

Senior School Behaviour Policy

Introduction

At Bedford Modern School we are very proud of our behaviour record and we continue to encourage students to adopt the highest standards of behaviour, principles and moral standards and to respect the ethos of the School. Promoting the emotional well-being of all of our students is key to their development. We aim to teach trust and mutual respect for everyone. We believe that good relations, good manners and a secure learning environment play a crucial part in the development of intellectually curious students, who are motivated to become life-long learners. We develop qualities of team-work and leadership through our extensive programme of co-curricular activities.

Bedford Modern School is an inclusive community. We treat everyone as an individual and aim to develop the whole person equipped to take his/her place in the modern world.

Code of Conduct

Bedford Modern School community of governors, staff, parents and students adhere to an established routine and code of conduct. Bedford Modern School sees education as a partnership. Our staff are committed to excellence, aiming to achieve a spirit of trust and cooperation. We expect the highest values and standards of behaviour inside and outside the classroom, as well as outside the School and in any written or electronic communication concerning the School.

We expect students to treat staff and each other with respect, consideration and good manners and to respond positively to the opportunities and demands of School life. They should follow the School's Rules and adhere to the BMS Student Expectations Charter and understand why sanctions may be imposed for inconsiderate behaviour.

Everyone has a right to feel secure and to be treated with respect at Bedford Modern School, particularly the vulnerable. Harassment and bullying will not be tolerated. Our Anti-bullying Policy is on our web site. See other relevant policies on website. The School is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all, with regard to the nine Protected Characteristics¹.

We expect students to be ready to learn and to participate in School activities. They should attend school and lessons punctually and follow the School's Attendance Policy. They should care for the buildings, equipment and furniture. We expect students to behave at all times in a manner that reflects the best interests of the whole community.

Involvement of Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians who accept a place for their child at Bedford Modern School undertake to uphold the School's policies and regulations, including this policy when they sign the Parent Contract. They will support the School's values in matters such as attendance and punctuality, behaviour, uniform/dress and appearance, standards of academic work, co-curricular activities and homework/private study.

¹ age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

We are always happy to consider suggestions from parents and hope that you find the School responsive and open-minded.

Absences

We require parents to telephone/email the School on the first day of an absence to explain the reason for it and in order to make sure that your child has not suffered an accident. Please note that it is the School's policy usually not to allow holiday to be taken during term time.

Involvement of Students

Our experience shows that the ethos of and respect for the School is enhanced by listening to our students and by encouraging constructive suggestions from them, in assemblies, tutor periods and via the Student Government, which meets regularly.

School Rules

The School's Rules are designed to encourage positive behaviour and self-discipline. Our aim is to encourage good behaviour through our Rewards System. Sanctions help us to set boundaries and to manage challenging behaviour. Copies of the School Rules are set out in the Parent Information Booklet and in Essential Downloads on the website and may change from time to time. Parents and guardians undertake, when signing the Parent Contract, to support the authority of the Headmaster in enforcing them in a fair manner that is designed to safeguard the welfare of the community as a whole.

The Headmaster for his part undertakes to apply any sanctions fairly, and, where appropriate, after due investigative action has taken place. Sanctions may undergo reasonable change from time to time but will not involve any form of unlawful or degrading activity.

Bedford Modern School does not use corporal punishment.

Rewards

At Bedford Modern School we like to encourage and reward effort, attainment and good citizenship. This can be through the praise we give to students either individually or as a group.

Our Rewards System perhaps best reflects our acknowledgement of the above through the awarding of 'Eagle Points'. Students are rewarded for things such as – particularly good effort, excellent work, or doing something for others above and beyond what would ordinarily be expected, or perhaps independently undertaking a task to benefit the School in the way it looks, or perhaps that enhances our reputation.

When a student accrues a defined number of 'Eagle Points', certificates and ultimately badges will be presented to them to celebrate their achievement. At various times in the school year we have an Academic Awards evening, a Sports Awards evening and an Artistic Awards evening where prizes are presented to a large number of students for excellence, effort, progress and contributions to the School.

Staff Development and Support

All staff are supported through our pastoral and academic structures via HoY & HoS, HoF and Leadership Team. There is training for all new staff in the Sanction/Reward system and INSET on various areas of these systems.

Sanctions

Sanctions fall into two broad categories – academic misdemeanours (those problems that occur within the classroom) and non-academic misdemeanours (those that occur outside the classroom). Our Sanctions System allows the opportunity for students to make mistakes but learn from them. Academic and non-academic sanctions will run parallel but separately from each other. They will be overseen by the tutor who will communicate with parents if they are concerned about the overall behaviour of the student.

Some **examples** of misdemeanours (not exhaustive) and what the sanction might be are given below. This will depend largely on the context of the offence, the number of times a student will have committed the offence, and reasonable adjustment.

- **Level 1** = discussion with subject teacher – record kept:
 - Not having correct equipment
 - Failure to hand in homework
 - Punctuality
 - Dropping litter
 - Overly boisterous behaviour in class or at break/lunchtime

Detentions

- **Level 2** = Faculty (academic) or Head of Year (non-academic) Detentions - lunchtime = 30 minutes.

A third Level 1 academic sanction OR a third Level 1 non-academic sanction automatically escalates to a Level 2 sanction.

A Level 2 sanction can be given without the need to go through lower level punishments if the offence is serious enough:

- Failure to undertake homework
- Not wearing the School Uniform correctly
- Disruptive behaviour during a lesson
- Inappropriate behaviour between lessons

- **Level 3** = After School Detention - 1 hour Thursdays 4.15-5.15pm.

A third Level 2 academic sanction/detention OR a third Level 2 non-academic sanction/detention automatically escalates to a Level 3 sanction/detention.

A Level 3 sanction can be given without the need to go through lower level punishments if the offence is serious enough:

- Fighting (limited damage – between 2 equals)
- Causing minor damage to property
- Running in the Science Centre (Health & Safety consideration)
- Failing to attend a lesson
- Lack of respect for a teacher
- Failure to submit coursework

- **Level 4** = Deputy Head's Detention – 2 hours after School (4.00pm-6.00pm) on a date set by one of the Deputy Heads.

A third Level 3 academic sanction/detention OR a third Level 3 non-academic sanction/detention automatically escalates to a Level 4 sanction/detention.

A Level 4 sanction can be given without the need to go through the lower level punishments if the offence is serious enough:

- Inappropriate comments about a teacher
- Offensive behaviour towards another student
- Inappropriate use of Technology
- Acts of aggression – striking another student (dependent on severity - might escalate to Level 6/7)
- Bullying

If a student is given a second Deputy Head's Detention a contract may be drawn up listing specific requirements and adjustments the student must make and which the School expects to be the norm in the future. This will be signed by the student, parents and Deputy Head. It is expected that a meeting will take place between all parties involved around this time.

- **Level 5** = Senior Deputy Head's Interview

A third Level 4 sanction/detention of any kind (academic or non-academic) will automatically lead to an interview with the Senior Deputy Head. This may lead to suspension or even permanent exclusion.

Exclusions

- **Level 6** = Suspension – between 1 & 5 days depending on severity of offence. This sanction is restricted to very serious offences and would not usually be based on a build-up of minor offences; therefore by-passing the aforementioned 'Levels'. Possible examples of offences:

- Theft
- Physical Assault
- Bullying
- Drug use
- Alcohol use in School
- Inappropriate behaviour of a serious kind towards another – student or adult
- Criminal damage
- Racist or sexist abuse

- **Level 7** = Permanent Exclusion – the most severe of sanctions and one that will be used only when it is absolutely necessary, perhaps to protect the safety of others (students and/or staff) within our community. It may be due to the seriousness of the offence, that it may have been a repeated action which has been punished previously by a suspension (Level 6) or the law has been broken and therefore we are obliged to apply this sanction. Examples of possible offences:

- Drugs – supplying/distribution of, including alcohol
- Bringing weapons to School, to be used in a threatening manner
- Bullying
- Threatening/malicious behaviour to students or staff
- Physical assault
- Premeditated stealing
- Sexual misconduct

Whenever a sanction is imposed (especially from Level 4 upwards), a full investigation is undertaken by a senior member of staff and parents will be notified at a point in time where detail is clearest. Interviews will be held (notes will be taken), meetings may take place and time will be taken to ensure the best chance of correct decisions being made. The student will usually be given the opportunity to provide a written statement to clarify

in their own mind what happened, what went wrong and how they would act differently in the future.

Discussion will always take place where Level 6 & 7 sanctions might be the outcome between the Headmaster and one or more of his Deputies to ensure that all areas of concern have been investigated and clarified as far as is reasonably practicable; that we are consistent in our application of our rules and that due care and consideration have been given to the misdemeanour(s) and the students involved. The School has an appeal policy/process.

Appropriate outside agencies may be contacted and advice sought from them, this could include the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer – Child Protection), Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (which incorporates social care and the Police Force) and any other expert body which we are either obliged to inform or that we think might be beneficial to the students and the School.

We aim for transparency, fairness and consistency in our 'Sanction System' and do not at any stage make decisions that will substantially affect our student's lives without very careful consideration.

Physical Restraint

Like all schools, we reserve the right for our staff to use reasonable force to control or restrain a student in specific circumstances. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use "such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a student from doing or continuing to do" any of the following:

- *"Committing any offence (or, for a student under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older student)"*
- *"Causing personal injury to any person (including the student themselves)"*
- *"Causing damage to the property of any person (including the student themselves)"*
- *"Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school, and among any students receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise"*

The Act also defines to whom the power applies as follows:

- *"Any teacher who works at the school"*
- *"Any other person whom the Head Teacher has authorised to have control or charge of students"*

Staff are advised always to use their voices first, to use the minimum force necessary to restrain a student for the shortest possible period of time and use their professional judgement as to whether the use of physical restraint is appropriate. They should consider:

- *"The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder that is likely to result if force is not used"*
- *"The chances of achieving the desired result by other means"*
- *"The relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies"*

Every member of staff will inform the Headmaster immediately after s/he has needed to restrain a student physically. We will always inform a parent when it has been necessary to use physical restraint, and invite them to the School, so that we can, if necessary, agree a protocol and/or sanction for managing that individual student's behaviour.

Teaching and Learning

Bedford Modern School aims to raise the aspirations of all its students and to help them to appreciate that there are no barriers to their potential achievements both inside and outside the classroom. Students 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 student a high level of individual attention, together with consistent and helpful advice. In return, we expect every student to cooperate and to work hard.

The Sixth Form

We encourage and expect our most senior students to behave maturely, and act as role models for our younger students. Therefore, the number of times we have to reprimand and punish a sixth form student is few and far between. The 'Sanctions System' discussed above applies to all students in the Senior School but we do not expect that any of the most senior in the school would be subject to the less serious offences as these should be avoided as a matter of course due to the greater age, experience and sense of responsibility associated with the older students. We all, of course, can make mistakes and therefore there may be cause to reprimand and/or punish, possibly at the higher levels. If this is the case, incidents will be considered and investigated appropriately and the aforementioned 'Sanction System' will come into play.

Complaints

We hope that you will not feel the need to complain about the operation of our Behaviour Policy, and that any difficulty can be sensitively and efficiently handled before it reaches that stage; however, the School's Complaints Procedures are on our web site. We will send you copies on request.

Jude Goodacre
Deputy Head Pastoral

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