

West Cornforth Primary School



Behaviour Management Policy (including the use of reasonable force)

Reviewed October 2022
Ratified October 2022

West Cornforth Primary School operates a positive approach towards behaviour management. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own actions, make decisions for themselves based on a positive attitude towards others.

Aims and expectations

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected; each person is treated fairly and well. We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all. The school behaviour policy is therefore designed to support the way in which all members of the school can live and work together in a supportive way. It aims to promote an environment where everyone feels happy, safe and secure.

The school has a number of school roles and responsibilities, but the primary aim of the behaviour policy is not a system of enforcement, but a means of promoting good relationships, so that people can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone to take responsibility for their own actions and ultimately make progress in their own learning. This policy supports the school community in aiming to allow everyone to work and learn together in an effective and considerate way.

The school expects every member of the school community to behave in a considerate way towards others.

We treat all children in a firm but fair manner and apply this behaviour policy in a consistent way.

This policy aims to help children to grow in a safe and secure environment, and to become positive, responsible and increasingly independent members of the school community.

The school rewards good behaviour, as it believes that this will develop an ethos of kindness and co-operation. This policy is designed to promote good behaviour, rather than merely deter anti-social behaviour.

Rewards and sanctions

We praise and reward children for good behaviour in a variety of ways. We treat work and behaviour separately by rewarding a positive attitude towards each in separate ways.

Effort:

- Teachers congratulate children
- Teachers present stickers for individual sticker charts, give class group points, individual rewards, whole class rewards or awards from class baskets
- Pupils at the discretion of the teacher are sent to the headteacher to acknowledge good work completed and presented with HT stickers
- Each week several pupils are given the opportunity to choose a gift from the headteacher's basket during achievement assembly
- Each week one pupil is awarded 'Pupil of the Week'
- Pupils of the week are mentioned in the school newsletter and their photographs displayed in the corridor
- Teachers have 'achievement postcards' they can send home if/when a child completes either an outstanding piece of work or demonstrates excellent behaviour
- We operate a Class Dojo system (www.classdojo.com) where children create an online avatar character and receive green dojos for positive behaviours. This can be viewed in class and parents can also track their child at home using an online login. Weekly reports are sent home to children who have achieved a high score of green dojos.
- At the end of the academic year one pupil per year group is awarded 'pupil of the year' and their name is displayed on a plaque in school.
- If behaviour is exemplary for any reason parents are informed of such.

The school employs a number of sanctions to enforce the school rules, and to ensure a safe and positive learning environment is apparent.

Every behavioural incident is dealt with individually and sanctions are applied appropriately to each individual situation.

- If they behave in an inappropriate way (i.e. low-level fuss) they move up the traffic lights. If children reach the red light (after a number of warnings) they will be given a negative dojo. If children are given another warning they will lose a few minutes off their playtime.
- Pupils can earn back their time by behaving appropriately at the discretion of the teacher.

- If pupils constantly disrupt the learning environment, the headteacher will be informed and if necessary parents will be contacted.
- If pupils engage in threatening and violent behaviour towards others, parents will be invited into school to speak about the incident. Parent contracts may be agreed and written.
- When behaviour is physically aggressive and antisocial children may not be allowed to participate in certain non-compulsory 'extra-curricular' activities. For example, after school clubs. Parents/carers will be contacted.
- When behaviour is so antisocial and breaches the safety of others an exclusion procedure maybe followed. Parents/carers will be contacted and asked to visit the school.

Class teachers will discuss the school expectations with each class. In this way, every child in the school understands the expected standard of behaviour. If there are incidents of antisocial behaviour, the class teacher discusses these with the whole class. Behaviour management is part of the PSHCE curriculum and dealt with in the appropriate way for each individual year group.

The school does not tolerate bullying of any kind. If we discover that an act of bullying or intimidation has taken place, we act immediately to stop any further occurrences of such behaviour. While it is very difficult to eradicate bullying, we do everything in our power to ensure that all children attend school free from fear.

The Use of Reasonable Force

All members of staff are aware of the regulations regarding the use of force by teachers, as set out in DfEE Circular 10/98, relating to section 550A of the Education Act of 1996; The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils. Members of staff have been trained in Team-Teach, a recognised positive approach to handling pupils with care and control.

The Team Teach approach promotes positive, proactive, non-punitive and safe non-violent methods of approaching crisis situations through the intervention of an appropriately calm, controlled, dignified and skilled intervention. It acknowledges that there will be times when there is no other alternative but to hold a child. The physical intervention strategies and techniques are not used to discipline or punish. The physical techniques are based on providing the maximum amount of care, control and therapeutic support. The message behind the intervention should be "I care enough about you not to let you be out of control". Parents are informed when 'Team Teach' strategies have been engaged and a Major Incident Form is completed. (Ref: Team Teach policy)

There may be times when it is appropriate to use reasonable force, and staff should read and follow the guidance below, taken from the **DFE Guidance 'Use of Reasonable Force' 2011:**

Key Points

- (i) School staff have a legal power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
- (ii) Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.
- (iii) Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.

1. What is reasonable force?

- (i) The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
- (ii) Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
- (iii) 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
- (iv) As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
- (v) Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- (vi) School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring a pupil.

2. Who can use reasonable force?

- (i) All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.
- (ii) This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the headteacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

3. When can reasonable force be used?

- (i) Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
- (ii) In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
- (iii) The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground;
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

Schools cannot:

- Use force as a punishment – **it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment**

Informing parents when force has been used on their child

School informs parents about serious incidents involving the use of force and to consider how best to record such serious incidents. It is up to schools to decide whether it is appropriate to report the use of force to parents.

In deciding what is a serious incident, teachers should use their professional judgement and should refer at all times to the Head or Deputy and also consider the following:

- The pupil's behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident
- The degree of force used
- The effect on the pupil or member of staff
- The child's age

What happens if a pupil complains when force is used on them?

- (iv) all complaints about the use of force should be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated
- (v) where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order **to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder** – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action
- (vi) when a complaint is made, the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is **not** for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably
- (vii) suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. Schools should refer to the 'Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff' guidance where an allegation of using excessive force is made against a teacher. This guidance makes it clear that a person must not be suspended automatically, or without careful thought
- (viii) schools must consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate
- (ix) if a decision is taken to suspend a teacher, the school should ensure that the teacher has access to a named contact who can provide support
- (x) governing bodies should always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against the teacher
- (xi) as employers, schools and local authorities have a duty of care towards their employees. It is important that schools provide appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident

What about other physical contact with pupils?

Safe Touch

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary:

- holding the hand of the child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school
- when comforting a distressed pupil

Safe holding is vital to help a child regulate stress more effectively. Safe holding would only be used to help a child contain their emotions and feelings.

Early Years Foundation Stage and Nursery

The school operates a nursery for two and three-year-old children, registered with OFSTED, within their Foundation Stage Unit. The school behaviour management policy will be extended to encompass these children and adapted to their individual needs.

The adults working in the Foundation Stage Unit and Nursery will promote positive behaviour by:

- Giving lots of praise for good behaviour;
- Giving the children individual attention so they feel valued;
- Setting a good example, being good role models;
- Listening to what the children have to say;
- Rewarding good behaviour in an appropriate way such as praise, stickers, etc.
- Giving children certificates for good behaviour and informing parents.

It is important children understand the realistic expectations of the setting.

However, all children may display challenging behaviour for a given reason which has to be managed. All adults will use a range of strategies to diffuse, distract and discuss any form of adverse behaviour exhibited to ensure the child; others, property and individuals are not hurt. There may be times and when parents need to be informed of aspects of adverse displayed by a child.

4. The role of the class teacher

4.1 It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that the school expectations and pupil roles and responsibilities are enforced in their class, and that their class behave in a responsible manner during lesson time.

4.2 The class teachers in our school have high expectations of the children in terms of personal behaviour management, and they strive to ensure that all children achieve to the best of their ability.

4.3 The class teacher treats each child fairly and enforces the classroom code consistently. The teacher treats all their class with respect and understanding.

4.4. In the first instance, the class teacher manages behaviour using a traffic lights (warning) system. If misbehaviour continues, the class teacher seeks help, advice and support from the headteacher. Incidents that are reported to the Headteacher are logged on CPoms and in the majority of cases parents are contacted.

4.5 The headteacher and class teacher liaise with external agencies, as necessary, to support and guide the progress of each child. The class teacher may inform the SENCo to engage the help from other multi-agency support services through the referral process. School may seek help and advice from Behaviour Support, the school's Educational Psychologist or the Counselling Service.

4.6 The class teacher reports to parents about the progress of each child in their class, in line with the whole-school policy. The class teacher, after consultation with the headteacher, may ask for the parent to be contacted if there are concerns about the behaviour of a child.

5. The role of the Headteacher

5.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher, under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to implement the school behaviour policy consistently throughout the school, and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy. It is also the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children in the school

5.2 The headteacher supports the staff by implementing the policy, by setting the standards of behaviour, and by supporting staff in the implementation of the policy.

5.3 The headteacher keeps records of all reported serious incidents and when holding techniques have had to be applied. These records are evaluated and reported on at Governing Body Meetings.

5.4 The headteacher has the responsibility for giving fixed-term exclusions to individual children for serious acts of misbehaviour. For repeated or very serious acts of anti-social behaviour, the headteacher may permanently exclude a child. Both these actions are only taken in line with LA policy and the Governing Body will be informed of such action as soon as practicable.

5.5 Governors will be informed annually on any prejudice related incidents.

6. The role of the parent

6.1 The school works collaboratively with parents, so children receive consistent messages about how to behave at home and at school. Early help referrals can be made to the One Point Service for additional parental support on behaviour management.

6.2 We explain the school expectations in the school brochure and home/school agreement and expect parents to read and support them.

6.3 We expect parents to support their child's learning and to co-operate with the school, as set out in the home-school agreement. We try to build a supportive dialogue between the home and the school, and we inform parents immediately if we have concerns about their child's welfare or behaviour.

6.4 If the school has to use reasonable sanctions with a child, parents should support the actions of the school. If parents have any concern about the way that their child has been treated, they should initially contact the headteacher. If the concern remains, they should contact the school governors. If these discussions cannot resolve the problem, a formal grievance procedure is available for parents to follow.

7. The role of the Governing Body

7.1 The governing body has the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on standards of behaviour, and of reviewing their effectiveness. The governors support the headteacher in carrying out these guidelines.

7.2 The headteacher has the day-to-day authority to implement the school behaviour policy, but governors may give advice to the headteacher about particular disciplinary issues. The headteacher must take this into account when making decisions about matters of behaviour.

8. Fixed term and permanent exclusions

8.1 The school will follow the recommendations by the LA with regard fixed and permanent exclusions. Please refer to exclusion policy.

8.2 For pupils who have been excluded for more than 10 periods within a term the Governing Body may decide to offer the parent a contract that will be signed by all parties to provide support to both the parent and the pupil to improve the pupil's behaviour. Please refer to DCC Parenting Contracts in cases of Pupil Exclusion

9. Monitoring

9.1 The headteacher monitors the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis. They also report to the governing body on the effectiveness of the policy and, if necessary, make recommendations for further improvements.

9.2 The Class Dojo enables staff to monitor incidents of low level inappropriate behaviour. If necessary, behaviour incidents are also recorded on CPoms. Governors monitor behaviour incidents on a termly basis.

9.3 Lunchtime supervisors give a verbal account of any behaviour incidents to the class teacher. If incidents occur on a regular basis, a lunchtime warning letter may be sent home. The sanction at lunchtime, for low level inappropriate behaviour, is for pupils to go to the headteacher for time out for a five-minute period to calm down. If their inappropriate behaviour escalates or does not reduce they are given extra time and parents may be informed. Relevant sanctions and rewards are recorded on CPoms. This information follows the child on their educational journey.

9.3 The headteacher keeps a record of any pupil who is excluded from school and informs the Chair of Governors and LA via the procedures enforced.

9.4 It is the responsibility of the governing body to monitor the rate of exclusions, and to ensure that the school policy is administered fairly and consistently.

10. Review

10.1 The governing body reviews this policy every two years. They may however review the policy earlier, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy may be improved.