



# Aylesford School

## Character and Behaviour Policy

Ratified/Reviewed by	Date	Date to be reviewed
LGB	September 2025	September 2026

# Character and Behaviour Policy

## Rationale

This policy exists to provide a framework for supporting our stated aim of developing “Courage, Confidence and Character”, to promote a climate which enables all students to flourish, regardless of ability or special educational needs, and supports our desired outcomes of developing "strong character".

A key aim of the behaviour policy is to ensure that behaviour is good so that all students can learn and make progress. All students have a right to lessons which are free from disruption and poor behaviour and we expect our parents to support us with this aim through the home school agreement (in the appendix)

## General Principles

- We believe that achievement is affected by a student’s character. We also recognise that we have a joint responsibility with families to develop character.
- We want to enable every child to reach their full potential academically, socially, emotionally and physically.
- We aim to promote a positive approach in attitude and standards in order to create the best environment in which the students can achieve their full potential. Therefore, maintaining a positive and caring ethos throughout the community is fundamental to achieving this aim. staff, families, visitors and students are expected to conduct themselves in line with our policy.
- We encourage praise and reward good character.
- We share and display good work and character with families, staff and students through positive reward systems on a regular basis.
- We have clear expectations which are consistently applied by all staff.
- We aim to provide all students with opportunities to gain respect for themselves and others and to develop integrity, compassion, open-mindedness and an understanding for each other’s needs, feelings, rights and culture.

## Aims

The school’s expectations clearly focus on the positive behaviours that we want our students to display.

Our aim is to establish the highest possible standards of behaviour and character at Aylesford School and to help students to actively demonstrate the schools character strengths at all times. This is important so that the school is always a warm, caring, friendly and happy place, where learning can flourish. Students’ behaviour around the school should be excellent; every lesson should be characterised by a relentless focus on learning, free from distractions. Every student and every member of staff should be able to feel relaxed and happy, confident that their working environment is one where people are kind, courteous and respectful at all times.

The schools behaviour policy and expectations clearly focuses around positive behaviours, building the good character that we want our students to display. This is focused around 3 clear school rules that are easy for staff and students to understand.

- Be Ready
- Be Respectful
- Be Safe

By ‘being ready’, we expect all students to wear the correct school uniform; have the correct equipment; complete their homework and be on time to school and lessons.

By 'being respectful', we expect all students to be polite to everyone; be that in school, in our local area and whilst travelling to and from school. 'Being respectful' encompasses the positive traits we expect from our students, for example respecting the school environment by not littering.

By 'being safe', we expect all students to behave in a safe way for example; be alert, listen to instructions, be in the right place at the right time adhering to the school timetable and home school agreement. All students and staff have the right to feel safe.

### **Links to other policies**

It is important that this policy is read in conjunction with other policies such as the following:

- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Communication Policy
- Uniform policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Inclusion Policy (pending)
- Equality Policy
- SEN Policy
- Child Protection Policy (+KCSIE Latest Version)
- Sex and Relationship Education Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force guidance published by the DfE
- Searching, screening and confiscation guidance published by the DfE
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance – DfE
- Behaviour in Schools Guidance – DfE

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Leadership and Management:

- Miss T Kelvie – Headteacher – Oversight and monitoring of policy and implementation
- Mrs K James – Deputy Headteacher
- Mr D Wright – Deputy Headteacher – Character, Behaviour, Inclusion and Safeguarding
- Mr Byron Walker – Assistant Headteacher I/C KS4
- Mrs M Johnston – Assistant Headteacher I/C KS3
- Mrs L Muddle – Assistant Headteacher – Teaching and Learning
- Mrs A Dighton – Director of 6<sup>th</sup> Form, Associate AHT KS5
- Pastoral Support Mentors (Mr Osmond, Mrs Hodgson, Miss Bartholomew)
- Progress Leaders – Years 7 to 13
- Mentors – All years
- Classroom Teachers

It is the responsibility of everyone at Aylesford School to contribute towards a positive learning culture within the school by displaying the right character to foster a positive atmosphere within the school. We all have a part to play in developing this culture within our school community

The Governing Body will establish, in consultation with the Head teacher, staff and parents, the policy for the promotion of good behaviour for learning and keep it under review. It will ensure that it is communicated to students and parents, is non-discriminatory and its expectations are clear. Governors will support the School in maintaining high standards of behaviour for learning.

The Head teacher and other members of the Senior Leadership and Middle Leadership Teams will be responsible for the implementation, review and day-to-day management of the policy and procedures. Support and training for staff faced with challenging behaviour is also an important responsibility of those in positions of leadership.

The Governing Body, Head teacher and staff will ensure that there is no differential application of the policy and procedures under any circumstances, particularly on the grounds of ethnic or national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexuality. They will also ensure that the concerns of students are listened to and appropriately addressed.

### **Responsibility of Parents**

The role of parents is crucial in helping school develop and maintain good behaviour and character. Parents expect that student should be able to learn without their child's learning disrupted and that their children are safe in school. To support the school, parents should be encouraged to get to know the school's behaviour and character policy and, where possible, take part in the life of the school and its culture. Parents have an important role in supporting the school's character and behaviour policy and should be encouraged to reinforce the policy at home as appropriate. Where a parent has a concern about management of behaviour, they should raise this directly with the school while continuing to work in partnership with them. It is expected that parents support the school's behavior policy and support the attendance of detentions

### **Responsibility of Pupils**

All pupils deserve to learn in an environment that is calm, safe, and supportive, where they are treated with dignity. All pupils have a right to learn without disruptive behaviour in their lessons. To achieve this, every pupil should be made aware of the school character and behaviour standards, expectations, pastoral support, and consequence processes. Pupils should be taught that they have a duty to follow the school character and behaviour policy and uphold the school rules, and should contribute to the school culture. Pupils should be asked about their experience of character and behaviour and provide feedback on the school's character and behaviour culture. This can help support the evaluation, improvement and implementation of the character and behaviour policy. Every pupil should be supported to achieve the character and behaviour standards, including an induction process that familiarises them with the school character and behaviour culture.

### **Responsibility of staff**

All Staff will be responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed and consistently and fairly applied. Staff are expected to teach well planned lessons that meet the needs of their students. Teachers are expected to ensure that learning can take place free from disruption. Mutual support amongst all staff in the implementation of the policy is essential. Staff have a key role in advising the Leadership Team on the effectiveness of the policy and procedures. They also have responsibility, with The Governing Body, Head teacher and staff to ensure that there is no differential application of the policy and procedures under any circumstances, particularly on the grounds of ethnic or national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexuality.

They will also ensure that the concerns of students are listened to and appropriately addressed.

Staff have an important role in developing a calm and safe environment for pupils and establishing clear boundaries of acceptable pupil behaviour. Staff should uphold the whole-school approach to behaviour by teaching and modelling expected behaviour and positive relationships so that pupils can see examples of good habits and are confident to ask for help when needed. Staff should also challenge pupils to meet the

school expectations and maintain the boundaries of acceptable conduct.

### **Pupil Transition**

Pupils are inducted on our character and behavior standards as part of their pre – start transition programme. Parents and students are invited in to meet a member of the Senior Leadership Team prior to starting at Aylesford School where the Home School Agreement is explained and signed by all parties.

### **Pupil support**

Our inclusion team (Pastoral Support Mentors, School Psychotherapist and Mentors) provision supports all students as needed and our SEND team is responsible for those with SEND that may impact behavior – these teams work closely to deliver bespoke approaches to students as required.

### **Staff Induction/ Staff Training**

All new staff are inducted to this Character and Behavior policy and related policies on commencement of employment. Staff are trained regularly throughout the year on policy changes and support in implementing this policy through our CPD programme.

Training is also provided on an identified needs basis to address any specific or individual concerns with implementation as recognised by the school monitoring and evaluation process. This includes induction and regularly updated training, including input for outside agencies on up to date and research driven SEN and AEN strategies.

### **Behaviour Outside of the School Premises**

It is a parent's responsibility to manage the behaviour of their child outside of school and to keep them safe.

The school will work with outside agencies, such as the police, community teams and social services to support any external intervention or investigation into pupil conduct outside of school.

The school will always act to keep the students safe and to manage their behavior in school and out of school for example:

- when taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity;
- when travelling to or from school;
- when wearing school uniform;
- when in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school;
- that could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school;
- that poses a threat to another pupil in school; or
- that could adversely affect the reputation of the school

Sometimes there are instances where these two responsibilities of parents and school cross and the school will always work with parents to ensure their child is safe, happy and engaged with education. It is important that this is a partnership.

Where incidents unrelated to school, or outside of our reasonable remit to sanction or tackle, this limitation should be recognised and the appropriate agencies engaged.

For example, the school is not responsible for policing the actions of parents towards other parents outside of school or in the local community above our duty to safeguard young people. The school may offer support connecting parents to the appropriate agencies where they have non-school related concerns.

The school works closely with external agencies such as the police, child protection and social services and will always work to serve the professional agreement of what is in the best interests of the child. This does not negate or supersede the responsibility of a parent to report crimes or safeguarding concerns relating to their child.

During a police investigation, the school may be required to suspend its own internal investigations so not to jeopardise the legal process.

### **Rewarding Good Character**

Our focus is to reward positive behaviour and to foster an atmosphere of respect at all times. We will recognise positive behaviours through identifying when pupils show and model good character, for example the schools specific character strengths, regular attendance, commitment to the school, representing the school, positive attitudes and effort towards learning and progress made.

Rewarding and Recognising students will be underpinned by a set of 'Character Strengths' that are used as a way of rewarding students.

The 'character strengths' were developed through consultation with staff, students and parents with all stakeholders having a say in which character strengths we should be committed to developing at Aylesford School.

The 10 'Character Strengths' that we will be committed to developing and rewarding in our students are

**RESPECT** SELF-DISCIPLINE **COURAGE**  
OPEN-MINDEDNESS **MOTIVATION**  
**RESILIENCE** CONFIDENCE **INTEGRITY**  
COMPASSION **CURIOSITY**

These will be recognised by staff when students demonstrate these skills. These will contribute towards a student's end of term graduation ceremony along with good academic progress and good attendance.

In addition to this, students will be rewarded and recognised by

- Positive phone calls and emails home
- Postcards home from the teacher
- Recognition in assemblies
- Headteacher commendations
- Attendance Streak recognition

### **Managing poor behaviour**

Students are responsible for their own behaviour and need to accept the appropriate consequences that are handed to them by staff at the school. Students are expected to show and display the schools character strengths at all times as well as adhere to the 3 school rules of Ready, Respectful and Safe. It is expected that parents support the school in enforcing these consequences

### **Behaviour for learning**

Behaviour for learning refers to student conduct inside the classroom. Where behaviour expectations of a student falls below the high expectations of the school a teacher will issue a 30 minute afterschool detention.

The student will be informed and the **parent will be informed via classcharts** of the time and date of the detention. Detention will normally be the following day. Students will need to attend the detention in the school hall. Failure to attend will mean that the detention is escalated to a 60 minute detention. Failure to attend a 60 minute detention will results in the student being placed into the schools isolation room. At each of these stages the parents will receive communication via class charts and an email notification.

Behaviour for Learning	
Behaviour Type	Sanction
Not following teacher instructions	30 Minute Afterschool Detention
Disrupting the learning environment	
Insufficient work completed	
Late to Lesson (More than 5 minutes)	
Not completing homework	
Rudeness to staff	
No PE Kit	
Leaving a lesson without permission	

### Student Conduct – Minor

There will be a '3 strike' approach attached to the following behaviours, giving students time and chances to ensure that the 'basic student conduct' is being adhered to on a daily basis.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> incident, the student will automatically be issued a 30 minute afterschool detention. **Parents will be informed of this via classcharts.** Failure to attend will mean that the detention is escalated to a 60 minute detention and failure to attend a 60 minute detention will result in the student being placed into the schools isolation room. At each of these stages the parents will receive a communication via classcharts and an email notification.

Student Conduct- Minor	
3 Conduct Logs = 30-minute afterschool detention	
Chewing Gum	Uniform Violation
Missing Equipment	Mobile Phone/Headphone Confiscation
Poor language/swearing	Eating inside the school buildings
Littering/Minor Vandalism – 30 Minute Community Detention (Fridays)	

### Student Conduct – Serious

The following behaviours are considered more serious by the school. These types of behaviours are deliberate, and the schools takes these extremely seriously. These type of behaviours can have a negative impact on student and staff safety and also the wellbeing of all members of the school community.

Any behaviour resulting in a 30 minute detention will **be communicated to parents via classcharts.** Failure to attend will mean that the detention is escalated to a 60 minute detention. Failure to attend a 60 minute detention will result in the student being placed into the schools isolation room. At each of these stages the parents will receive communication via classcharts and an email notification.

For **serious incidents** resulting in isolation or more serious parents will be notified by a phone call

Student Conduct – Serious	
Behaviour Type	Sanction
Being in an out of bounds area	30 Minute Afterschool Detention
Misuse of school toilets	
Not following the hands-off policy	
Refusing to follow staff instructions	
Refusal to hand over a mobile phone, headphones or other item	
Not attendance to a 60 minute detention	Isolation
Possession of or use of Illicit substances, including vapes, cigarettes, drugs or alcohol	Isolation, Suspension or Permanent Exclusion may be considered for these types of serious behaviours depending on the severity of the incident.  As well as this being logged and recorded on class charts you will <b>receive a phone call if your child is in isolation or being suspended</b>  Further information regarding these types of serious incidents can be found later on in this policy
Truancy	
Inciting or filming a fight	
Dangerous Behaviour	
Persistent poor behaviour over a day, or several days	
Significant Vandalism	
Theft	
Verbal/Physical Abuse towards peers	
Fighting	
Directed swearing/intimidation of a staff member	
Persistent Bullying	
Use of or directed hate speech	
Possession/use of a weapon	
Sexual Assault or Sexual Harassment	
Serious Physical Assault	



### **Isolation Room**

If it is deemed appropriate, students can be placed in the isolation room for a period of time (where there is a serious incident, a student may be placed in Pastoral Support whilst an investigation is being conducted).

Students who display persistent or disruptive behavior over a number of lessons in a day will be in the isolation room the following day. Classcharts is used as a way to monitor students behavior and is checked each day by pastoral staff and the leadership team.

Students may also be placed in isolation if their uniform does not meet the schools uniform policy outlined on the school website. The school will always seek options first to ensure that students are in the correct uniform, for example lending spare uniform or asking parents to bring the correct uniform into school. Medical notes are the only exception for a student not being in the correct school uniform. Parental notes should be taken to Pastoral Support to be checked and dated and issued with a uniform note. Where a student does not have the correct uniform and they need to go to uniform shop to borrow uniform – the students phone will be handed in to ensure safe return of any items borrowed and the phone returned to the student at the end of the day

Students will be required to sit in isolation with a member of staff, to complete work in silence and to complete the work that is set. This is a very serious sanction; it signifies that the student has made choices that are unacceptable in our community. This time gives them an opportunity to reflect on the poor choices that they have made, as well as consider and reflect on their own character.

The length of time in Inclusion will be decided by the leadership team and this will be based on the severity of the incident, whether there have been any previous incidents and also whether or not the student is able to positively reflect on their actions. No student will be placed in isolation for more than 3 consecutive days. Internal Exclusion runs up to 4pm each day.

Parents/Carers will be informed by a member of the Welfare Team if their child is in isolation. The Mentor and progress leader will also be informed. If deemed necessary, a 're-admission' meeting may need to take place between the student, parent/carer and appropriate member of staff

If a student is placed in Inclusion it may be necessary for the Welfare Team to be involved and consider whether the student or family need further support, for example through 'The Early Help service', Social Services and/or the School Nursing Service.

### **Internal Exclusion at Partner Schools**

Suspension is not always appropriate or effective for some students and on some occasions the school will work with partner schools so that students can complete their internal exclusion at another school. It ensures that students are still receiving access to a school environment and avoids having a suspension on their permanent record. If a student chooses not to attend this will be recorded as an unauthorized absence

It is not always appropriate or possible for students to complete this at a partner school and this will be at the discretion of the school's leadership team. We will also support other local schools by offering our inclusion room.

## Suspension

The Head teacher can determine periods of exclusion up to 45 days in any one year. This is usually as a result of a serious incident or the regular repetition of poor behavior or breaches to the schools behavior policy. When considering or investigating an incident that potentially may result in a suspension its important that correct procedures are followed – these are outlined in appendix 1.

There will be a reintegration meeting held where a post exclusion contract will be signed and targets set.

Parents are expected to attend this meeting to ensure that a positive way forward can be identified. Where parents are unable to attend the responsibility is with the parents to notify the school. The school could consider conducting this meeting over the phone.

In certain situations, determined by the head teacher it may be appropriate for the student to remain in Inclusion until parental meeting has taken place.

If the exclusion or cumulative period of exclusion is more than the statutory period of 45 days, as prescribed in the DFES Circulation 10/99 Social Inclusion, then a meeting of the Governors' Discipline Committee will take place.

## Permanent Exclusion

The Head teacher may, in certain circumstances, permanently exclude a student. A meeting of the Governors' Discipline Committee has to be convened to ratify this decision. Once permanently excluded, the LA has a responsibility to offer educational support or to assist the parents in finding an alternative school. The parents also have a right of appeal to an independent tribunal. This tribunal's decision is binding.

When considering or investigating an incident that potentially may result in a permanent exclusion it's important that correct procedures are followed – these are outlined in appendix 1

Please be also refer to the schools suspension and exclusion policy.

## Offsite Directions

If a student's poor behaviour does not improve, we will look to find alternative options to avoid a permanent exclusion. This may include an offsite direction – (formally known as a Managed move)

Directed off site – formerly a Managed Move/ Monitored Transfer.

Directions off- site (formerly Managed moves) are decided at IYFA meetings. These are designed to offer a student who is at significant risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the opportunity to start afresh at a new school. Initially the student will be on a six-week trial period at the new school, this can be extended if required. If this is successful, they will move there permanently. Parents must consent to this.

- A managed move is now called off site direction
- A monitored transfer is now called managed move to avoid a PEX
- It becomes a permanent managed move when the off -site direction is successful.

### Electronic Devices

Electronic devices such as phones, are not permitted to be used in school. We are fully aware that some students will need these to ensure safe journeys to and from school and as a result students are allowed these devices in their bags. However, they should not be used or out on display during lessons, before school, after school as well as breaks and lunches whilst on the school premises.

Students who use or are seen with these devices during the school day will have these taken to the school office and returned at the end of the day.

If a student has their phone taken for a 2<sup>nd</sup> time in a term then the parents/carers will need to collect this. Parents will be contacted by the school to arrange collection. If a parent/carer is unable to collect the phone then this will be stored by the school in the school safe until such arrangements can be made.

Where a student refuses to hand over the device a 30 minute after school detention will be set. A mobile phone or earphone confiscation will contribute towards 'minor' conduct and count as one of the strikes on a students record. A reminder that 3 occurrences of minor conduct results in 30 minute afterschool detention.

We are aware that at times there may be extenuating circumstances, perhaps linked to safeguarding that a student may require their phone back on the same day. On these occasions the school will allow this, but the student will be expected to hand their phone in to the school office the following day.

### Hands off Policy

The school has a hands-off policy. The school expect that students keep their hands off all community members. This includes staff and students. This policy is designed to keep all members of our school community safe. Depending on the nature and way that the hands-off policy is breached the school may choose to apply consequences as per the schools behavior policy as per above.

### Smoking/Vaping

Aylesford School has a zero tolerance on Smoking and Vaping. These items are banned from the school premises and any student caught vaping/smoking, in possession of vaping/smoking paraphernalia, or caught with other students who are vaping/smoking **will be suspended**. There is never a time that multiple students should occupy a single cubicle. There will be an assumption that students may be vaping and as such, in order to keep students safe staff may choose to search these students and if found with any of the above items will be subject to the same consequences. (Please also refer to the guidance on searching, screening and confiscation which can be found on the school website)

## **Behaviour Online**

The way in which pupils relate to one another online can have a significant impact on the culture at school. Negative interactions online can damage the school's culture and can lead to school feeling like an unsafe place. Behaviour issues online can be very difficult to manage given issues of anonymity and online incidents occur both on and off the school premises.

The same standards of behaviour are expected online as applied offline, everyone should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity.

Many online behaviour incidents amongst young people occur outside the school day and off the school premises. Parents are responsible for this behaviour. However, often incidents that occur online will affect the school culture. As a school we will consider sanctioning pupils when their behaviour online poses a threat or causes harm to another pupil and/or could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school, when the pupil is identifiable as a member of the school or if the behaviour could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

Sexual behaviour online including the sending of explicit images, sexual harassment is covered in our safeguarding policy in line with KCSIE guidance.

## **Social Media**

The school will educate students on appropriate use of social media and give them the tools they need to stay safe online. This is delivered through our character curriculum, safety assemblies and briefings and through our life and society curriculum.

The school will regularly update parents on the risks to students' safety online and provide resource and information to help them support and keep their child safe online and when using social media.

The school will always act to safeguard children from harm online and enact our safeguarding policy where a child's safety is threatened.

## **Parental Responsibility and Social Media**

The school's view is clear that by allowing access to social media parents accept responsibility for this and for monitoring its use by their child and keeping their children safe outside of school hours. This includes monitoring and taking responsibility for preventing their child from being involved in dangerous or poor behaviour online, in messaging apps and on social media.

Whilst the school will support parents and ensure that poor online behaviour is challenged as appropriate in school, it does not support students/children being allowed access to social media.

The school does not recognise the value in social media spaces for use by young people and regularly sees first-hand the severe damage to confidence, wellbeing and safety that access to online communications can do. Social media use/misuse has a direct correlation to self-harm, bullying, risk taking behaviour, extreme views, and anxiety in young people. We cannot support its use for these reasons.

Whilst the school understands the pressures of online culture and social media usage on parents from children, it does not endorse or support its use by young people. Therefore, the school is explicitly clear in its view that if you allow your child unmonitored access to social media or messaging apps then you risk exposing them to bullying, intimidation, the influence of unmonitored behaviours, extreme views, sexualised acts or behaviours and safeguarding risks. The school will happily support any parent who is concerned about social media use and continues to support and educate children on its safe use.

Parents must be aware that the school does not have remit or resources to manage or police online behavior outside of school. Parents must be active in managing their children's social media use.

If your child experiences crime online, including harassment, sexual harassment, fraud or hate crimes then this should be reported to the police and the school so that we can work together to investigate and resolve in your child's best interests.

### **Serious Incidents**

The school recognises and actions such incidents as high priority and serious. Please see guidance as part of our safeguarding policy for details on the school's response to these incidents.

All serious incidents will be judged on individual circumstances and following a rigorous investigation. It will be based on a balance of probability, following all national guidelines for suspensions in schools. Serious incidents include, but are not limited to:

- Physical aggression
- Sexual harassment or Sexual Violence
- Use of or directed hate speech, including but not limited to, racism, misogyny or homophobia
- Possession of or use of illicit substances including, but not limited to; vapes, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs
- Bullying
- Cyberbullying (in a school related context) also see safeguarding policy.
- Bringing the school into disrepute
- Prohibited Items are any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been or is likely to be used: to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the pupil). These items include:
  - knives and weapons;
  - alcohol;
  - illegal drugs;
  - stolen items;
  - tobacco and cigarette papers;
  - fireworks;
  - Possession of or distribution of pornographic images

The following the consequences will be considered for more serious incidents outlined above

- Internal inclusion
- Fixed term period at a partner school
- Fixed term Suspension/ Permanent exclusion
- Managed move/ Direction off- site.
- Where applicable incidents may be reported to the police or other external agencies.
- Bespoke supportive strategies following initial consequence e.g. alternative timetable, input from external agencies etc.

Exclusion/ suspension data is reviewed at Local and Trust governing body meetings each term.

Where a pupil has a disability or special educational need reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate and support this in balance with the consequences and incident.

## **Appendix 1 – Process leading to a suspension or permanent exclusion**

### **Please see our Suspensions and Exclusions Policy**

When taking the decision to suspend or permanently exclude a student the school will follow appropriate guidance from the DfE, most notably ‘Suspension and Permanent exclusions from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including Pupil movement’ and ‘Behaviour in schools – Advice for head teachers and school staff’

Whilst serious incidents at Aylesford are rare, we aim to investigate serious incidents (both alleged and actual) thoroughly and promptly.

When establishing the facts in relation to a bullying allegation, potential suspension or permanent exclusion decision the headteacher must apply the civil standard of proof, i.e., ‘on the balance of probabilities’ it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of ‘beyond reasonable doubt.’ This means that the headteacher should accept that something happened if it is more likely that it happened than that it did not happen.

The following process will be applied to situations that may result in a suspension or permanent exclusions.

- Statements collected from victim, perpetrator and any witnesses, this includes staff, students, governors, parents and community members. Where a student refuses to give a statement this will be recorded and where a student needs this scribing the student will sign their account
- In some incidents, where there may be Health and Safety risk to students or staff the school may send a student home and ask for a statement to be sent in.
- The school will consider any contextual or mitigating circumstances around the child that may have led or contributed to the incident, including if there has been any previous issues with this student or is this an isolated or reoccurring incident
- The school will consider whether the student as a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) or potentially have and SEND. As a result the welfare team will liaise with the SENCO regarding any potential suspension or Permanent Exclusions and to consider whether any ‘reasonable adjustments’ could of have been made.
- The Head teacher or ‘acting’ Head Teacher will meet with the student and take their views about the incident/suspension into account, particularly in light of their age and understanding before making a decision to suspend
- The school will complete the Head Teachers suspension checklist before making a decision to suspend.
- Evidence that may be used includes:
  - CCTV footage.
  - Staff accounts
  - Student Witness accounts
  - Accounts from members of the public
  - Mobile phone messages and e- communications
  - Videos, images or screenshots provided by others or posted on social media.

Anything the investigation lead feels may be appropriate

- Once this information has been gathered – it will be put together with an incident front sheet and all the information presented to the Head Teacher or ‘acting’ head teacher to make a decision about an appropriate consequence. The Head Teacher should consider if there are any other acceptable forms of consequence and may consider paragraph 45 the DfE Behaviour in schools document. The Head Teacher or ‘acting’ Head Teacher should consider these events on civil standard of the ‘Balance of Probability’ rather than the criminal standard of ‘beyond reasonable doubt’ (Paragraph 3 DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance)
- The school will endeavor to contact parents without delay, however the school must and will take time to gather all information before a decision is made and parents are contacted. The school will ensure that parents receive a letter outlining the information that is set out in paragraph 63 of the DfE Guidance ‘Suspension and Permanent Exclusions’
- The school will inform Social Workers or Virtual Schools Staff about the suspension if that applies to the student
- The school will inform the governing body about any permanent exclusion. The school will also inform the governing body if the student has been suspended for more than 5 school days per term or the suspension will result in the missing of a public examination
- A date for a reintegration meeting will be set and held with parents and students. This meeting will be with the most appropriate members of staff for that students. As a result of this meeting staff, parents, and student will sign to agree the targets that have been set.

Exclusions/ suspensions can be made by the Headteacher or any named “acting” Headteacher who is performing this delegated role in the Headteacher’s absence.

All suspensions/ exclusions will be checked and issued by the Headteacher or ‘acting’ Headteacher.

The exclusion can be investigated and communicated by any member of the leadership or pastoral team who has been delegated this responsibility

## Use of Reasonable Force

### What is Reasonable Force?

- 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 students.
- Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a student 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.
- 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than needed.
- Schools generally use force to control students and to restrain them.
  - *Control* means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of the classroom.
  - *Restraint* means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two students are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- 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 injury.

### Who can use reasonable force?

- All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force
- 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 students such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

### When can reasonable force be used?

- To prevent students from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder
- 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:
  - remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
  - prevent a student behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
  - prevent a student leaving the classroom where allowing the student to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
  - prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student, or to stop a fight in the playground; and



- restrain a student at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.
- Reasonable force cannot be used as a sanction – it is always unlawful to use force as punishment.

Telling parents when force has been used on their child

Record the incident on SIMs and speak to the SLT Line Manager for your department. They will support you in communicating the incident to parents. In deciding what is a serious incident, teachers should use their professional judgement and consider the:

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

What about other physical contact with students?

It is not illegal to touch a student. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a student is proper and necessary. Examples of where touching a student might be proper or necessary:

- When comforting a distressed student;
- When a student is being congratulated or praised;
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching; and
- To give first aid.

## **Appendix 2 – Home school agreement**

Please confirm you have read and in agreement with the Home School Agreement (tick box)

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### **AYLESFORD SCHOOL - HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT**

At Aylesford School, our aim is to prepare our students for life beyond, so that they are well-qualified, well-rounded citizens with the confidence to face the many challenges that life presents. We have a strong ethos based on high personal and academic expectations that underpin everything we do. We want our students to be confident and have great character strengths. Exam success will get you the interview but it will not get you the job. As such, we expect our students to do as well as they can at school and to take full advantage of the many academic and extra-curricular activities that are presented to them. Our vision and values are demonstrated by our students every day, where their tenacity and determination are a constant source of inspiration. I am immensely proud to be Headteacher and acutely aware of the responsibilities the role entails.

#### **The School**

We will:

- contact parents/carers if there is a problem with attendance, punctuality or equipment;
- let parents know about any concerns or problems that affect their child's work or behaviour;
- send home regular assessments and annual report of achievement;
- set, mark and monitor students' work;
- arrange parents' evenings during which progress will be discussed;
- keep parents/carers informed about School activities through regular letters home, and notices about special events;
- provide intervention sessions to help students progress outside of curriculum time;
- develop and reward Character Strengths that students demonstrate

#### **The Students**

I will:

- be determined to achieve the very best I can
- follow the school rules: 'Be ready, be respectful and be safe'
- aim to have attendance of 100%
- arrive on time every day
- be in full school uniform every day
- be committed to developing and demonstrating the 10 character strengths
- complete all tasks set to the best of my ability
- participate fully in school life
- take responsibility for my learning including revision activities
- attend intervention sessions to help students progress outside of curriculum time

#### **The Parents/Carers**

I/We will:

- see that my child goes to school every day, on time, properly equipped and in full school uniform;
- support the school's behaviour policy of 'Be ready, be respectful, be safe';
- let the school know about any concerns or problems that might affect my child's work or behaviour;
- support my child in homework and other opportunities for home learning;
- attend all parents' evenings, meetings and discussion about my child's progress;
- ensure that my child attends any intervention sessions outside of curriculum time that the school feels is necessary for them to make progress.