

Behaviour Policy, including Rewards & Sanctions

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Author: SMT
Last Amended: September 2020
Review: September 2021

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

School Mission Statement

Our Mission is:

'The rigorous pursuit of excellence, within and outside the classroom, combined with a passionate concern for each individual.'

We aim to achieve this by:

- a) Encouraging the growth of intellectual curiosity, creativity and independent learning whilst also focusing on examination preparation and success.*
- b) Recruiting and retaining high quality teaching staff, committed to continual professional development, who have expertise and high expectations of all pupils, who enjoy teaching and learning and who enable pupils to fulfil their academic potential.*
- c) Providing outstanding pastoral care and ensuring relationships and behaviour within the school are based on mutual respect within a supportive and safe environment.*
- d) Encouraging the development in each pupil of confidence and compassion, leadership and a concern for others, combined with the growth of resilience and good physical and mental health.*
- e) Offering excellent facilities and a wide range of extra-curricular activities which enable pupils to participate and to experience competition and collaboration, and which develop character and confidence as well as the enjoyment of artistic, cultural, intellectual and sporting interests.*
- f) Preparing pupils for life beyond school through an understanding of higher education and career opportunities, a development of collaborative and leadership skills, an understanding of core British values balanced by an appreciation of the diversity of the world and a sense of service and responsibility to the wider community.*
- g) Working in partnership with the Merchant Taylors' Girls' School, with parents and Alumni and the local community, for mutual benefit and support.*

The promotion of good behaviour is implicit in our Rewards System (see below) and in order to encourage pupils to meet our required standards we have a framework of rules which are enforced by a series of sanctions set out in the Rewards and Sanctions section of this policy.

Code of Conduct (see the relevant pages on Firefly)

The basis for all good behaviour is mutual respect. Pupils attending Merchant Taylors' have a right to expect a well-ordered environment which is conducive to study. This right can only be provided in circumstances where all individuals accept their obligation to honour the Code of Conduct.

The Head is entitled to exercise wide discretion in relation to our rules, policies and regime and will exercise those discretions in a reasonable and lawful manner, and with procedural fairness when the status of a pupil is at issue.

We attach importance to courtesy, integrity, good manners, good discipline and respect for the needs of others. Pupils are encouraged to take a full part in the activities of the School. They must attend school each school day, be punctual for school and lessons, work hard, be well-behaved and comply with school rules about the wearing of uniform.

The Head and other members of staff on the Head's behalf, will take all reasonable disciplinary or preventative action necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of each pupil and the School community as a whole. This policy applies to all pupils when they are on School premises, or in the care of the School or wearing School uniform, or otherwise representing or associated with the School. This policy also applies to pupils who are outside the care of the School and away from the School premises if their conduct is such as to cause serious damage to the reputation of the school, or injury or other loss to members of the School community.

Everyone has a right to feel secure and to be treated with respect, particularly the vulnerable. Harassment and bullying will not be tolerated. Our Anti-bullying policy is available on request and reinforces our expectations about behaviour. The school is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, gender, gender orientation or physical disability. Reasonable adjustments are made for all pupils with special educational needs/disabilities and pastoral leaders take into account these matters when considering the imposition of a sanction. (Our SEND policy sets these out in detail.)

We expect pupils to be ready to learn and to participate in school activities. We expect pupils to behave at all times in a manner that reflects the best interests of the whole community. In extreme circumstances this school has a Physical Intervention Policy, which is part of the Health & Safety Policy.

Involvement of Parents and Guardians

Parents and Guardians who accept a place for their child at Merchant Taylors' Boys' School undertake to uphold the school's policies and regulations, including this policy. They will support the school's values in matters such as attendance and punctuality, behaviour, uniform and appearance, standards of academic work, extra-curricular activities and homework.

Involvement of Pupils

Our experience shows that the ethos of and respect for the school is enhanced by listening to our pupils and by encouraging constructive suggestions from them, for example, via the School Council which holds weekly meetings to discuss various issues. The Peer Support system at MTBS has an important part to play in reducing misbehaviour (e.g., bullying) within the school. Pupils learn from their peer supporters the basis of mutual respect and consideration between pupils of different ages. Peer Supporters also provide a sympathetic ear and a means of communication for younger pupils who may be experiencing bullying, for example, but feel unable to tell an adult. This is promoted in our PSHE programme.

The Head and the staff undertake to apply any sanctions fairly, and, where appropriate, after due investigation has taken place. Sanctions may undergo reasonable change from time to time; but will not involve any form of unlawful or degrading activity. Corporal punishment is never used. Examples of sanctions include: detention [after school/ on Saturdays], withdrawal of privileges and assistance with domestic tasks such as collecting litter or suspension for a specified period, removal or exclusion. The school's policy on rewards and sanctions is at Appendix A.

Pupils' Transition

Due regard is given to the transition of pupils from the Boys' Junior School and neighbouring schools at 11+ and also for the support and encouragement of boys new to the school at other age groups. Pupils new to the school are met by the Form Tutor and Group Tutor and our values and expectations of behaviour clearly communicated. The relevant sections on Code of Conduct, Behaviour and Anti-bullying policies will be highlighted.

Teaching and Learning

Merchant Taylors' Boys' School aims to raise the aspirations of all of its pupils and to help them appreciate there are no barriers to their potential achievements both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. We celebrate success, emphasise the positive and deal with the negative in a sensitive and tactful way. Our teaching staff offer every child a high level of individual attention, together with consistent and helpful advice. In return, we expect every pupil to cooperate and to work hard.

Complaints

The school has a Complaints Procedure which is available on request if a complaint about the operation of our behaviour policy cannot be resolved informally.

APPENDIX A - REWARDS AND SANCTIONS

The rewards system and many of the sanctions which are issued are communicated to a boy and to his parents via Firefly. Rewards and sanctions issued to a boy are visible on his Firefly Dashboard.

All boys and staff should be familiar with the Code of Conduct (displayed in all Form Rooms) and School Rules as well as the Uniform Regulations. General pastoral care of the boys is the responsibility of every member of staff and all staff are expected to play their part in seeing that good order is maintained about the school e.g. along the corridors at the changeover of lessons.

More specifically each boy is cared for by his Form Tutor who monitors academic progress, extra-curricular activities, behaviour within school and general physical and emotional well-being. Concerns over individual boys are shared at a weekly staff meeting, if appropriate. Boys may be put 'on report' for a variety of reasons but often to monitor behaviour / work over a short period such as 2 weeks. Parents will be informed if their son is put on report.

The Aims of our Rewards System

To provide a system in which different types of pupil achievement can be recognised and rewarded in school.

There are four types of rewards:

- Merchant Star - Given by teaching staff good contribution to school life
- Head of Department Star - Given for excellent academic work by departments
- Head of Year Star - Given for excellent pastoral contribution
- Headmaster Star - Given for outstanding contribution to school life

Heads of Year often run Reward competitions for highly rewarded students. Form Tutors will monitor the rewards received by boys in their forms and recommend them for further praise to Heads of Year.

SANCTIONS:

Good discipline requires a framework of rules which are sensible, defensible and clearly understood. This needs to be enforced by sanctions which are generally regarded as being fair in the sense that the punishment fits the crime. Sanctions may also be used for poor or late academic work. The School will consider whether the behaviour under review gives cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this may be the case, school staff should follow the schools' safeguarding policy. They should also consider whether continuing disruptive behaviour might be the result of unmet educational or other needs. At this point, the school should consider whether a multi-agency assessment is necessary.

Guidance is issued to all staff about appropriate levels of sanctions and who should administer them.

At Merchant Taylors' the following sanctions are employed:

Verbal reprimand:

This is by far the most common sanction employed and is usually sufficient.

Late and/or unsatisfactory work slips:

These are issued by subject teachers for work which is late or unsatisfactory. These are set up on the teacher portal and when set these are sent automatically by email to the form tutor, group tutor, then Reception for posting home. (There are bound to be differences in view about what constitutes unsatisfactory work and, similarly, what constitutes late work. It is neither possible nor desirable to introduce tight guidelines; however, it is expected that subject teachers will only put in slips for work which is significantly unsatisfactory and that they will give at least one "chance" with regard to late work.)

When the form tutor has received 3 or more slips from different teachers, he or she will see the boy concerned and is likely to tell him that any further transgressions will result in detention (school work to be set). If slips come from the same teacher, the form tutor will discuss the situation with the subject teacher. The form tutor will keep the slips until the end of the year.

Temporary removal from lessons

On rare occasions, when a pupil is being extremely uncooperative and undermining the learning of the remainder of the class, a teacher may require a pupil to wait outside the classroom, for a short 'cooling off' period, which should not exceed 5 minutes in duration.

Such an action by the member of staff, invariably following a verbal reprimand, should be a last resort and as such is a serious sanction. Whenever a pupil is required to leave the classroom, the form tutor and group tutor must be informed at the earliest opportunity so that parents can be informed, and further sanctions such as a detention can be administered. A blue form should always accompany such an action to confirm the communication and outcomes with the parents. If the same pupil is required to leave a classroom twice in a term, a formal meeting with the Deputy Head Academic, the Head of Department (and if necessary the Group Tutor) and the pupil's parents should be arranged at the earliest opportunity, to directly address the unacceptable behaviour of the pupil.

Report book

Boys may be put 'on report' for either academic reasons, e.g. consistent failure to produce or complete work or for continual poor behaviour in lessons. The parent or guardian will be contacted about this arrangement and will be asked to read the subject comments on their son's effort, progress or behaviour on a daily basis and sign off the page. The Group Tutor will issue the Report Book on a weekly basis and the comments made by the teaching staff and/or parent or guardian will be monitored by the relevant Form Tutor.

Subject teachers' private detentions, Lower School detention and Middle School work sessions:

Teachers may use their own private detentions for poor work, or for disciplinary infringements which are insufficiently serious for main school detention. There is not a ban on group detentions, but they should only be used as a last resort.

The Head of Lower School may occasionally operate a lunchtime detention for poor work/homework/behaviour as required and in the Middle School an extra work session may operate during lunchtime, specifically for those whose homework is inadequate. There may also be other organised detentions which will be supervised by a detention team, into which teachers may place boys as a more serious sanction than their own detention. Attendance at these detentions will be recorded and boys who are placed in such detentions on more than one occasion can expect the school to contact their parents to discuss their repeated poor behaviour / work.

COVID-19: Where detentions are not practical/available, Heads of Year and Group Tutors will set additional written work as a sanction. Parents will be informed and encouraged to support their son so that he completes the work at home to the best of his ability.

Plenty of notice must be given to the parents if boys are to be kept in after school (the fact that a boy might miss one of the school buses if he is put in detention should not, in itself, dissuade a colleague from using this form of sanction, as long as sufficient notice is given; as a last resort, staff may have to put a boy/boys in a taxi at the parents' expense.) School staff should not issue a detention where they know that doing so would compromise a child's safety or if the pupil has known caring responsibilities which mean that the detention is unreasonable.

A list of extra-curricular activities by year group will be posted on the Common Room notice board and subject teachers are asked where possible to avoid using lunchtimes when a particular year group have a games practice or drama/music rehearsal. Clashes will be resolved by the Group Tutors.

Head of Year Detention

Heads of Year Detentions run on a Tuesday lunchtime, 12.40 – 1.20pm. These are supervised by Heads of Year, Group Tutors and Deputy Heads. Boys are placed into these detentions by Heads of Year for persistent minor misdemeanours, repeated unsatisfactory work or for other disciplinary incidents which do not warrant a Main School Detention. Parents will be informed that a boy has been placed in a Head of Year detention and a record will be placed on a boy's file.

COVID-19: While measures are in place to keep bubbles of boys separate from each other, the Head of Year Detention will not be applied, as it is often a gathering of boys from different Year Groups. However, we retain the option of running a Head of Year detention if it can be guaranteed to be COVID secure (only one Year group present).

Main School Detention:

There is School detention weekly from 4.15 pm to 5.15 pm on Tuesdays. Teachers may also hold private detentions either at lunch time or after School. Where boys are kept behind after School at least 24 hours' notice must be given. In the case of School detention parents are informed of the circumstances involved and sign an appropriate slip. If a boy is absent on the day of the detention, then the punishment should be carried forward to the following week. No Sixth Former should be placed in school detention without consultation with the Head of Sixth Form.

COVID-19: While measures are in place to keep bubbles of boys separate to each other, the arrangements for Main School Detentions will be modified. Year Group bubbles will be kept apart by running separate detentions for each Year Group from Years 7-10. Two Year Group Main School Detentions will operate each Tuesday (Years 7&8 one week and Years 9&10 the next). These detentions will take place in the classrooms used by each Year Group.

Group Tutors' Detention:

Group Tutors/Deputy Heads may put boys in extra detention for behaviour which is too serious for detention on Tuesday after school, but not serious enough for suspension. If a boy misses a Tuesday detention without proper excuse, the ordinary detention would very likely become an extra detention. (The Group Tutor would be responsible for taking the appropriate action.)

Group Tutors' detentions are held after school on most evenings for between 1½ and 2 hours or on other days which are free for boys, but when staff are in school. Boys are required to wear school uniform and will be set appropriate tasks to do by the Group Tutor/Deputy Head.

The Sixth Form:

The Extra Study Period (ESP) is for Sixth Formers who fail to hand in appropriate work on time; its purpose is not to punish, but to help students discipline themselves. It will operate between 4.15-5.15 pm in the Sixth Form Centre on Tuesdays and take precedence over extra-curricular activities, the CCF, rehearsals, practices etc. 24 hours' notice is not required for extra-study periods.

Where boys are behind with work, it is quite appropriate for Sixth Form teachers to require them to sit in the back of Lower and Middle School classes which are being taught by the teacher involved.

Suspension from School:

This is regarded as a very serious punishment. Its length depends on the seriousness of the offence and in all cases parents are informed in writing and should discuss the situation with either the Head or a Deputy Head.

External suspension means that a boy is sent home. Once the decision has been made to apply this sanction the school will contact the parents by telephone to tell them that their son has been suspended. A letter must be written to parents explaining the circumstances and they will be invited to meet the Head (or the Deputy Head if the Head is not available) when the term of suspension has been served. The boy concerned must be given the equivalent of six hours work per day during the suspension period. A note is placed on the Common Room Notice Board, explaining briefly why the boy was suspended and when he is returning. A note is placed on file explaining the full circumstances surrounding the incident.

Expulsion:

In certain very rare circumstances it may be necessary for a boy to be expelled or excluded permanently from School, in which case the Chair of Governors must be informed.

When sending a boy home, it is always important, even if the boy is in the Sixth Form, to ensure that he is in a proper state of mind to leave our care (if a boy is extremely upset, it would not be a good idea to send him home, even a Sixth Former, until he has calmed down). Boys below the Sixth Form must not be sent home unless the School has previously contacted the parents by telephone and is certain that the boy is getting home safely. In most cases his parents will come to pick him up.

Parents may ask for a Governors' Review of a decision to expel or require the removal of the pupil from the School (but not a decision to suspend the Pupil unless the suspension is for 11 School days or more, or would prevent the pupil taking a public examination). The request must be made as soon as possible and in any event within seven working days of the decision being notified to parents. Parents will be informed of the names of the Governors who make up the Review Panel and may ask for the appointment of an independent panel member nominated by the School and approved by the Parent (approval not to be unreasonably withheld).

The Head will advise the Parents of the procedure (current at the time) under which such a Governors' Review will be conducted. The panel will consist of up to three Governors (including an independent member, if requested) but not the Chair of Governors. If Parents request a Governors' Review, the Pupil will be suspended from School until the decision to expel or remove has been set aside or upheld. While suspended the Pupil shall remain away from School and will have no right to enter School premises during that time without written permission from the Head. A Governors' Review will be conducted under fair procedures in accordance with the requirements of natural justice.

Searching pupils:

School staff can search pupils with their consent for any item.

The Head and staff authorised by the Head have the power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they suspect the pupil has a 'prohibited item'. Prohibited items are:

- Knives and weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Electronic cigarettes and associated equipment
- 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

Weapons and knives, drugs and extreme or child pornography must always be handed over to the police, otherwise it is for the teacher to decide if and when to return a confiscated item.

Use of reasonable force:

All school staff have the authority to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom. Further details can be found in the Physical Intervention Policy.

Malicious accusations against staff or boys will be treated with the utmost seriousness and may result in serious sanctions being imposed. However, boys making a genuine accusation or concern over the behaviour of staff or pupils will be offered support and advice by Form Tutors, Heads of Year and senior managers.

Reviewed September 2020 – D. Williams.