

Meadowside School Behaviour Policy



Discipline- from the word 'disciple', meaning to guide with knowledge.

Written by Claire Dunn, February 2020

Rationale

Meadowside School prepares pupils to achieve a fulfilling adult life where they are able to access as many relevant opportunities as possible. In order to do this, they need to be as self-sufficient as possible when it comes to managing their own behaviour. Teaching pupils to self-manage is an integral part of the curriculum which promotes appropriate and relevant social skills to all pupils, allowing them to participate as fully as they are able, in the school, at home and in society. Supporting behaviour is most effectively done with consistency, high expectation and in line with the law. This policy outlines these expectations.

In light of the Covid 19 pandemic, these temporary amendments must be applied to this policy and will be reviewed regularly in line with Government, DfE and Public Health England advice. In due course, these considerations will be removed and the previous policy will stand.

- Incidents of challenging behaviour are likely to increase as pupils return to school, and, social distancing, reduced sensory support (because of limited space and resources) and some de-escalation techniques are likely to compound this further. To mitigate this, some PPE is available to school staff who may need to engage in restrictive physical intervention, staffing levels are relatively high, and parents have been asked to prepare their child as much as possible, for the changes in the school environment. Full PPE should be worn where RPI is necessary, staff should not wait to don PPE before intervening in an emergency, PPE should be worn if an incident is escalating and RPI looks likely.
- Dynamic and formal risk assessments of individual pupil needs and behaviour both in and out of school have been, and continue to be carried out.
- The DfE has issued some temporary changes to the practise relating to pupil exclusions from school. This mainly relates to timescales and virtual meetings. See 'Statutory guidance Changes to the school exclusion process during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak' Updated 29 May 2020.
- Parents need to exercise extra diligence when it comes to supplying their child's medication to school. If lack of medication is likely to increase the likelihood that unacceptable breaches of covid-19 precautions, the parent will be required to attend school to provide the medication, or the child may be required to accompany the parent home to take their medication before they can be brought back to school.
- Staff are required to keep up to date with Government guidance and the school risk assessment as they update, and apply the advice alongside this policy.

Principles

At Meadowside School it is recognised that there is no single strategy or technique for managing behaviour that meets all pupils' needs, and a strong and consistent approach is essential, using a risk-benefit, impact assessment strategy. Appropriate behaviour is vital in the school setting, in order to ensure that learning opportunities are maximised. This policy supports an ethos where:

- Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and become effective self-managers.

- Staff support pupils through establishing appropriate relationships, by promoting conventional or augmentative communication, consistently applying strategies and maintaining high expectations.
- Emphasis is placed on recognising appropriate behaviour.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop high self-esteem and self-discipline.
- The whole school community, including therapists, families and other agencies work to support the child holistically.
- Safeguarding is prioritised.

Implementation

Although there is a consistently high standard of behaviour required from all pupils, it is acknowledged that not all pupils are able to achieve this standard as readily as others, and therefore require a range of supportive strategies, which are tailor made to meet their individual need.

At Meadowside School we recognise that behaviour is a form of communication, and always seek to equip pupils with words, or augmentative communication that they can use instead of behaviour that challenges, to make their points heard.

Supporting pupils to behave appropriately must be done in a consistent manner. To ensure that this is possible, pastoral teachers write, in the first instance, Help Me/Supporting Strategy Sheets, and then, if further support is required (as identified through careful data analysis or a Challenging Behaviour Assessment), a Personal Support Plans (PSP's). These are kept up to date and shared with relevant people. The documents are written following consultation with the pastoral team, or other members of school staff, and the pupil where appropriate, before being agreed with parents (a signed copy of the plan is kept in the office on the child's file, an electronic copy is uploaded onto School Pod). They are based on careful analysis of behaviour slips which are logged on the web based system School Pod. The pastoral tutor analyses the data and decides which behaviour needs to be targeted as a priority. There is no prescription for which behaviours are prioritised, but pastoral teachers consider duration, impact, severity and frequency of behaviours, before making their decision. It is most effective to address the most challenging behaviours as a priority, rather than to overwhelm the child with trying to deal with all of them at once. Behaviour support documentation is reviewed on a termly basis, or whenever there is a significant change in behaviour, whichever is sooner.

In order to build a sound evidence base, it is vital that staff log all behavioural incidents relating to an individual child. In the main, this should be on School Pod. Where there are a lot of incidents, or behaviour is relatively minor, yet concerning, pastoral teachers can use a paper based logging sheet to collect information, for a maximum period of one week. Once a PSP has been written and a 'baseline behaviour' has been established, recording of an individual's behavioural incidents can be personalised. In line with the law, **ALL** incidents which include restrictive physical intervention (RPI), must be logged on School Pod, which is our 'bound book', regardless of whether or not they are also logged on a paper based system. Incidents must be logged as soon as possible, and always within 24 hours.

Meadowside School recognises that proactive approaches are the most effective way to support and promote appropriate behaviour. All members of staff model the

desired behaviour at all times. Following consultation with staff and pupils in November 2019, the Meadowside School rules are:

Be here
Behave
Be ready to learn

Those consulted felt that the new rules were memorable, and covered all aspects of positive behaviour, including school's the Anti-Bullying message.

In order to support pupils to follow the school rules, a calm atmosphere, which is conducive to engagement and learning is required. To ensure that this is possible all classrooms:

- Are as organised and as tidy as possible
- Visual, and other clutter is kept to a minimum
- Visual schedules and symbols to support communication and understanding

Lessons are:

- Engaging and use resources which appeal to individual interests and learning styles
- Well planned and organised
- Accurately pitched, and challenging in a 'low threat' manner.
- Places where active listening and turn taking are taught and promoted.

The school adopts an individual approach to positive reinforcement. The varying needs of the pupils necessitates a reward system that will celebrate and incentivise their positive behaviour. Staff will choose the rewards they consider most appropriate for individual pupils, and are invited to be creative, rewarding pupils in ways which are most appropriate to their learning environment, without compromising any planned strategies. Acceptable rewards include the following:

- Verbal praise
- Dojo's.
- Choice of favourite activity
- Tangible reward e.g. Stickers, stars, special job.
- Going to someone else for praise e.g. Head Teacher.
- Special mentions, certificates or stickers to be awarded in assembly
- Notes, phone calls or other communication with home, which is especially important where pupils have communication difficulties.
- Special treats/outings/events
- Short periods of 'free choice'

It is acknowledged that de-escalating behavioural incidents is not always straightforward, but it is the primary focus of staff to preserve the dignity, wellbeing and learning of all pupils. It is occasionally necessary to support a pupil in crisis by using restrictive physical intervention (RPI). RPI is used as a last resort, and for the shortest, most infrequent way possible. All permanent, employed school staff are trained in Team Teach, which uses a 95% de-escalation, 5% physical intervention approach. Team Teach trains staff to use physical intervention safely, only once, all methods of de-escalation have been exhausted. We acknowledge that sometimes our pupils require staff to 'go the extra mile', so when it comes to de-escalation, if dancing will help, we dance! Training is refreshed regularly, in accordance with the recommendations of the provider, and staff who are not physically able to carry out the 5% physical intervention, are still required to carry out the 95% de-escalation.

The use of RPI must only be used as is reasonable, proportionate and necessary. Meadowside School is compliant with the DfE guidance on the use of reasonable force. *Use of Reasonable Force, DfE, July 2013*

Occasions when it is reasonable, proportionate and necessary to use RPI:

- To separate a fight between pupils (when a verbal warning has been given but not responded to)
- To keep a pupil or pupils safe
- To prevent significant damage to property
- To keep staff or visitors safe
- To preserve the learning environment
- When searching a non-compliant pupil for the following items:
 - 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

Restraint cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules e.g. mobile phones.

Following an incident of challenging behaviour, particularly where RPI has been used, it is essential that both staff and pupils are given the opportunity to debrief. For staff, this may mean taking a short break, getting a drink, being checked by a first aider, or having a conversation with a critical friend, present at the time of the incident, about how the incident unfolded and was dealt with; this is an evaluative process which may lead to alterations being made to a child's PSP. Pupil debrief is personalised to the needs and cognition of the child, and is aimed at repairing relationships and reducing the likelihood of further incidents. It is not punitive and should not happen at a time likely to escalate behaviour again.

Sanction

Meadowside is working towards becoming a sanction free school. Behaviour is best improved through good relationships and pupil accessible communication, so teaching these skills, is far more impactful, and conducive to lifelong learning, than punishing a child. In reality, in the workplace, adults are more likely to spend their lunch breaks redoing a substandard piece work, than sitting outside their boss's office because of poor performance.

Traditional Sanctions	Meadowside's preferred alternatives
Detention or thinking time	Using break or lunchtime to catch up on missed learning, improve work or attitudes towards learning, or learn new strategies alongside a member of staff.
Sending pupils out of class	Finding a quiet space/alternative work space, preferably inside the classroom, where lesson tasks or calming strategies

	can be carried out in the setting they are designed to be used in.
Removing privileges, or exclusion from treats, educational visits and special events.	Earning privileges or places on offsite visits in a supportive, pre-planned way. (Pupils may be excluded from activities where their behaviour is likely to pose risk to others or, in the case of offsite visits, the school's reputation, but in these incidences, previous offsite behaviour needs to be considered). SLT must be consulted 2 weeks in advance of a pupil being excluded from a planned educational activity on the grounds of behaviour.
Phone calls home with expectation that parents apply sanctions.	Phone calls home to report positive or improved behaviour, where effective strategies are shared; or, phone calls home to inform parents about behaviour, in order that they anticipate the mood their child might return home in, and to promote a transparent and consistent approach.
Banning pupils from favoured/specific lessons.	Including pupils in a broad and balanced curriculum, particularly lessons where pupils have success and engage well (exceptions may be made in light of specific risks e.g. swimming or cookery)
Segregation or isolation, particularly in a locked room.	Segregation of any sort is not permitted, and the use of a locked room is also <u>strictly forbidden</u> . Pupils may be encouraged to make use of alternate learning spaces, and in order to minimise risk, staff make effective use of space to keep pupils apart in order to avoid triggers, or potential bullying. In some cases, pupils may be directed or escorted to the Mellow Room or other space, in order to maintain the learning environment, reduce risk to others, and preserve their dignity.
Restraint	Using restraint in any form, as a sanction, is <u>prohibited</u> . Restraint is used when considered reasonable, proportionate and necessary in accordance with the law.
Exclusion from school	Fixed term exclusions may be used as a last resort. It is preferable to keep a child within the school community where possible. Where exclusion is deemed the best option in terms of impact, consideration to the safeguarding and welfare of the child and their family must be considered. Meadowside School does not exclude children or young people who demonstrate challenging behaviour which is likely to result from their diagnosed needs or disabilities. See separate Exclusions

Using materials which offend or repulse a child, expose them to the elements, or cause them discomfort in order to discourage or threaten is **not permitted**. It is especially important to consider this when supporting a child with specific sensory needs, who may find discomfort in things that others do not.

Humiliation of any kind, including name calling 'in jest' or otherwise, **is prohibited**.

Photographing, recording (or threatening to) a child displaying inappropriate behaviour is not allowed, for the purposes of collecting evidence, sharing with parents or otherwise. On very rare occasions, it is acknowledged that debrief or post incident learning, may be supported by footage of challenging behaviour. Where this is the case, any recording must be agreed with SLT and signed consent must be gained from the parent **and** the child *PRIOR* to any recordings being made.

Basic Needs

Proactive behaviour management strategies prioritise a child's basic needs as it is recognised that unmet needs may lead to challenging behaviour. As standard, staff endeavour to ensure all basic needs are met and always consider the impact of the following:

- Hunger
- Thirst
- Poor diet
- Pain
- Illness
- Effects of medication or lack of it.

Denying a child their basic needs as a result of their behaviour is not permitted. For example, if a child is in crisis over lunchtime, food will be made available to them at another time; it may not be possible to offer a hot dinner, or a preferred choice of food, but a child will not go hungry, other than by their own choice.

Resources

Staff are invited to be creative when it comes to resourcing behavioural support, and resources are most effective when personalised for the child e.g. with a favourite colour or cartoon character.

Relevant staff training and CPD is available through the CPD budget and application procedure. Staff are invited to apply for any CPD which may be relevant to behavioural support, whether that is directly to learn new behaviour management strategies, or communication approaches, planning, or condition-specific ones which may support an individual, or whole groups of pupils.

The Mellow Room is available as both a proactive and reactive resource for supporting behaviour. It is not an isolation room and pupils are **never** shut inside the room without an adult. Use of the Mellow Room is logged in a log book which is monitored by SLT. Use of the Mellow Room is listed as a strategy in Help Me Sheets or PSP's where it is used regularly. The Mellow Room is a positive, multi-use space where pupils are encouraged to calm, and engage in learning, they are encouraged to ask to access the Mellow Room as a proactive self-management strategy.

The Learning Mentor is available part time, to offer both proactive and reactive behavioural support.

All staff are required to read and know individual pupil's behaviour support paperwork. In order to facilitate this, they are allocated paid break times where they

are not required to directly support pupils, and have time at the beginning or end of the school day where behaviour paperwork can be read.

Equality Impact Assessment

This Behaviour Policy should be read alongside other relevant Meadowside School policies. It has been written with the 2010 Equalities Act (and its March 20 updates) in mind. Pupils at Meadowside School are treated with consistency and high standards are expected of all. In order to achieve these for all pupils, they are treated with sensitivity towards their individual needs, characters and rights. We recognise that treating people equally does not mean treating them in the same way.

Workload Impact Assessment

This policy makes no additional demands on staff time. Whilst detailed and specific data collection, analysis and paperwork is required in some instances, a graded response is described which prefers small, high impact input in the first instance.

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Behaviour Lead.

This policy should be used in conjunction with, the school's Anti-Bullying and Pupil Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy, the Exclusion Policy, and the 2020 statutory guidance- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

