, but underlying this is a clear sense of the consideration and kindness all members of the community are expected to show in their day-to-day lives, from the way they move around the site to the way they interact.

Form teachers and tutors have a particular responsibility for reminding students of these underlying expectations, and they form an intrinsic part of the taught curriculum in lessons, assemblies and Skills for Life (PSHE). Ultimately, however, all members of the community across students, teaching and support staff share a common responsibility to demonstrate and exemplify positive behaviour.

Where students have additional needs, the team supporting them will be fully involved in determining the right course of action to promote positive behaviour and address negative behaviour. Inclusion is at the heart of positive behaviour: all students must feel that they belong and have a role to play to ensure that feeling is shared by all members of the community.

The Junior and Senior School Leadership Teams (JLT and SLT) are responsible for overseeing the aims of this policy and the processes deployed to support positive and respectful behaviour. All members of the teams visibly and demonstrably engage with students to support the ethos outlined in this policy.

The policy is subject to governor oversight and to direct involvement by governors in the event of appeals in cases of long-term temporary or permanent exclusion. Governors also form part of the team supporting positive behaviour through regular formal and informal visits.

## **Student and family responsibilities**

Students share responsibility for positive behaviour across the school. All students are given guidance on expectations and routines by form teachers (Junior School) and form tutors (Senior School), who support them as they settle into positive patterns of behaviour and are the first point of call when minor behavioural issues need to be addressed.

Behavioural matters are regularly discussed with student representatives to ensure they are aware of the routines and systems in place, understand any sanctions and have confidence that the principles governing behaviour are transparent, fair and universally applied.

In issues of behaviour, the close relationship between student, school and home is of particular importance. Information about behaviour is shared with parents, and parents are involved as appropriate in responses to misbehaviour and in the subsequent pastoral support.

This relationship is particularly important as regards the use of devices and mobile phones and online safety. Clear age-specific approaches to student devices are adopted and laid out in staff handbooks and student guidance. These approaches are graduated to encourage the development of a positive attitude to the use of technology. For example, when students are first allowed daily use of devices in Lower V, one day a week is designated phone-free to help manage use. Guidance is applied consistently and reiterated throughout the school year to all parties.

It is possible that behavioural issues may represent a form of child-on-child abuse. The school's approach to preventing and responding to incidents of child-on-child abuse are laid out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

## Responses to unacceptable behaviour

Our primary aim is for the student to recognise where they have made a mistake, to apologise to anyone else who has been affected and to learn from the experience so that the same mistake is not made again. Unacceptable behaviour may occur in or outside school, for example when taking part in school excursions or trips, when travelling to and from school and when wearing school uniform, and when interacting online.

The first priority is already the safety of students and staff and the restoration of a calm and positive environment. Staff will always respond in a consistent, fair and proportionate manner so that students know concerns will be addressed and dealt with impartially.

- Minor offences are usually dealt with by the form teachers (Junior School) or teacher/form tutor (Senior School)
- Unacceptable behaviour is predominantly addressed through individual and group discussion, circle time and assemblies – as appropriate to the age of the students concerned. Form teachers or the Head of Year may gather a whole year group or section of the school to discuss the matter of concern
- All children, including those in the Nursery and Reception, should feel safe and will not be threatened with corporal punishment in response to negative behaviour. Physical intervention by a staff member will only occur in instances where a student is in immediate danger of physical injury. Any intervention by a staff member will then be recorded and shared with the parent on the same day or as soon as is reasonably practical
- Dependent on the nature and severity of the incident, the member of the School Leadership Team responsible for that phase of the school would speak to the student or students concerned. In the Senior School, the Director of Lower or Upper School or Director of Sixth Form may become involved
- When one student behaves inappropriately towards another, each student is given the opportunity to talk through their peers' perspective and then brought together in an attempt to bring closure to the incident, to work out strategies for the future and to make a new start
- Where appropriate a verbal or written apology may be required from the student
- Parents are kept informed as appropriate
- To support a student in their behaviour, they may be given a report card which records all positive behaviours to reinforce our Policy
- In the event of a more persistent problem the Senior School Deputy Heads /Head of Junior School will become involved using a similar approach. Intervention is vital in such situations to help students manage their behaviour and do all possible to avoid a cycle of negative behaviours that may lead to escalating sanctions.
- The School will always take into account any Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) in managing behavioural issues. It will never be assumed that any SEND has affected behaviour but if a student's SEND may have been a contributory factor this will be considered on a case-by-case basis

Occasionally, in the Senior School, sanctions may be applied to support this aim as appropriate:

- Department catch up in lunchtime or after school for lack of homework
- Community service where appropriate, as decided by the Section Director

- School detention for repeated failure to behave well, complete work, or comply with uniform rules
- Very occasionally - Head's detention

Consideration will always be given to whether misbehavior suggests that the student responsible may be suffering or may be likely to suffer harm. Where such concerns exist, the provisions outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

## Serious Disciplinary Offences

In the event of a persistent serious disciplinary matter the Senior School Deputy Heads / Head of the Junior School would be involved, as may the Executive Head.

Such serious disciplinary offences might include:

- repeated bad behaviour, of the same or different types, when lesser sanctions have not led to significant improvement
- a single act of seriously bad behaviour
- repeated acts of unkindness to other members of the school community which may constitute bullying, including by technological means and outside school premises
- the use of aggressive behaviour or inappropriate language on school premises
- fighting or physical assault
- bringing the School into disrepute
- theft, wilful damage or gross negligence that leads to loss or damage to property
- repeated unauthorised absence
- fraud or any other offence committed against or outside the school that constitutes a breach of the law
- deliberate misuse of confidential data
- substance abuse of any kind
- academic dishonesty, taking other students' work and passing it off as their own; any form of cheating

The level and type of sanction depends upon circumstances and the offence and the following are usual examples, not an exhaustive list and not necessarily in progressive order:

- A written warning (not usually considered sufficient but sometimes appropriate for a first major offence or where the student seems truly to have realised the implications of their actions). This would often be combined with another sanction eg Head's detention or in-school tasks.
- Final or 'first and final' written warning (quite a likely sanction, warning that further repetitions of the same or related offence(s) will render the student liable to exclusion. This would often be combined with another sanction).
- Suspension for a defined period of time. (This may mean temporary exclusion from the school premises or 'internal suspension' where a student is removed from their classes and supervised elsewhere in the building. A variation may be attendance at lessons but separate supervision during non-teaching time including break and lunch time or special supervision during a public or internal examination period. Meaningful work will be provided for the student to complete throughout the duration of any internal suspension.)
- A Home-School Contract. (Binding rules of behaviour and work ethic drawn up by the school for each individual and signed by both the student and their parents. It includes a clause specifying that failure to adhere to it may lead to permanent exclusion.)
- Permanent exclusion (the student will be removed from the school register following due process and requirements and will not be permitted to return to school).

## **Appeals Procedure**

In the case of permanent exclusion or temporary exclusion longer than one continuous week off school premises, the parents have the right of appeal by making written representation to the Chair of Governors within 15 working days when the school is in session of the date of receipt of the formal written notice of the disciplinary action from the Head. The notice of appeal should set out the reasons for the appeal. The Chair of Governors will constitute a panel from among the Governing Council to hear the appeal as soon as is practically possible. The outcome of the appeal will be communicated in writing within 10 working days while the school is in session. This outcome is final.

## **Use of Force to Control or Restrain Students**

Detailed guidance is provided by the Department for Education on the use of reasonable force in schools. Members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to prevent students committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property and to maintain good order and discipline at the school or among pupils. This power does not permit the use of corporal punishment, which is illegal in all circumstances, nor does it permit the use of inappropriate force.

## Appendix: principles governing search and confiscation

In very rare cases it may be necessary to conduct a search, for example for a missing item that may have been taken as a prank, or for an item contrary to school rules such as e-cigarettes and vapes. Were a prohibited item suspected, a search might also be undertaken. Prohibited items are:

- knives and weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- 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 property of any person (including the student)
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks; and
- pornographic images

Any search will be limited to bags and lockers. It is extremely unlikely that clothing would be searched but if this were the case, only outer clothing would be searched.

Students are always advised and informed about how and why any search will take place. If students object to a search, staff will give the reasons consideration and consult with the DSL or Head. In almost all circumstances any such case would also be discussed with parents. Parents will always be informed of any search for a prohibited item and would generally be informed of any search of possessions.

Further guidance on searches in education settings is provided in *Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools*, DfE, 2022. The provisions in this appendix follow that guidance and it will also apply in all circumstances beyond the scope of this appendix. In complex and sensitive areas of practice, such as search where the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes or semi-nudes is suspected, staff should always pay due regard to specific sections of the guidance as appropriate.

### Confiscation

It may be necessary to confiscate items from time to time, for example where mobiles phones are being used in ways that breach School rules. Any confiscation will conform with DfE guidance and requirements.