



POLICY DOCUMENT

For use by all member schools

Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Exclusions Policy

	Name	Date
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Behaviour in school is inseparable from academic achievement, safety, welfare and wellbeing, and all other aspects of learning. It is key to all other aims and, therefore, crucial.

Tom Bennett, Creating a Culture 2018

Introduction

This policy encompasses deeper thinking and understanding based on current research of neuroscience, child development and how children behave based on their emotional responses. The policy aims to provide guidance for staff in order to promote positive behaviour and will ensure a consistent approach across all schools. The policy aims to outline our approaches to the management of behaviour resulting from children's emotional responses.

'Too often we forget that discipline really means to teach, not to punish. A disciple is a student, not a recipient of behavioural consequences.' Dr. Dan J. Siegel.

Our Ethos

Educating and investing in children and encouraging them to grow up to lead safe, happy, healthy and successful lives, is at the heart of what we do in the Spring Partnership Trust schools. We recognise that a pupil's happiness and well-being are the foundation for their success and that it is essential to nurture not just the academic progress of the child, but to look after and care for the 'whole person'. We encourage children to learn about health and well-being and the importance of looking after our social, emotional and mental health as well as our physical health. We want our children to develop a set of values that will stand them in good stead now and in later life.

These include a sense of community and responsibility. Children are encouraged to be kind and considerate, and to have respect and show tolerance for all. The promotion of British values and an understanding of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning is at the heart of what we do. We take every opportunity to teach strategies for building social skills, resilience and raising self-esteem.

In the Spring Partnership Trust, these are seen as vital steps in preparing our pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. Our children develop a range of strategies which enable them to manage their emotions and self-regulate their behaviour.

We take a child-centred, nurturing approach: learning should fit around the child, not the child be made to fit a narrow or rigid model of learning. We believe that anti-social behaviours come from an unconscious, fear-based state of stress or anxiety and that all behaviour has meaning. We understand that behaviour is a primary form of communication and that continued disruptive behaviour may be due to an unmet need. A child's poor behaviour is often a result of difficulties they are experiencing. If the causes of the behaviour are identified and appropriate support is provided, the behaviour can be turned around and the barriers to learning removed.

Our expectations and responses to our children's behaviour is tailored to each child's needs and ability. We feel it is important that the children in our Alternative Resource Provision aspire to demonstrate positive behaviours, with support, that are broadly in line with their mainstream peers. Our children should be prepared to exist and function in the wider community. Supporting the children to understand expected social behaviours is working towards succeeding in this. Rehearsing these behaviours with their mainstream peers in the wider school is the perfect 'rehearsal space'.

Our aims

In the Spring Partnership Trust schools, we aim for our children to achieve their academic potential and lead independent lives preparing them for the next phase of their education. We enable this by building mutually respectful relationships with them and showing them how to have respectful

relationships with each other and with other people. This helps them to reflect and take responsibility for themselves, and is a form of discipline that is constant, immediate and consistent. Our personal, social and health education (PSHE) Jigsaw programme complements our teaching on relationships, self-regulation and understanding emotional and social needs of our own and others.

The warmth, humour and pleasant firmness with which our staff engage with children from the moment they arrive in the school each day demonstrates the way in which we set boundaries on behaviour, and is reflected throughout the school community. Our culture and ethos deeply define our core values and this is reflected in our positive relationships and behaviours in the classroom, playground and wider community.

Our schools are ambitious and we strive for the highest standards of teaching, learning and behaviour in an environment where all children and staff are valued as individuals and their efforts are respected and celebrated. Our aims are to work together as a team to:

- a) Promote high standards of teaching, learning and behaviour;
- b) Ensure that we enable pupils to be the best they can be irrespective of race, sexual orientation or physical or mental disability;
- c) Provide a happy, supportive and safe environment. We want children to display positive learning behaviours that contribute to excellent achievement and reflect pride in themselves and their school.

We understand that children will need different levels of support and time to develop and maintain positive learning behaviours in school. We recognise that the quality of teaching and learning in each lesson directly affects the behaviour of children so staff are expected to be familiar with the Trust's Learning and Teaching pedagogy and work within this framework. Managing behaviour is not just about responding to inappropriate behaviour. It is firstly, about creating the conditions that encourage positive behaviour, recognising and celebrating this. Our schools have developed a nurture-based approach and focus on six principles:

- All behaviour is communication
- Learning is understood developmentally
- Language/sign is a vital means of communication
- Transitions are significant
- The classroom offers a safe base
- Nurture develops self-esteem

Strong routines

Staff ensure strong, predictable routines for their classroom.

These expectations are reinforced around the school, through assemblies and daily interactions with children. It is everyone's responsibility to challenge children when these expectations are not met but equally to comment positively when they are. Strong routines are in place for:

- Start and end of day
- Transition times
- Lining up
- Assemblies
- Getting changed for PE
- Moving around the school
- Break and lunchtimes

Teaching and promoting positive behaviour

We teach children about our expectations for behaviour through:

- PSHE lessons
- SMSC lessons
- RE lessons
- Class assemblies
- Whole school theme days/weeks

These cover areas such as 'being in my world, celebrating differences, dreams and goals, keeping healthy, relationships, and changing me'. There is a PSHE programme for the year with themes for each week which will include specific issues including: racism; homophobia; gender-based language; tolerance and respect; disability awareness.

In the Spring Partnership Trust, we recognise that strong relationships between staff and children are vital. Staff must be fair and consistent with every child, taking into account individual needs. Children need to understand that the staff member is in control at all times, enabling pupils to feel safe. Equally, staff must be approachable and there to help (not only there to discipline) and children need to understand this. If a member of staff is having difficulties with an individual or group of children, they are expected to seek support in order to make a positive change.

Our Approach

Creating an inclusive and positive school ethos around behaviour is driven by the Head Teacher/Head of School and SLT so that it is endorsed by, and embedded across, the whole school community. We strongly believe that responding to the social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs of a child is not the responsibility of a few staff in school; it is everyone's responsibility.

We have a non-judgmental, curious and empathic attitude towards behaviour. We encourage all adults in schools to respond in a way that focuses on the feelings and emotions that might drive certain behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself. Children that present with difficult or challenging behaviours are regarded as vulnerable rather than troublesome, and we are aware that we have a duty to explore this vulnerability and provide appropriate support. "Thinking of a child as behaving badly disposes you to think of punishment. Thinking of a child as struggling to handle something difficult encourages you to help them through their distress" (Paulette Motzko). We rely on our positive school culture and climate that fosters connection, inclusion, respect and value for all members of the school community.

Relevant rewards and consequences that can follow certain behaviours should be made explicit, without the need to enforce 'sanctions' that can shame and ostracise children from their peers, school community and family, leading to potentially more negative behaviour. Not all behaviours are a matter of 'choice' and not all factors linked to the behaviour of children are within their control. Therefore, the language of choice (e.g. 'good choice/bad choice') is not always helpful. We encourage parental engagement and involvement and see this as absolutely crucial when addressing and planning support for children's needs.

It is also important to view children whose behaviour is externalised or whose emotional distress is internalised as equally vulnerable. Early intervention is imperative for addressing both active and passive behaviours to ensure that low level features/difficulties can be addressed early. It is essential to be aware of the tendency to make judgements around behaviour (e.g. 'mad'/'bad') and important to see all behaviour as an indicator of emotions to which we must respond in an empathic and caring manner. This can be particularly hard to do when a child acts in a way that hurts or frightens others.

Statutory Framework and other guidance

The Behaviour Policy is written in line with the following areas of legislation and guidance:

Education and Inspection Act 2006

Equality Act 2010

Education Act 2011

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools – DfE Guidance 2016

Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff 2022

Policy Implementation: Roles and Responsibilities

The school communities are responsible for reinforcing positive behaviour

Pupils	Expected to take responsibility for their own behaviour, and follow the school behaviour expectations at all times. They are expected to reflect on their actions and recognise they are part of a community.
Parents	Work in partnership with the school to maintain excellent standards of behaviour and inform the school about any changes at home that could impact learning or behaviour in school.
All staff	Responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented in a fair and consistent manner. Be positive and remember behaviour has to be taught – not assumed. Act as role models in every interaction.
Member of leadership team responsible for behaviour	Responsible for training staff (including volunteers) in the implementation of the policy. Quality assuring the application of the policy in all areas of the school. Tracking and monitoring rewards and consequences on Arbor , and devising and implementing strategies to improve behaviour where required.
Head Teacher / Head of School	Responsible for the implementation and day-to-day management of the policy and procedures. Updates KPIs on a monthly basis, which is reported to CEO and trustees on a termly basis. CEO – quality assure standards of behaviour in Academies, support and challenge where necessary and report progress to the Board
Trustees	Responsible for ensuring the Behaviour Policy is in place, meets all statutory requirements, and is clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

Positive approaches to behaviour used in Spring Partnership Trust schools

Restorative Justice

Our schools embrace restorative approaches which aim to build the school community and to repair and strengthen relationships within it. These approaches foster an awareness of how others have been affected by inappropriate behaviour. This is done by actively engaging participants in a process allowing participants to make amends for the harm caused. Restorative approaches acknowledge the intrinsic worth of the person and their potential contribution to the school community.

Restorative approaches aim to:

- Improve behaviour and attitudes
- Provide explicit tools within a defined framework to challenge unacceptable behaviour, resolve conflict and repair harm
- Improve relationships; establish rights, accountabilities and responsibilities to the community
- Provide a safe philosophical basis for staff pupils and parents to share ideas and discuss issues

The Zones of Regulation and Self-regulation

The Zones of Regulation are a research-based intervention to promote positive behaviour. They help children to regulate their feelings in order to control overwhelming emotions that prevent them from learning, and achieving their best. When used effectively children feel empowered and in control of their emotions. The Zones of Regulation are particularly effective for children with SEND and SEMH needs.

In order for a child to be ready for learning they need to be able to self-regulate. For most children they are able to regulate with ease. For other children they will need 'tools' to help them self-regulate. The Zones of Regulation help children to identify their feelings through the use of colours:

- blue - sad, sick, tired
- green, happy calm, ok
- yellow - frustrated, worried excited
- red - mad, angry, out of control.

With adult support children will learn to use their 'tools' to self-regulate. The zones are used not only for key children but for all children, adults and parents as a model to self-regulate emotions.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the EYFS (Nursery and Reception) ages range from 3-5. Many of our children are only just beginning to understand their own emotions and can struggle to identify or label these. They therefore need a greater amount of staff support in managing their emotions and consequently their behaviour.

In recognition of this we support the children in understanding their emotions by discussing how the incident has made them feel, and support their management of these emotions by modelling self-soothing behaviours, such as deep breathing or rubbing their arms. This support not only helps them to calm themselves in order to deal with the behaviour, but will also support them later when they begin to use Zones of Regulation. We also ensure all our EYFS classrooms have areas that are comfortable, calmer and quieter in order for children to remove themselves, reduce anxiety and self-soothe.

We work in the moment with the children, providing a curriculum that is personalised to their needs and therefore ensures they receive the support they need whilst minimising opportunities for negative behaviours. The staff use consistent approaches and support the children with clear expectations, for example through the use of visuals and sand timers for taking turns. We use praise in order to reinforce positive behaviours, ensuring we catch all children displaying these behaviours

Where appropriate, children will be given time to regulate their behaviour. Staff will then continue to support their behaviour choices with a restorative approach. All incidents are dealt with at the time and staff ensure they are supporting children to recognise the issues with their behaviour and make positive decisions.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness can help children to achieve their potential and to flourish. Mindfulness practice can anchor children and help them feel grounded, safe and free to choose how they respond to a situation.

- *Well-being and mental health* - as well as helping them to recognise worry, manage difficulties and cope with exams, developing a more mindful awareness also helps children and young people to appreciate what is going well and to flourish.
- *Concentration and cognition* - mindfulness trains us to understand and direct our attention with greater awareness and skill. This may improve the capacity of children to concentrate and be less distracted, as well as their working memory and ability to plan.
- *Social and emotional learning* - mindfulness is often taught in the context of PSHE. It helps to develop a greater awareness of relationships and how to manage them (including difficult ones at home), as well as offering a richer understanding of things like self-esteem and optimism.
- *Behaviour* - mindfulness may help the young to self-regulate more effectively, manage impulsivity and reduce conflict and oppositional behaviour. It should not, however, be used as a disciplinary tool.

Emotion Coaching

Emotion Coaching is an approach that focuses on the development of emotional regulation through supportive relationships. It can benefit not only children but also parents/carers and professionals to better understand and regulate their emotions, in order to manage strong feelings and take ownership of behaviour. Emotion Coaching offers practical steps for responding to behaviour, and is linked to key attachment concepts, such as the importance of connection. Emotion Coaching is an evidence-based approach that provides an understanding of the neuroscience behind behaviour. Research also indicates that staff in schools feel more confident managing behaviour when they have increased knowledge of the link between behaviour and emotion. The following principles are central to Emotion Coaching:

- All emotions are natural and normal, and not always a matter of choice
- Behaviour is a communication
- Emotional 'first aid' (calming, soothing) is needed first

Referral to Pastoral Support Team

Our pastoral inclusion initiatives have been set up to provide additional enrichment and PSHE support for children, their families and their carers. Children who are internally referred to the pastoral inclusion teams are supported through group work and if necessary, 1:1 sessions.

Referrals are made for a wide range of reasons including support with friendships, developing confidence, managing feelings and bereavement.

Intervention groups focus on social skills, self-esteem, building resilience, and managing behaviour. This is done through creative methods such as drama, art, play, group discussion and relaxation using mindfulness techniques.

Consistent Management Plans

For children who need more intensive support and detailed strategies to regulate emotions, a Consistent Management Plan is co-produced with adults in school and parents. Where applicable, the child can also contribute to this plan. It is a working document that should be reviewed at least half termly and should be used alongside a child's personal risk assessment. It often links into a child's colour coded personalised emotional regulation system such as 'Zones of Regulation'. It is vital that we improve home school links which will lead to improvements in learning behaviours and improved attendance.

Rewards for Good Behaviour and Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviour

Individual schools within the Spring Partnership Trust will publish a Behaviour, Anti-bullying and Exclusion Procedure that sets out how this is to be achieved.

In particular, the procedures shall:

- Set out the disciplinary sanctions to be adopted if a pupil misbehaves including provisions for permanent exclusion
- Reflect the principle that all behaviour is a form of communication and that persistent poor behaviour may be indicative of an unmet need that requires an appropriate response; expound the notion that good behaviour is not simply the absence of poor behaviour and describe how it will create the conditions to encourage positive behaviour
- Set out the disciplinary sanctions to be adopted if a pupil misbehaves including provisions for permanent exclusion.

School procedures reflect the following 8 key aspects of school practice that, when effective, contribute to improving the quality of pupil behaviour:-

- 1) A consistent approach to behaviour management
- 2) Strong school leadership
- 3) Classroom management
- 4) Rewards and sanctions
- 5) Behaviour strategies and the teaching of good behaviour
- 6) Staff development and support
- 7) Pupil support systems
- 8) Liaison with parents and other agencies

Parental Involvement

Continual and positive contact with parents is implicit to the successful implementation of this policy. Contact should emphasise positives to build effective relationships and connections. In cases where detailed and regular communication is required, then the class teacher will ensure that the behaviour

of the pupil in question will be carefully monitored in order that accurate and objective information can be conveyed to parents.

The behaviour policy beyond the school gate

The behaviour policy can extend to activities outside the school day and off the school premises when the pupil is:

- Taking part in any school organised or school related activity
- Travelling to or from school
- Wearing school uniform
- In some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school
- Engaging in remote educational activities

Even where the five conditions above do not apply, the behaviour policy can extend to any misbehaviour which could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school, pose a threat to another pupil, or member of the public, or could adversely affect the reputation of the school. Sanctions may be applied where a pupil has misbehaved off-site when representing the school, such as on a school trip or on the bus on the way to or from school.

Bullying

- Bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour that the school considers inappropriate and unacceptable in all its forms.
- Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group repeated over time. It can take many forms, including hurting another individual or group either physically or emotionally.
- Bullying can be motivated by actual differences or perceived differences.

What is bullying?

- Cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet
- Prejudice-based bullying against groups, for example, on grounds of special educational need, race, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation, disability
- Physical e.g. punching, kicking, hitting, spitting at another person
- Verbal e.g. name-calling and/or offensive, discriminatory verbal abuse
- Exclusion e.g. deliberately excluding a person or encouraging another person to exclude a person from discussions/activities
- Damage to property or theft e.g. deliberately damaging someone's or taking personal belongings. Physical or verbal threats might be used to force the person to hand over their property
- Face-to-face or remote e.g. via the internet or text
- By someone known to the recipient or an unknown protagonist e.g. an anonymous email Cyber-bullying e.g. communications that intimidate, control, manipulate, put down, falsely discredit, or humiliate.

All staff are alerted to the signs of bullying and children are encouraged to tell their class teacher or other adults working in the school. This is shared in confidence with other staff. Teachers always take bullying seriously and deal firmly with such behaviour. If a child persists in bullying, the formal consequences outlined earlier in this policy, will be brought into play. The ultimate consequence of bullying could be permanent exclusion.

Parents should refer to the schools' Anti-bullying Policy for details on procedures to follow if they are concerned that their child may be involved in bullying activities.

Child on child abuse/sexual harassment and violence

We are committed to a Trust approach to ensure the prevention, early identification and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse within our schools and beyond. In cases where child on child abuse is identified we will follow our child protection procedures, taking a contextual approach to support all children and young people who have been affected by the situation.

We recognise that child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways such as:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Sexting or youth produced digital imagery
- Upskirting
- Bullying
- Radicalisation
- Abuse in intimate relationships
- Children who display sexually harmful behaviour
- Gang association and serious violence (County Lines)
- Technology can be used for bullying and other abusive behaviour

Some of these behaviours will need to be handled with reference to other policies such as the, anti-bullying policy, child protection policy and online safety policy. We are compliant with the statutory guidance on child-on-child abuse as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023) and should be read in conjunction with the Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB) Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and any relevant Practice Guidance issued by it

Use of reasonable force

The school will follow the Department of Education advice 'Use of Reasonable Force - advice for school leaders, staff and governing bodies' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>).

It enables teachers and other members of staff in the school, authorised by the Head Teacher/Head of School, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or amongst its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

What does it mean to use physical intervention on a child?

Physical intervention is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming themselves or others, or seriously damaging property. The proper use of physical intervention requires skill and judgement, as well as knowledge of non-harmful methods of intervening.

Why use physical intervention?

Physical intervention should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's actions, or by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm themselves or others. Physical intervention is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour. Parents will always be informed if reasonable force has been used. Each school will identify staff to receive training and will undertake risk assessments on individual pupils where necessary.

Prohibited items and searches

It is extremely rare, but it may also be necessary to undertake a search of a pupil's possessions to check for prohibited items

Schools have the statutory power to undertake a search of a pupil or their possessions if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil may be carrying a dangerous or banned substance or object, e.g. a weapon or illegal drug, or any other item which might pose a serious risk to the safety of that pupil and/or others. The specific items which can be searched for without consent are specified on page 11 of the DfE's Behaviour and Discipline in Schools Guidance with more detailed information provided in Screening, Searching and Confiscation – advice for Heads, staff and governing bodies.

Only the Head Teacher/Head of School, or a member of school staff authorised by the Head Teacher/Head of School, can undertake the search of a pupil and there must be a witness (also a staff member). The person carrying out the search will, where possible, be the same sex as the pupil being searched.

The exception to this rule, where a search can be carried out on a pupil of the opposite sex and / or without a witness, will only occur where the Head Teacher/Head of School or member of the leadership team reasonably believes that there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to the person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.

Any searches of a pupil's own person or of their possessions will be carried out with due consideration for the pupil's personal dignity, health and safety, the Trust's Safeguarding and Equal Opportunities policies. There may be rare instances where a child with a specific SEND diagnosis requires a different approach. For example, the school may refrain from searching, unless in an emergency, if a child is tactile defensive or has a sensory sensitivity which means that a search may significantly escalate a situation.

Any such searches will be viewed as a last resort, when other methods of investigation and communication have failed and only if absolutely necessary, such as in extreme situations when leaving a pupil with such a suspected item could pose risks to others (or to that pupil). It is hoped that in the great majority of instances, there will be no need for a search to be carried out.

Searches without consent

The following items are banned in school and pupils may be searched for them without their consent and without the consent of their parents:

- knives or weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco, cigarette papers, vapes or other nicotine based products
- fireworks

- pornographic images
- mobile phones
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used:
 - to commit an offence
 - to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil).

Members of staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm. Physical resistance by a pupil to a search for these items can itself be subject to behavioural consequences.

Before a member of staff carries out a search without consent, the member of staff must reasonably suspect that the pupil has the prohibited item in their possession. Only staff members authorised by the Head Teacher/Head of School may carry out searches without consent.

School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search and can also seize any item, however found, which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline. When deciding what to do with a prohibited item, the school will act in line with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education.

Searches with consent

The school may search pupils with their consent for any item. A pupil's possessions can only be searched in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.

Extent of search

The person conducting the search may not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing. 'Outer clothing' means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear but 'outer clothing' includes hats; shoes; boots; gloves and scarves. 'Possessions' means any goods over which the pupil has or appears to have control – this includes bags, lockers and desks.

Any formal complaints about searches should be made in accordance with the school's usual complaints policy.

Confiscation of articles

School staff have the power to confiscate property from pupils under their general right to discipline contained in S91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Disposal or retention of articles confiscated from pupils

The Spring Partnership Trust will follow the Department for Education guidance 'Screening Searching and Confiscation - advice for heads, staff and governing bodies' (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>) in deciding what to do with confiscated items.

Drugs

The Spring Partnership Trust operates a zero-tolerance policy on drugs for the health and safety of all staff, pupils and visitors. The school policy on drugs applies to all school and school-related activities whether on or off site. This includes the journey to and from school. The word 'drugs' used in this policy does not just mean illegal drugs. It extends to alcohol, tobacco and nicotine products, volatile substances and legal highs. The school should make this broad definition clear.

Any pupil found to be involved in a drugs-related incident will be disciplined in accordance with the school's behaviour policy. The consequence is likely to include suspension or in the most severe of cases, permanent exclusion. Dealing with illegal drugs will, except in exceptional circumstances, lead to permanent exclusion. Using illegal drugs will, except in exceptional circumstances, lead to suspension which may be permanent. This distinction between dealing and using is particularly important operationally. Sometimes, it will also be necessary to involve the police. The school will discuss this and take advice as necessary.

Confiscation of drugs

Any drugs found will be confiscated by staff who will dispose of them in accordance with guidance issued by the Department for Education.

Similarly, any drugs-related paraphernalia will be disposed of in a prudent manner.

Use of social media

Examples of prohibited use:

- Damage to the school or its reputation, even indirectly
- Use that may defame school staff or any third party
- Use that may harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff, other pupils or third parties
- False or misleading statements
- Use that impersonates staff, other pupils or third parties
- Expressing opinions on the school's behalf
- Using school logos or trademarks.

All incidents of prohibited use of social media should be reported to the class teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

In line with government guidance relating to the Prevent Duty, children must be kept safe from terrorist and extremist material and suitable filtering within school will be in place.

Exclusions

Legislation and Guidance

In applying this policy, Spring Partnership Trust Schools will adhere to current legislation, including the Equality Act 2010. Schools are obliged to have regard to the Department for Education guidance on exclusions. Section 1 makes specific reference to the Equalities Act. These duties need to be complied with when deciding whether to exclude a pupil. Schools must also ensure that their policies and practices do not discriminate against pupils by **unfairly increasing their risk of exclusion**. Provisions within the Equality Act allow schools to take positive action to deal with particular disadvantages, needs, or low participation affecting one group, where this can be shown to be a proportionate way of dealing with such issues.

The Head Teacher/Head of School and Trustees will comply with their statutory duties in relation to SEND when administering the exclusion process. This includes having regard to the SEND Code of Practice.

Exclusion/suspension relates to behaviour not only in school but also to behaviour out of school: for example, travelling to and from school, on school trips etc.

Types of Suspension/Exclusion

Internal Exclusion

Where appropriate, following a serious incident or an accumulation of incidents a child will be subject to an internal exclusion for a specified time period. Parents/Carers are informed of the reasons for the internal exclusion. When on internal exclusion, the child will be sent, with relevant work, to an appropriate learning space. A child on an internal exclusion will get regular breaks and a lunch time break but not with their peers.

Suspension

A suspension will be for the shortest time necessary. A suspension may be issued for a period of time from half a day to 5 days for persistent or cumulative problems. Usually, these will be imposed when the school has offered and implemented a range of support and management strategies, however our schools reserve the right to issue suspensions too for isolated serious incidents. Examples of some of the strategies that may first be used are:

- Discussion with the pupil
- Support from the schools pastoral inclusion team
- Discussions with parents
- Sanctions (consequences) in school
- Checking on any possible provocation
- Internal exclusions
- Referral to outside support agencies

It is important to note that exclusion will not be used for minor incidents such as academic performance or lateness. A suspension may be used in response to a serious breach of school rules or policies. In such a case, the Head Teacher/Head of School will investigate the incident thoroughly and consider all the evidence to support the allegation, taking account of all the school policies. The child will be encouraged to give their version of events and the head teacher/head of school will check whether the incident may have been provoked e.g. by bullying or racial harassment.

For the first 5 days of a suspension, the school must send homework for the pupil and arrange to have this homework marked. The school is also aware of its duty to provide a strategy for reintegrating pupils that return to school following suspension, and for managing their future behaviour. If a pupil has received numerous suspensions or is approaching the legal limit of 45 school days of suspension in an academic year, the school has a duty to consider whether suspension is considered to be an effective sanction.

Permanent Exclusion

A decision to exclude a pupil permanently should be taken only in response to serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy e.g. If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupils or others in the school. All exclusions will be carried out in accordance with the May 2023 DfE Guidance on Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England including Pupil Movement. A decision to permanently exclude is a serious one and will usually be the final step if the school has tried a range of sanctions and other strategies to improve behaviour that is consistently falling below

what is expected. However, there will be exceptional circumstances where it is appropriate to permanently exclude for a first or 'one off' offence, which 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

When is suspension/exclusion not appropriate?

Suspension/Exclusion should not be used for:

- Minor incidents such as failure to do homework or to bring dinner money
- Poor academic performance
- Lateness
- Breaches of school uniform rules or rules on appearance, except where these are persistent and in open defiance of such rules
- Punishing pupils for the behaviour of their parents, for example where parents refuse, or are unable, to attend a meeting

Who can suspend or exclude?

Only a Head Teacher/Head of School or designated member of staff acting on behalf of the Head.

How will you know if your child has been suspended/excluded?

You will receive a letter from the Head Teacher / Head of School or their delegate stating the reason for the suspension/exclusion and your right to make representations to the Discipline committee of the Trustees.

What happens to my child's education whilst s/he is suspended/excluded?

Day 1 to Day 5

You have a duty to ensure that your child is not present in a public place in school hours during this period unless there is reasonable justification for this. You may receive a penalty notice from the local authority if your child is present in a public place during school hours on the specified dates. If so, it will be for you to show reasonable justification. The school will arrange for some work to be provided but it is your responsibility to see that this work is completed and returned to school for marking.

Day 6 onwards

From the sixth day of a suspension until the expiry of the suspension the school will make arrangements for suitable full-time education. From the sixth day of a permanent exclusion, the Local Authority will ensure an education provision is made available.

How do I give my views to the Discipline Committee?

If you feel that the suspension/exclusion is unfair, you should let the Clerk to the Discipline Committee know within 7 days. The Clerk's details will be in the Head teacher's letter. The Discipline Committee is made up of three to five trustees who have had no previous involvement in your child's exclusion.

For suspensions, which total more than 15 school days in a term, the Clerk will automatically set up a meeting of the Discipline Committee to which you will be invited. Although the Discipline Committee is not obliged to meet to consider suspensions of between 1 and 15 days in a term, you can request a meeting and the Clerk will attempt to arrange this. This will also apply to any suspension where a public examination will be missed.

What will happen at the Discipline Committee meeting?

The Trustees, or a sub-committee of the Board may, for:

Suspension of Less than 5 Days (in one term)

- Consider any statement from the parent, and place a note on the pupil's record. The Committee cannot direct reinstatement but may do so only if the suspension causes the pupil to miss sitting a public examination

Suspensions of More than 5 days

- Uphold the Head teacher's decision to suspend the pupil
- Overturn the suspension. If the pupil is back in school before the meeting takes place, the decision will be noted on the pupil's file
- Direct the Head teacher to reinstate the pupil at the school where the pupil has not already returned OR where the pupil loses the opportunity to take a public examination

Permanent Exclusions

- Uphold the Head's decision to exclude the pupil
- Direct the Head Teacher to reinstate the pupil at the school

When will the discipline committee tell me their decision?

A letter informing you of the Discipline Committee's decision will be sent within 1 school day of the meeting.

What happens if a permanent exclusion is upheld by the Discipline Committee?

The Committee's letter will explain your right to appeal to an Independent Review Panel (IRP) and the date by which this must be done. If applied for by a parent within the timeframe, the Academy Trust must, at their own expense, arrange an Independent Review Panel hearing to review the decision of the committee not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil. Legal timeframe is: within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents by the committee or within 15 school days of the final determination of a claim of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

Parents may request an IRP even if they did not attend the meeting of the committee. The panel can decide to:

- Uphold the exclusion decision,
- Recommend Trustees reconsiders their decision or
- Quash the decision and direct Trustees to consider the decision again.

The panel may only quash the decision where it considers it was flawed in light of the principles of judicial review; illegality, irrationality, procedural and impropriety.