

Oakley Lower School

Discipline & Behaviour Policy

Ethos & Rationale

Learning to live and work together in the school community is an important preparation for responsible citizenship. Considerate behaviour and courtesy towards others are essential elements to the success with which a child forms relationships in and out of school and to later success in life. We are concerned that our children learn to behave responsibly and thoughtfully, develop respect for people, place and property and value the efforts and achievements of others. We believe that, through a close working relationship between home and school, problems should be dealt with as soon as possible. "School rules" should be based upon a cooperative, commonsense approach to specific circumstances and situations and relate more specifically to the safety and security of the children.

Children are encouraged to be responsible for their own behaviour and to consider the feelings of others.

The school expects high standards of behaviour, both within the classroom and on the playground. Children are made aware if their behaviour has been unkind or thoughtless to others. Bullying is not tolerated in any shape or form, whilst concern and respect for other people is vital to the philosophy and ethos of the school.

Policy

It is the policy of Oakley Lower School to:

- ensure staff and governors recognise the need to create a positive atmosphere, based on the sense of community and shared values to which we aspire.
- provide a safe, welcoming, friendly and caring school where individuals are valued for their own unique contribution and personality.
- promote skills of self-confidence, self-discipline, self-motivation and self-awareness.
- Foster social skills, such as positive attitudes and considerate behaviour towards others.
- develop mutual respect for adults and children alike, where all feel able to speak openly and honestly about their feelings and concerns.
- provide a consistent approach throughout the school.

Practice

Role of the Headteacher

- The Headteacher has overall pastoral responsibility for both children and staff.
- The Headteacher makes every effort to become informed and involved about individual strengths and weaknesses, personalities and friendships within the school community.
- The Headteacher works in consultation with the governing body to define the aims of the school in relation to standards of behaviour, as defined in the home/school agreement.
- The Headteacher ensures that the standards of behaviour are applied consistently throughout the school by regular monitoring and talking to individual staff members, and by supporting staff when discipline problems occur.
- The Headteacher has an important role in modelling the types of behaviour encouraged by the school policy to both staff and pupils.

Role of Staff

The attitude of staff is of great importance. It is they who, in the end, determine the environment in which good staff/pupil relationships can develop.

Staff are expected to :

- set the right standards to pupils in matters of dress, punctuality, commitment and behaviour - thus leading by example.
- consider themselves responsible at all times for the behaviour of all children within sight or sound of them, for discipline is indivisible and those who ignore bad behaviour because they are not on duty or are not teaching cannot expect to have the respect of pupils or be able to establish the right relationships in class.
- recognise and praise good behaviour as well as dealing with bad behaviour.
- participate in maintaining a whole school approach to promoting good behaviour.
- recognise that personal and social education is important as a means of promoting the values of mutual respect, self-discipline and social responsibility, which underlie good behaviour.
- recognise the importance of their pastoral role.
- model the types of behaviour encouraged by the school policy.
- apply rules consistently, recognising that there must be flexibility in the use of sanctions to take account of individual circumstances.

Boredom, lack of understanding and lack of challenge are major reasons why some pupils misbehave. The provision of a relevant and appropriate curriculum, the use of inspiring and motivating teaching methods and the full involvement of all pupils are important pointers to achieving good discipline and behaviour.

Similarly, outside the classroom it is desirable that teachers provide opportunities for pupils to be engaged in activities rather than to complain of misbehaviour which can result when pupils are bored.

Role of Children

Staff acknowledge the need to take pupils' views into account and the need to consult with pupils on modification and changes to the policy.

Children elect representatives to serve on the School Council. All children are invited to submit items for the agenda.

Children should:

- be aware of the school rules and reasons for them.
- be aware of rewards and sanctions available and the general circumstances in which they will be used.

Code of Conduct:

- I will be kind and friendly.
- I will be careful not to hurt anyone.
- I will talk quietly and be ready to learn by listening and asking questions.
- I will tell someone if I am worried about any part of my life in school.
- I will take good care of the equipment and our school building.

School Strategies for Promoting Good Behaviour

Positive ways in which staff can assist in raising standards of behaviour may be demonstrated by:

- immediate checking by all staff of minor offences, requiring only a look or a quiet word, which often prevents more major problems from developing.

- recognising pupils' non-academic achievements as well as the academic ones and encouraging children to be proud of strengths in other areas.
- emphasising the positive, including praise for good behaviour as well as good work.
- taking full account of the implications of pupil behaviour when reviewing grouping arrangements.
- paying attention to furniture layout to minimise disruption.
- being enthusiastic and using humour to create a positive classroom discipline.
- explaining rules for classroom behaviour clearly to children and stating why they are necessary.
- encouraging active participation of pupils in shaping and reviewing the school's behaviour policy through the School Council.
- allocation of a designated ball play area, also the provision of a small skills/games box for use at playtime.
- use of children as "helpers" on a rota basis.
- using a reward scheme and providing extra responsibilities for year 4 children e.g. bell monitors, music centre monitors etc.
- arriving promptly in the playground at the start of sessions.
- using assemblies and story/circle times to illustrate and discuss behaviour issues.
- Using the home school communication book for Special Needs Pupils.

Poor behaviour may stem from personal problems or difficulties. To sanction the bad behaviour and ignore the reasons for it, will have only a short term effect and will not provide a lasting solution. It is important, therefore, to look for the reasons; both a child-centred approach to teaching and a good pastoral system will help to maintain good discipline.

Opportunities will be taken, particularly with troublesome children, to suggest strategies for more positive behaviour patterns. Social skills work may be undertaken with some children. It is important that, during discussions, the child should understand that it is their behaviour that is undesirable, not the child who is "bad".

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Staff acknowledge the need to arrange for assessment of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties at the earliest stage, so that their needs can be met and so that other pupils' learning is disrupted as little as possible and safety is not compromised. Staff, parents and governors will be kept fully informed. Admission requests from parents may not be refused to a child with behavioural difficulties if they are resident in the catchment area.

The aim of pastoral support is to prevent poor behaviour, rather than merely react to it with sanctions. The school establishes close relationships with external support services, such as the Educational Welfare, Educational Behavioural Difficulties Team, Psychological, Social and Community Services and the Police, so that this background understanding of the needs of the child and the provision of suitable support can be achieved. The Local Authority guidelines on the exclusion of pupils will be adhered to (see policy). Pastoral Support Programmes are used if appropriate.

The school is a participant in the Healthy Schools Initiative. There is a school council and this is a vehicle for pupils to participate in the monitoring and review of discipline.

P.S.H.E. activities are an important vehicle for considering general behaviour issues / attitudes towards others / personal responsibility. Rules of Conduct are reviewed on a regular basis during a P.H.S.E. session.

Sanctions & Rewards

School staff acknowledge the need to specify clearly rewards and sanctions and to make these (particularly rewards) accessible at all ability levels. Sanctions should make the distinction between minor and more serious misbehaviour clear to children and should be applied fairly and consistently. At all times staff will endeavour to be fair and consistent, to use sanctions sparingly and to discuss the situation with the child/children.

Rewards

All opportunities should be used to praise good work, behaviour and effort.

The following rewards may be used:-

1. Commendations and positive remarks, both oral and written.
2. Personal contact at the end of school with parents to praise good behaviour.
3. Use of stars or merit stickers - at the discretion of individual teachers.
4. Showing work to other children, staff or headteacher. Children may be sent to the headteacher for an "achievement award" each child receives a special sticker and a certificate that is presented during Friday assembly.
5. Making a special copy of work to take home.
6. Having work displayed in a prominent place.

Staff recognise that rewards need to cover the broadest range of academic and non-academic achievements. Rewards should also recognise / acknowledge an individual's best efforts. Appropriate support is given to pupils with E.B.D. Behaviour targets are included on IEPs. (Refer to SN policy).

Sanctions

Sanctions must be in an agreed hierarchy and linked to behaviour as far as possible; there may be occasions when it is felt necessary to jump the order.

At the school sanctions could take the following forms:-

1. Look.
2. Word or words with an explanation.
3. Being moved to a solitary position within class or to another group of children.
4. Withdrawal of privileges eg, occasionally missing out on a liked activity.
5. Missing of break or lunch time - children to work or sit in entrance hall.
6. Referral to senior staff member, Head or Deputy.
7. Parents are informed of a serious incident or persistent breaking of rules. They are informed face to face at the end of the day or over the telephone.
8. A letter is sent home and a copy is placed in the child's record folder to record the incident.
9. 'On Report' ie staff `reports' to parent at regular intervals commenting on good/bad behaviour.
10. Involvement of Special Needs Service.
11. Exclusion.

It is necessary to log sanctions taken and the reason from point 7 "A letter is sent home".

Bullying and Racial Harassment (see separate policy)

The Headteacher and staff will always be alert to signs of bullying and racial harassment.

1. Any behaviour of this type will be dealt with very firmly.
2. Action will be taken to protect and support victims and to discuss incidents with the perpetrators.
3. Pupils will be encouraged to tell staff about any incidents of bullying and racial harassment.

All incidents are logged

Role of Parents

The staff acknowledge that relationships with parents are important. The school should be a welcoming place, which encourages parental involvement.

Ways in which parents can be involved

Parents may be informed of positive behaviour as well as negative.

The school's policy on discipline is communicated fully and clearly to all parents. When the school has serious concerns regarding an individual pupil, parents will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the matter and their support will be sought.

Parents are expected to:

- make sure their child arrives at school on time for 8.55am start.
- make sure their child attends school regularly and contact the school before 8.45 am if they are going to be absent.
- let the school know about any concerns or problems that might affect their child's work or behaviour.
- attend Parents' Consultation Evenings to discuss their child's progress.
- support their child with work at home.
- support the school's policy to promote good behaviour.

Lunchtime and Playtime Supervision

At playtime a teacher and at least one other member of staff is on duty and the children know that they are to report any incidences of bad behaviour to them.

Lunchtime is a longer period of play. The senior supervisor is a teacher and is the liaison person with the midday supervisors. In-service training is offered periodically to give these supervisors more ideas for games to play with the children and strategies for responding to bad behaviour. A guidance booklet is given to all new midday supervisors. This booklet contains the discipline policy and other relevant policies. Incidents will be noted in the lunchtime file and the supervising teacher informed. Where two or more children are in disagreement or conflict the supervising member of staff should:

- take those involved to one side away from other children.
- listen to all children in turn.
- discuss the situation with the children and attempt to guide them to agreement/ a solution.

Where the situation cannot easily be resolved or in serious cases of indiscipline/violence the children involved should be sent/taken to the senior supervisor or the Head or Assistant Headteacher for a more detailed investigation. Should the Head or Assistant Headteacher take steps to resolve a situation or apply sanctions they will discuss the matter fully with the relevant staff.

Role of Outside Agencies

Staff acknowledge the need to liaise with the Education Welfare Officer, School Psychologist and District Inspector for advice on dealing with persistent behaviour problems. It is also intended to use

opportunities whenever available to promote good relationships with the police and to promote the development of school-police liaison projects.

Use of Buildings

Staff acknowledge the need to keep the school premises clean and well ordered in order to encourage the children to take a pride in their surroundings.

Within the school day care must be taken to avoid circulation bottlenecks eg coming into the hall for assembly or lunch. Staff should place themselves strategically when conducting pupils round the hall to ensure that the front and back of the line can be seen. Pupils are expected to walk round the building at all times whether in line or in pairs/groups. At assembly time they must enter the hall in silence and sit silently in their places, listening to the music. At the end of assembly pupils must sit in silence until their teacher collects the class.

Staff on duty must establish good sightlines for the supervision of pupils.

All staff must acknowledge their responsibility to reprimand pupils for bad behaviour and breaking school rules in and around the building: no such actions can be ignored.

School approaches to continued misbehaviour – Pre exclusion

When a child persistently misbehaves –

- The individual needs of the child are assessed. External factors and special needs must be taken into account and, where relevant, should be dealt with.
- Staff assess the classroom organisation and the curriculum being presented to the child to ensure that this is not the cause of the persistent misbehaviour.
- Parents are informed of the problem at the earliest possible opportunity. These lines of communication must be kept open. This is vital to ensure that the school retains the trust of the family in all that may follow.
- Instances of misbehaviour should be recorded and centrally logged. This should be available to all professionals who work with the child. The parents/carers of the child must be fully informed and have right of access to any information recorded. Use of a central log ensures access for professionals and improves transfer of information from one setting to another.
- External agencies should be involved in supporting staff and pupils when dealing with persistent instances of exceptionally anti-social or violent behaviour.
- The class teacher holds responsibility to ensure the Behaviour Log is completed when relevant, although this may be delegated to another member of staff to complete, eg a Teaching Assistant working directly with the child.
- When appropriate the SEBSS team and Educational Psychologist should be involved for support and guidance.
- Governors should be kept informed at Governors' Meetings of any child causing problems through repeated misbehaviour. The Inclusion Officer should be consulted at an early stage for advice on practice and procedure.
- If a child continues to misbehave and show no respect for the school community it may be necessary to use exclusion as a means to improving behaviour. There is an acceptance that the school only uses this as a last resort for extremely bad behaviour.

Alternatives to exclusion

A number of options may be available in response to a serious breach of behaviour policy:

- **Restorative justice**, which enables the offender to redress the harm that has been done to a 'victim' and enables all parties with a stake in the outcome to participate fully in the process. All the professionals need to be thoroughly involved in the process and this can only work with the consent of all parties.
- **Mediation** through a third party, usually a trained mediator, is another approach that may lead to a satisfactory outcome, particularly where there has been conflict between two parties, e.g. a pupil and a teacher, or two pupils.
- **Internal exclusion** which can be used to defuse situations that occur in schools that require a pupil to be removed from class but may not require removal from the school premises. The internal exclusion could be to a designated area within the school, with appropriate support and supervision, or to another class on a temporary basis, and may continue during break periods. Internal exclusion should be for the shortest time possible and should be subject to review.
- **Managed move** to another school to enable the pupil to have a fresh start in new school. The head teacher may ask another head teacher to admit the pupil. This should only be done with the full knowledge and co-operation of all the parties involved, including the parents, governors and the LA, and in circumstances where it is in the best interests of the pupil concerned.

At Oakley Lower School, the process towards exclusion follows the guidelines for all schools set down in the DFES Document Improving Behaviour and Attendance: guidance on exclusions from schools and pupil referral units September 2008.

The decision to exclude

A decision to exclude a pupil permanently should be taken only:

- in response to serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and
- if allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

Only the Headteacher can exclude a child

The Chair of Governors will be kept informed by letter within a working day should misbehaviour result in exclusion.

A decision to exclude a pupil for a fixed period should be taken, on a balance of probabilities, only in response to breaches of the school's behaviour policy (including persistent disruptive behaviour) where these are not serious enough to warrant permanent exclusion and lesser sanctions (such as detention) are considered inappropriate. Individual fixed period exclusions should be for the shortest time necessary, bearing in mind that exclusions of more than a day or two make it more difficult for the pupil to reintegrate into the school afterwards. Ofsted inspection evidence suggests that 1–3 days are often long enough to secure the benefits of exclusion without adverse educational consequences. Where it is clear that fixed period exclusions are not being effective in deterring poor behaviour, for example if they are being repeatedly imposed on a pupil in response to the same behaviour, the head teacher will consider alternative strategies for addressing that behaviour.

A decision to exclude a child **permanently** is a serious one and should only be taken where the basic facts have been clearly established on the balance of probabilities. It will usually be the final step in a process for dealing with disciplinary offences following a wide range of other strategies which have been tried without success. It is an acknowledgement by the school that it has exhausted all available strategies for dealing with the child and should normally be used as a last resort.

There will, however, be exceptional circumstances where, in the head teacher's judgement, it is appropriate to exclude a child permanently for a first or 'one off' offence.

These might include:

- serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- sexual abuse or assault
- supplying an illegal drug
- carrying an offensive weapon

Length of fixed period exclusions

Regulations allow head teachers to exclude a pupil for one or more fixed periods which, when aggregated, do not exceed a total of 45 school days in any one school year. The limit of 45 school days applies to the pupil and not to the institution. Therefore, any days of fixed period exclusion served by the pupil in any school in the same school year will count towards the total. It is important therefore that, when a pupil transfers to a new school during the academic year, records of the fixed period exclusions a pupil has received and served so far during the current academic year are also transferred promptly to the new school. When imposing fixed period exclusions head teachers should bear in mind the guidance concerning duration and frequency. Exclusions may not be given for an unspecified period, for example until a meeting can be arranged.

Such a practice amounts to an indefinite exclusion for which no legal authority exists. A fixed period exclusion does not have to be for a continuous period: for example, a pupil may be normally attending school three days a week and an alternative establishment for the other two; so a five-day exclusion from the school could be for three days in one week and two days in the next week.

Lunchtime exclusion

Pupils whose behaviour at lunchtime is disruptive may be excluded from the school premises for the duration of the lunchtime period. Lunchtime exclusions are counted as one half of a school day for statistical purposes and to trigger governor/ management committee meetings so that parents can make representations. Lunchtime exclusions will not be counted towards the school's duty to provide full-time education from day six of a fixed period exclusion. Therefore lunchtime exclusions are not affected by the regulations on providing pupils with education from the sixth day of their exclusion. Taking into account the child's age and vulnerability, the head teacher should ensure that a parent/carer has been contacted and is available, if appropriate, to arrange collection and supervision of the pupil during the lunchtime exclusion. A lunchtime exclusion for an indefinite period, like any other indefinite exclusion, would not be lawful.

In the long term another strategy for dealing with the problem should be worked out. Arrangements should be made for pupils who are entitled to free school meals to receive their entitlement which may mean, for example, providing a packed lunch.

Procedures following a fixed period exclusion

The school's obligation to provide education continues and must be met during a fixed period exclusion. Where a pupil is given a fixed period exclusion of a duration of six school days or longer, the school has a duty to arrange suitable full-time educational provision from and including the sixth school day of the exclusion: this does not apply to pupils of non compulsory school age.

Monitoring:

The Headteacher monitors the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. She reports on the effectiveness of the policy to the Governing Body and makes recommendations for improvement.

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor the number of exclusions and to ensure that the school policy is administered fairly and consistently.

Review:

The Governing Body will review this policy every 3 years. They may review it earlier if the Government introduces new regulations or if they feel that it can be improved.

It is essential that Teaching Staff, Governors and Staff all work together at all stages to meet the needs of the child and avoid the need for disciplinary action.

Refer to:

DFES Document Improving Behaviour and Attendance: guidance on exclusions from schools and pupil referral units September 2008.

PSHE policy

Policy for the prevention of bullying and harassment

Policy for the supervision of pupils.

Mrs S Lovett

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