



Heath Mount School

Section 2

Disciplinary Principles and Practices

Aims of the Policy

The school's Values Documents aim to sustain an educational environment in which each individual is able to reach their potential. Good discipline is central to this aim and the school recognises the need to establish and maintain effective discipline.

The school's distinctive approach to Restorative Practice is central to the system of discipline and sanctions: please read Section 3 *Restorative Practice*.

Heath Mount believes that the most beneficial discipline is self-discipline and that that this should be achieved, whenever possible, by:

- adults modelling positive behaviour for pupils (including restorative practice);
- building pupils' self-esteem;
- developing pupils' 'emotional intelligence';
- ensuring that each pupil feels a valued member of the community;
- developing pupils' moral courage and judgement;

It is our belief that a 'default' authoritarian position can be detrimental to our behavioural objectives and to the aims of the school. It is also felt that authoritarianism can be detrimental to an open and trusting school community. As such, staff are expected to model emotionally intelligent responses to behavioural issues. However, this does not preclude the use of 'authority' as a means of establishing discipline if 'restorative' approaches have failed or are not appropriate. Heath Mount School recognises that it may sometimes be necessary to adopt a more traditional approach to discipline with children for whom restorative practice is ineffective or inappropriate. Heath Mount School is fully supportive of staff using 'authoritarian' disciplinary procedures where all other avenues have been exhausted or where there is an immediate and obvious need.



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The Policy in Practice

Whole School

Supporting Pupils

The behaviour of individual pupils is monitored by Form Teachers. Heads of Year will support them in this role, and provide rewards and sanctions as appropriate. Heads of Year oversee the behaviour of the pupils in each Section of the school, and the Deputy Head Pastoral (DSL) works with the Senior Deputy Head to monitor overall behaviour patterns in the school.

Where pupils need support to improve their behaviour, the school will adopt a range of strategies, which could include:

- Individual reward or sticker charts, with targets for school and home
- Strategies to prevent poor behaviour escalating – a 'time out' or 'safe place' strategy
- Support cards which give every teacher the opportunity to comment on a child's behaviour in lessons
- Mentoring by a member of staff

Equality and Individual Need

The school has legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that children are not discriminated against by treating them less favourably because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity. The Behaviour Policy should be applied equally to all children without discrimination. The exception is that, under the Equality Act, reasonable adjustments should be made for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, including when applying this Behaviour Policy and associated Rewards and Sanctions. Such adjustments may include (but are not limited to):

- Changing the threshold at which rewards and sanctions are applied in response to a child's individual needs
- Producing an individual set of rewards and sanctions for a child with Special Educational Needs
- Developing an individual risk assessment and set of strategies for a child with Special Educational Needs who might be more likely to require the use of reasonable force to keep himself or others safe

All reasonable adjustments will be taken in discussion with the Department for Skills and Strategies and the child's parents.

Training is provided to staff on the best way to support children with individual learning needs to prevent behavioural problems in the classroom.



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External Agencies

Where pupils have ongoing difficulties with their behaviour, whether or not this is due to a Special Educational Need, the school will make appropriate referrals to external agencies, or advise parents on the best way to do so. This may include accessing Local Authority Early Help Services or the use of behavioural specialists or counsellors. The provision of a School Councillor helps support individual children and parents, as well as advising teachers about the best way to deal with behaviour that may have an underlying cause.

Malicious accusations against staff

Allegations against members of staff will be investigated using the procedures described in the school's Safeguarding Policy, with regard to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2016). Where children are found to have made malicious allegations against staff, the school's sanctions may be applied as deemed appropriate by the Headmaster and the Senior Management Team, including temporary or permanent exclusion from school.

The Prep School

The school operates a 'climate of praise' and values each of its pupils. Heath Mount School is distinctive, because it balances informality with rigour and the needs of the individual with those of the community. Discipline is maintained through the quality of relationships between teachers and pupils and by clearly understood expectations. Pupils learn that actions have consequences, which might include a letter mark in their diary, a sanction and possibly the use of restorative practice to put things right.

Several policies combine to create this distinctive approach to school discipline:

- *The Anti-Bullying Policy*
- *Heath Mount School Values Document* (Section 1)
- *Restorative Practice* (Section 3)
- *Rewards and Sanctions Policy* (Section 4)
- *Exclusion Policy* (Section 5)
- *EYFS Policy* (Section 8)

It is important to this approach that poor behaviour is seen in the context of an individual's personal circumstances and that no socially unjust group punishments are used. Sanctions include; break time detention, loss of Golden Time, Head of Year tutorial, Deputy Head detention, Headmaster's detention, Community Service, school suspension and internal or external exclusion.

Punishments will usually be accompanied by support:



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- Interaction with Form Teacher or Tutor (Why did the incident/ behaviour happen? How can we prevent it from happening again?);
- Restorative Circle (Who was affected by the behaviour? What can be done to make the situation right?);
- Conflict resolution (involving mediation);
- Heads of Year (Tutorial, Behavioural Report card);
- Deputy Head (mentoring, counselling, mediation, involving parents);
- School Counsellor;
- Head (any of the above, referral to outside agencies).

All consequences, together with details of the circumstances, should be entered onto School Manager, in the Incident Log, and emailed to relevant staff.

Punishments requiring the detention of a pupil after school need to be communicated to parents 24 hours before implementation.

It is not considered appropriate for punishments to be deferred until after a holiday period and every attempt should be made to resolve issues before a holiday begins. In doing so, pupils' safety, well-being and emotional development are carefully balanced with the needs of the community.

For pupils who are frequent offenders, careful consideration should be given to the underlying cause of their behaviour. A self-fulfilling prophecy should be avoided and pupils should not be allowed to slide into a permanent negative behavioural pattern. In essence, there will be occasions when a 'big picture' view is needed when teachers will not 'sweat the small stuff'!

Equally, it is also important that no individual is perceived by his/her peers to receive 'special treatment' and that ongoing behavioural issues do not negatively affect other children's learning and development. Where such a situation appears to be developing, it is likely that contact will be made with outside agencies and an internal suspension or school exclusion may become the only viable option in order for the school to fulfil its safeguarding and educational obligations to the wider body of pupils.

The Pre-Prep School

Excellent classroom management is seen as the key to good discipline with younger pupils. Teachers are expected to socialise pupils into acceptable behaviour, by having clear expectations and boundaries, and by modelling appropriate behaviour.

Such boundaries should be consistent, and in maintaining these boundaries staff will be cognizant of the school's underlying principles on behaviour and the climate of praise.

Punishment of young children (seen as different from correction) can be counterproductive in the long-run. Children must not develop a belief that they are naughty children!

In circumstances where teachers are unable to progress a situation through usual class-management strategies, a pupil may:

- *Verbal admonition* - A verbal admonition is given as an immediate response to inappropriate behaviour.



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- *Moved away from a group* - A child may be moved away from children to lessen the distractions.
- *Warnings* – children are reminded that their inappropriate behaviour may result in a timeout.
- *Timeout* – a child may miss a set amount of time from their playtime or golden time.

If inappropriate behaviour continues, children will be sent to speak to Head of Pre-Prep (Mrs Brown) or Deputy Head of Pre-Prep/ Head of EYFS (Mrs Dakakni). If the behaviour persists, parents will be informed and meet with teachers to establish a behaviour programme to help the children conform to the school's behavioural expectations. We want to help children take responsibility for their behaviour, repair any harm and restore good relationships.

Pre-Prep Assembly themes are planned to encourage good behaviour, respect, friendship and manners. We talk to children in regular circle times about feelings and about how to treat others. If an incident occurs which results in children being hurt, all parties are given time to reflect and talk about how they feel and what they could do to ensure it does not happen again. This constitutes a simplified version of Restorative Practice (see Section 3 *Restorative Practice* for more information).

All incidents involving children hurting others are recorded and the information placed on 'School Manager', a system used to keep a log of incidents that have occurred over time and track patterns of behaviour.

Using reading or additional work as a punishment for bad behaviour should be avoided, so as not to create a dislike of learning or feeling that learning is a punishment as the child develops. The principle is to find something that really matters to the child and to use this as a vehicle for leverage.

The Head of Pre-Prep has responsibility for discipline and is the point of referral should teachers find a situation difficult to manage. Records should be kept on the computerised Incident Log on School Manager and any sanction detailed in the text of actions taken.

Physical Intervention

The use of force or physical restraint

All forms of corporal punishment are unlawful (see *Ban on Corporal Punishment (School Standards and Framework Act)*, 1998 and staff must not use or threaten the use of corporal punishment. However, by law, teaching staff, and other staff who are authorised by the Head to have control or charge of pupils, may use such force or physical contact as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following (see the government guidelines on *Use of Reasonable Force*):



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- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing damage to property, including their own;
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom or elsewhere.

Application of code of restraint

This applies when a teacher, or other authorised person, is on school premises and when he or she is in control or charge of the pupil elsewhere, for example on a field trip or other authorised out of school activity. It only applies where no other form of control is available and where it is necessary to intervene.

Before intervening

Before intervening physically you should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil to stop and what will happen if he or she does not. You should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. You should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent. Nor should you act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.

Inform

You should inform the Head or Deputy Head immediately following an incident, except the most minor or trivial, where force has been used. This is to help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident and it will be helpful in the event of a complaint. A written record of any physical intervention used must be kept and parents informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Action taken in self-defence or in an emergency

The law allows anyone to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use more force than is necessary. Similarly, where a pupil is at risk of immediate injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff (whether authorised or not) would be entitled to intervene.

Using reasonable force

There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force'. It will always depend on the circumstances. Note that:

- physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour;
- any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result;



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- whether it is reasonable to use force, and the degree of force that could be reasonably employed, might also depend on the age, understanding and sex of the pupil.

Please refer also to the school's Safeguarding Policy for further guidance on the use of physical force.

Physical contact in other circumstances

When physical contact may be appropriate

Physical contact with a pupil may be necessary and beneficial in order to demonstrate a required action, or a correct technique in, for example, singing and other music lessons or during PE, sports and games.

Guidance on using physical contact

You should observe the following guidelines (where applicable):

- explain the intended action to the pupil;
- do not proceed with the action if the pupil appears to be apprehensive or reluctant, or if you have other concerns about the pupil's (or other pupil's in the vicinity) likely reaction;
- ensure that the door is open and if you are in any doubt, ask a colleague or another pupil to be present during the demonstration.

Report concerns

If you are at all concerned about any instance of physical contact, inform a senior colleague without delay, and make a written record.

Offering comfort to distressed pupils

Touching may also be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. You should use your own professional judgement when you feel a pupil needs this kind of support and should be aware of any special circumstances relating to the pupil. For example, a child who has been abused may find physical contact particularly difficult. You should always notify a senior colleague when comfort has been offered and should seek guidance if unsure whether it would be appropriate in a particular case.

Administering first aid

When administering first aid you should explain to the child what is happening and ensure that another adult is present or is aware of the action being taken. The treatment must meet the school's Health and Safety at Work Rules and Intimate Care guidelines, and parents should be informed (see Health and Safety and Intimate Care policies).

Regular physical contact



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Generally, regular physical contact can only be justified where it is part of an agreed plan such as a school policy, or as a result of a Special Educational Need. Details of such will be available to staff on the Staff Drive and updated regularly by the Learning Support Department. Email guidance from the Learning Support Department to colleagues, regarding a particular child, may also be periodically distributed.

Pupils' entitlement to privacy

Children are entitled to privacy when changing or showering. However, there still must be an appropriate level of supervision to ensure safety. You should:

- avoid physical contact or intrusive behaviour when children are undressed;
- announce yourself when entering changing rooms and avoid remaining unless required.

(For further information see the school's *Safeguarding Policy* and *Staff Code of Conduct.*)

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