Meopham School
Behaviour Policy

Equalities Statement

In our Trust we work to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all members of our community who hold a range of protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, as well as having regard to other factors which have the potential to cause inequality, such as socio-economic factors. For further information, please see our Equalities Policy.

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Appendix 1: Educational need and disability (SEND) and Vulnerable students

1. Introduction

Meopham School promotes preparation for responsible adulthood and has:

- A clear philosophy and explicit principles based on commonly-held values of personal development and progress, care for the individual, self-esteem and respect for others;
- A well-organised, secure environment, conducive to learning and the healthy moral and social development;
- A curriculum where high personal achievement is a priority;
- A smart, traditional uniform for all students.

This policy is intended to enable students, staff and parents to have a clear understanding of all issues relating to behaviour, conduct and discipline. It is hoped that this will enable the school to promote among students self-discipline and proper regard for the school's authority while at the same time encouraging good behaviour and respect for others.

We aim to create an inclusive, caring learning environment in the school by:

- Promoting good behaviour;
- Promoting self-esteem, self-discipline, and positive relationships based on mutual respect;
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all;
- Teaching students the behaviour we expect through assemblies, the tutor programme, Values, and Ethics lessons;
- Promoting early intervention to support a student if behaviour concerns become apparent;
- Providing a safe environment; free from disruption, violence, bullying and any form of harassment;
- Encouraging students to behave in such a way that furthers the interests of the local and wider community
- Encouraging a positive relationship with parents/carers
- Promoting a culture of praise and encouragement in which all students can achieve to their full potential;

This policy has been written with regards to the Equality Act 2010 and public sector equality duty. Meopham school recognises that reasonable adjustments to the application of this policy will, at times, have to be made where required to meet individual needs and avoid disability discrimination.

This policy is written in conjunction with key guidance provided by the Department for Education, including;

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools - A guide for headteachers and school staff
Suspension and Permanent Exclusion - DfE guidance 2024
Swale Academies Trust Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Policy

This policy also links with several school policies, practices and action plans including:

- Anti-Bullying
- Safeguarding and Child protection policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Responsible Internet Use Policy (AUP)
- Equalities Policy
- RSE Policy
- Uniform policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

2. School Values

Students thrive when there are high standards and expectations of conduct. We have four very simple expectations of everyone within our school community - our TRUE values; *Tenacity, Respect, Unity, Excellence*

Tenacity - we do not give up when things get tough. We know that sometimes in life we face challenges and we recognise that these challenges are opportunities for growth. When life knocks us down, we pick ourselves up, we dust ourselves off and we try again. We believe in a bright future and that we create our own destinies. We don't expect things to be handed to us on a plate. It is our life and our responsibility to shape it in the way we want.

Respect - we demonstrate respect in all we do. We are respectful and courteous to everyone we meet. This is a non-negotiable. We celebrate our differences and champion our diversity. We have the greatest respect for ourselves, for others and for our surroundings.

Unity - as a school, we work for each other: we share in our successes; we support each other through challenges and we are all jointly responsible for the community we uphold. We are proud to be active members of our local village community, making a positive contribution to life in Meopham and beyond. We help each other to grow in confidence and support each other in shaping our own paths through life.

Excellence - we strive to be the very best in all our endeavours, whether that be academically, creatively, competitively or morally - we dream big and never put limits on ourselves or others. We are encouraged to think for ourselves and demonstrate independence. We develop excellence as a habit and recognise that talent isn't enough. True excellence is only achieved through practice and effort.

The school's values are woven into every aspect of work - from high expectations of conduct, rewards systems and personal development programs. For example, the curriculum supports the teaching of these values, and the approach to behavior is rooted in them. The school also focuses on developing students' understanding of their place in a diverse society, promoting tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Furthermore, Meopham School actively promotes the Fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. The school aims to provide a safe and supportive environment where students can make positive choices, knowing they are in a community that values their well-being and potential.

3. Rewards

We have high expectations of our students, all of whom should try hard to value their own achievements, both in and out of the classroom. To encourage them a reward system based on our TRUE values operates throughout the school.

We use house points as a way for students to collect rewards. Any member of staff may issue points when students demonstrate positive behaviours. Positive behaviours in lessons that can achieve a house point may include:

Tenacity - Showing grit and resilience. Not giving up when things get tough. Working hard to overcome a challenge. Perseverance in the face of setbacks.

Respect - Showing respect for others and our school environment. Showing courteousness to other members of the school community and being respectful of others opinions and points of view. Championing our shared values whilst showing respect for our differences and diversity.

Unity - Support others through challenges. Taking responsibility for our school and wider community. Making a positive contribution to the life of our school.

Excellence - Showing excellence academically, creatively or morally. Making a good effort in class and showing commitment to learning. Completing homework to a high standard. Showing independence and taking responsibility for own learning.

House points are totalled termly and students can achieve bronze, silver and gold badges for demonstrating each of our TRUE values. Student achievements are celebrated in regular recognition assemblies and those achieving the full set of TRUE badges for each milestone are invited to the schools annual prizegiving event. Other rewards events also take place based on the accumulation of house points, or other service to the school - these include end-of-year rewards trips, certificates and prizes - as well as other in-school events.

Additionally, the school promotes department postcards, stickers and stamps. Students can also receive a 'Headteachers Commendation' if they have completed a particularly good piece of work. These students receive house points, a certificate and are invited to join the Headteacher for a pizza lunch. Students with 100% attendance, or improved attendance are recognised through certificates, prizes and letters home.

4. Student Expectations

The school asks students to:

- Take pride in being part of Meopham School.
- Ensure that nothing that is said or done causes hurt or unhappiness to any other member of the Meopham School community.
- Try their best to treat everyone and everything with care, courtesy and consideration.
- Remember that every public action of mine outside school is judged to the good or harm of the whole school community.
- Understand that we all have a part to play in achieving a successful and happy school.
- Remember that my school concentrates on the success and achievement of individuals and not their failure.
- Take responsibility for their own actions and avoid making excuses

5. Mobile Phones

At Meopham School, we aim to provide all students with a calm and purposeful environment that allows all students to work without distraction. To prevent any disruption to learning, to promote face to face socialisation and reduce electronic communication being used for unkind behaviour, mobile phones or other such electronic devices (such as smart-watches) must be switched off and kept out of sight in a school bag for the duration of the school day. This is now a legal requirement.

In Years 7 - 11, if a mobile phone, electronic device, earbud or smartwatch is seen, heard, used or found to have been used during the school day, staff will respond consistently, promptly and assertively by confiscating it. Once confiscated by a member of staff the phone will be kept securely until collection. The student will also be issued with a C4 after school detention. The mobile phone can be collected at the end of the school day.

Refusal to hand a mobile phone over for confiscation will result in a period of time in the school's Student Support Provision (SSP) and the student may lose the privilege of bringing a phone into school in their bag.

However, if a breach of the mobile phone policy becomes repeated, the confiscated phone can only be collected by a parent or carer. If a parent or carer is unable to collect the phone, the student will have it returned on the last day of that specific term. The school's right to confiscate electronic devices (as well as other prohibited items) is outlined in the Department for Education statutory guidance.

In Years 12 and 13 (Sixth Form), students only are allowed to bring personal electronic devices into school in order to use them as part of their independent study. They can only be seen and used in the Sixth Form study rooms. This is a privilege and can be revoked for individual students if not used appropriately. If a mobile phone is seen or used outside of the Sixth Form area, it will be confiscated and kept securely until collection at the end of the school day.

To maintain a safe and respectful environment, students are strictly prohibited from taking photographs, or making audio or video recordings, this includes recordings of any individual (staff or students) on school premises. This rule applies to all electronic devices, including mobile phones, laptops or chrome books and any smart technology with recording functionality. Recording anyone without their express prior consent is a serious breach of our culture of mutual respect and may be regarded as a breach of individual rights or, in some instances, a criminal offence. Any such unauthorised use of a device will result in immediate confiscation, and the student will be required to permanently delete the recording in the presence of a staff member. Depending on the severity and impact, the sharing or uploading of such recordings will lead to significant sanctions, including internal isolation, external suspension, or, in extreme cases (such as upskirting or the sharing of indecent images), permanent exclusion. Please find the link below to the Department of Education guidance on mobile phones in schools:

DfE Mobile Phone Guidance - February 2024

There may be exceptional circumstances to this matter and we comply with our Equalities Act duty to make reasonable adjustments - for example students who need to access a mobile phone for medical reasons. In order to request a reasonable adjustment, a formal request must be made to the Headteacher from the parent/carer.

In order to support the school in ensuring the mobile phones are not used on site, we ask that colleagues, parents and carers model expectations by not using their mobile phones for personal reasons whilst on the school premises, and ask that all daytime communications are made via the school office - rather than directly to students mobile phones. We will reluctantly sanction students using their phone in school to make contact with home without being given permission by a member of staff.

6. Home-School Agreement

Meopham School's "Home-School Agreement" summarises the school's expectations of our students. The intention is to reach a common definition of how we expect students to conduct themselves. At the same time, it recognises that teachers are important role models for students to follow in terms of good manners, courtesy and social behaviour.

Parent/Carers will:

- See that my child goes to school regularly, on time and properly equipped.
- Inform the school of any concerns that might affect my child's progress.
- Inform the school immediately if my child is absent and provide infomation to explain the absence.
- Support the school's rules for good behaviour and uniform.
- Support the school's sanctions.
- Ensure that my child attends after school detentions if they are set.
- Support my child in his/her homework.
- Attend Parents' Evenings and discussions about my child's progress.
- Keep the school informed of any medical conditions or changes of circumstances, e.g. home address

or telephone number.

- Improve students' health by encouraging walking/cycling between home and school, as fewer cars will benefit road safety on and around the school site, also reducing pollution in accordance with the School Travel Plan.

Students will:

- Abide by Meopham school rules.
- Attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- Bring all the correct books and equipment when required.
- Wear the school uniform with pride, follow the uniform rules and be tidy in appearance.
- Do my homework and classwork to the best of my ability.
- Be polite and considerate and behave in an orderly way at all times - including to and from school.
- Keep the school free from graffiti and litter.
- Follow the school rules and attend detentions if they are set.

The School will:

- Provide a safe, caring environment for students
- Encourage students to achieve their full potential as a valued member of Meopham School.
- Provide a broad, balanced relevant curriculum.
- Encourage high standards of work and behaviour.
- Contact you if there are any ongoing concerns that affect your child's progress.
- Keep you regularly informed about your child's progress.
- Set and mark homework on a regular basis, and provide facilities for your child to do homework after school.
- Arrange Parents' Evenings during which your child's progress and attainment will be discussed.
- Keep you informed about school activities through regular correspondence and newsletters.

A copy of the Home School Agreement will be given to every student/parent/carer/guardian on

joining the school, signed by all parties, and retained in the student's file. A copy can also be found on the school website:

Home School Agreement

7. Sanctions, Interventions and Support

We will always endeavour to work in partnership with parents / carers to support students to make positive behaviour choices. The school is a busy, friendly and thriving place; in order that it can function efficiently and for the benefit of the whole school community we do expect students to adhere to the school rules. We understand that some students may need support to regulate their behaviour – part of this support includes the need to issue sanctions to ensure students learn that there are always consequences for our actions.

The school's range of sanctions is listed below. However, it should be borne in mind that the school's positive expectations of students place a strong emphasis on encouragement and expecting positive and co-operative behaviour and the cooperation of parents will be sought to modify poor behaviour. The school strongly believes in a restorative approach as a means of encouraging positive behaviours.

The aim is for students to live and work in a happy, friendly and courteous atmosphere. The ethos of the school is intended to support its students so that they are able to learn without distraction or interference. The school recognises discipline as important and necessary. Corrective language and sanction will be directed towards the act of misbehaviour or failure to meet requirements rather than implied condemnation of a student. The student will be encouraged to work on targets for improvement.

When deciding upon sanctions/reprimands for all students with SEN, we assess their individual needs and apply the behavioural tariff accordingly. This may mean that reasonable adjustments are considered and applied.

We continue to monitor and take into account the guidance of the DfE, particularly regarding Social Inclusion, taking account of any subsequent guidance published by the DfE. Students with Special Educational Needs: we observe the SEN Code of Practice. In particular, we make referrals to outside agencies when appropriate, and plan accordingly for the education of the student. Meopham's legal duties, in relation to the Equality Act 2010 in respect of safeguarding students with Special Educational Needs and all vulnerable students, will be considered when making decisions linked to discipline and behaviour.

Sanctions

In order to manage behaviour consistently and effectively, classroom teachers will use an escalating C1-C5 Conduct Pathway system where students will be given every opportunity at each level to change their behaviour.

Teachers should give quiet, succinct reminders of standards to all students regularly. Tutor time and Assemblies are used to explain and discuss the schools expectations – this ensures students are clear on what is required of them.

The Conduct Pathway system, and how we issue consequences are outlined below:

(C1) - A first warning

This is issued to a student as a reminder that they have not met the behaviour expectations. No sanction is issued. It is a chance for the student to take responsibility and correct their behaviour.

(C2) - A second warning

This is issued following a C1. This is a second reminder to the student that they are still failing to meet the required behaviour standards. No Sanction is issued. Teachers may ask the student to leave the room for a re-set conversation, which will allow the teacher to explain the conduct that is expected and give the student an opportunity to explain why they are not meeting the expectation. It is a second chance for students to correct poor behaviour.

(C3) - A lunchtime detention (15 minutes)

This is for repeated failure to meet the conduct standards. It is issued after C1 and C2 warnings where students will have been given two opportunities to rectify their behaviour. A lunchtime detention will be issued by the classroom teacher. This will be served on the day it is issued, or the day after if issued after the lunch-break. This is recorded and an alert is sent to parents / carers that outlines the reason for the detention.

(C4) - A 30 minute after school detention (3:15pm until 3:45pm)

This is issued when a student's behaviour is so poor they have had to be removed from the classroom after repeated reminders. This will usually be issued after C1, C2 warnings and a C3 detention has been issued. This is recorded and an alert is sent to parents / carers. An after school detention will be issued by the classroom teacher and will take place the following day. Classroom teachers will usually call home to discuss the reason the student was removed from the classroom.

C4 detentions are also issued when a student fails to attend their C3 detention.

Removal from the classroom and a further sanction may also be set for a single disruptive incident that may warrant a student being removed.. These include, but are not limited to:

- Unsafe or violent behaviour
- Continued, or gross defiance of the teachers authority
- Repeatedly arguing with a teacher when asked to desist
- Swearing at the teacher or another student
- Discrimination, Racism or bullying

Students who are removed from the classroom will be taken to work in another classroom, with a senior member of staff or the Student Support Provision for the remainder of the period.

Should it be felt that a student is not able to self-reflect and / or are too dysregulated to attend their next lesson, they may be asked to work in the Student Support Provision for more than one lesson.

(C5) - A 1 hour after school detention (3:15pm until 4:15pm)

This is a sanction that is issued by the Curriculum Leader, the Heads of Year or by a member of SLT. C5 detentions are issued for incidents where there has been an ongoing, or more serious breach of the school standards of conduct.

These detentions are one hour long, and parents / carers will be notified that a C5 detention has been issued and the reason for the detention.. This is recorded and an alert is sent to parents / carers. The member of staff issuing the detention will often make contact with parents / carers to explain the behaviour that led to the C5 detention.

C5 detentions are also issued when a student fails to attend their C4 detention.

Failure to attend C5 detention will result in the student spending time in the Student Support Provision where they will be able to work quietly, reflect on their conduct choices and be spoken to by members of staff about the support they might need to avoid sanctions in the future.

Social times

For poor conduct in social times students will often be dealt with by a conversation with the student to reiterate the school's expectations. C3, C4 and C5 detentions, and other more serious sanctions may be set for poor or unsafe behaviour during social times.

We reserve the right to ask students to bring a packed lunch and eat only in a supervised area such as the Student Support Provision where their conduct in the school canteen repeatedly falls below expected standards. We will contact parents and give reasonable notice if this sanction is imposed.

In line with the Statutory guidance relating to Suspensions and Exclusions the Headteacher reserves the right to issue lunchtime suspensions for cases of ongoing, unsafe or significantly poor behaviour in social times.

Other measures:

The school has a number of other sanctions and support measures it may put in place to support students to improve their behaviour:

Time in the Student Support Provision

Our SSP is a silent working space where students can spend time away from the wider school community. It gives students time to reflect on their conduct and also re-regulate themselves if this is needed. When a student is placed in SSP as formal sanction (and not a lesson removal or C5 detention escalation) the Pastoral Support Manager or Head of Year will make contact with parents at the earliest opportunity to explain the conduct that resulted in this sanction.

Work appropriate for the year group will be completed in the SSP and students will need to complete this work and demonstrate appropriate conduct in order to complete their time in the SSP successfully. If the SSP rules are not followed, the the session will need to be repeated. Where applicable, reasonable adjustments will be made; these will be decided by senior staff in consultation with the schools SENDCo.

Students placed in the SSP will also have an opportunity to speak to the school Wellbeing lead who will be able to provide support and advice around making better conduct choices in future. Once a student has successfully completed their time, a monitoring report card will be issued. This is to ensure that students do not repeat poor choices and prevent them from returning.

Internal suspension

An internal suspension is an alternative to external suspension and is served in the Student Support Provision. Internal suspensions are authorised by the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher only and may be used when it is felt an external suspension could be considered, but might not be appropriate in the individual circumstances. We will inform parents / carers when an internal suspension has been issued and parents / carers will be expected to attend a re-integration meeting following an internal suspension.

Saturday Detentions / Training day detentions

In exceptional circumstances, or where a student is not able to complete the after school detentions issued, the school is able to set detentions to be served on a Saturday or when the school is closed to students on a training day. This will be on a date negotiated with parents / carers and this will be communicated by the Head of Year. These detentions may involve a form of community service around the school site but this will be negotiated beforehand.

Other appropriate sanctions

The school reserves the right to issue other sanctions that are appropriate and proportionate to the circumstances - for example not allowing a student to attend an extra-curricular activity, school trip or the removal of other privileges. The Headteacher will make the final decision in the event of any disagreement regarding the appropriateness of these kinds of sanction.

Conduct reports

Where a student has ongoing poor conduct or requires additional support to modify their behaviour, we may issue the following conduct reports:

Department report - This can be used by any department to support the behaviour for learning attitude of students within a specific subject area. Contact home must be made by the classroom teacher and the student must report to the Curriculum Leader

Tutor report - Tutor reports are a supportive measure to encourage students to make positive choices bout their behaviour and management of their emotions. Tutor reports are instigated at the discretion of the Form tutor in discussion with the Head of Year and are used where students are accumulating behaviour points across two or more subjects, or where behaviour concerns are ongoing. There will be contact home from the form tutor and the student will spend 4 weeks on report.

Head of Year report - this report is used when a student's conduct continues to cause concern after completing the 4 week Tutor report. The report is issued at the discretion of the Head of Year and may be instigated before the end of the 4 week Tutor report, if it is felt that this is warranted by continued poor behaviour. There will be contact home by the Head of Year and the student will spend at least 2 weeks on report to the Head of Year.

SLT report - this is the highest level of report and will be used at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team. Students on report will report to a member of SLT. At this stage, parents will be invited to a meeting. During these meetings, a conversation will involve discussions around intervention and outside agency support for the child. Parents and students will be expected to enter into an agreement regarding the next steps in order to change the behaviour of the student.

Offsite direction / alternative provision

The school reserves the right to consider an off-site direction or alternative provision if the student is persistently disrupting the good order of the school and is not responding to the interventions that the school has put in place. The school will contact parents and follow the Local Authority and Statutory guidance when implementing an Offsite direction or placement with an Alternative Provision (AP) provider.

Referral to Curriculum Leaders

Ongoing poor student conduct in a subject area may be referred to the Curriculum Leader.. Curriculum Leaders may use a range of strategies to promote a positive attitude to learning, including department reports, issuing sanctions and discussions with parents / carers. Curriculum Leaders will also contact parents or arrange a face-to-face meeting to discuss ongoing issues.

Referral to Head of Year and Pastoral Support Managers

The Head of Year and Pastoral Support Managers will be the main driver for change across all personal barriers to learning. Targeted students on the basis of attitude to learning and attendance will be reviewed on a weekly basis. Heads of Year will work closely with students, parents and school staff to ensure that the student is given every opportunity to achieve their personal best. Heads of Year may be able to signpost external agencies for support if necessary.

Further support and other targeted interventions

The school can use a range of strategies to provide additional support for students who are finding it difficult to self-regulate their behaviour. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Tutor support / mentoring
- Placing a student on a 'Positive report' to build self-esteem
- PSM wellbeing 'check-ins' / Head of Year meetings
- Regular meetings between school and parents / carers
- Referral to the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for behaviour
- Referral to the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher
- Wellbeing sessions / referral to the school counsellor / referral to external counsellors
- Targeted support e.g. Anger management, self-esteem, making better choices
- Additional SEND support
- Family external support e.g. Early Help
- Alternative school day timings e.g. SSP from 11am to 5:00pm
- Completing SSP time at a local partner school

Suspensions and Exclusions

For the most serious incidents of poor conduct which significantly impact the school culture the Headteacher reserves the right to issue Suspension and Permanent Exclusions. Please refer to our Suspensions and Exclusions section of this policy and the Suspensions and Exclusions policy, which can be found on the school website.

8. Internal and External Truancy

Internal truancy (avoiding lessons and wandering the school site) is not permitted in school for several important reasons. Firstly, students who choose not to go to lessons miss out on vital learning opportunities and in turn, limit the ability to reach their academic potential. Secondly, students miss out on the development of key skills developed in class such as teamwork and communication. Thirdly, students who choose to avoid lessons can disturb the good order of the school community as well as having a negative impact on the education of other students. Finally, students who truant and ignore staff instructions pose a significant safeguarding risk to themselves and others.

Students who are found to be truanting during the school day will be placed in the Student Support Provision and will have a conversation with their Head of Year to ascertain any support needs. Parents will be informed. Students who truant externally will spend their next school day in the Student Support Provision. Parents will be contacted. Repeated truancy, or leaving the school site during the school day will lead to further sanctions, including spending time in another local school's Student Support Provision.

9. Attendance and Punctuality

Regular attendance to school and good punctuality are essential if students are to do their best in school. They are also crucial to develop students' resilience and sense of responsibility and crucial life skills. For this reason we reward students who have regular attendance and those that do not accrue morning and lesson late marks and issue sanctions where lateness is an issue.

Students who are late to school in the morning

Students who are late to school in the morning will receive a 'Late' mark in the register and be issued a C3 lunchtime detention. The statutory guidance relating to school attendance states that after 30 minutes lateness in the morning a student's register mark must be recorded as 'Unauthorised absence' that will affect their overall attendance score. Students arriving more than 30 minutes late will be issued a C4 afterschool detention.

In the event of severe disruption to travel, or where it is known that a school bus has been delayed, we will consider not issuing sanctions for morning lateness - however, 'Late marks' will still be issued - as required in the statutory guidance. The Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Attendance will make the decision relating to any travel issues and the rescinding of sanctions.

Students who are late to lessons

Lateness to lessons causes significant disruption to others' learning. We want students to be on time and we have therefore allowed a five minute 'travel time' built into each lesson changeover and there are repeated tannoy reminders that count down the time to the next lesson starting.

Classroom teachers are asked to record the minutes late for any students who arrive after this 'travel time'. The cumulative minutes are added up weekly and students who have late minutes above set thresholds will be issued C3 / C4 / C5 detentions accordingly to make up the lost time.

Parents / carers are able to monitor attendance, punctuality to school and lessons using their MCAS parent / carer app.

Please refer to the school's attendance policy for further details.

10. Homework

We would always try and support students to reduce any barriers that may be stopping them from completing their homework. However, classroom teachers may issue detentions where homework is missed.

11. Bromcom / My Child At School (MCAS) app.

Recording of sanctions

All behaviour incidents, (above a C1 / C2 warning) detentions and other sanctions are recorded in our school MIS system (Bromcom)

Alerting parents / carers

All sanctions recorded on the Bromcom system are automatically alerted to parents via the Bromail system and the MCAS app.

12. Anti-Discrimination, Racism and Bullying

Meopham school is unreservedly committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our students, so they can learn and achieve their full potential in a secure and positive atmosphere. Discrimination, Racism and Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We celebrate the diversity of our school community—students, staff, governors, and parents—as a source of strength and enrichment.

All staff, students, and visitors are expected to actively challenge and report discriminatory, racist or bullying language (including 'banter'), behaviour, or prejudice, however subtle or unintentional.

This forms part of our wider commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every student, and is underpinned by our core values.

We will always sanction students when there are incidents of discrimination or bullying. The level of sanction will depend on the nature of the incident in question - but could include the most serious sanctions available to the school.. We would also consider the feelings of the victim of the discrimination / bullying. Sanctions for these incidents will be communicated to the parents / carers of both the victim and the perpetrator.

Where appropriate, students may also receive education about the impact of discriminatory actions, language and / or bullying. The school may also invite the school's community Police constable to speak to students where there have been ongoing or aggravating factors, or hate-speech has been used.

Further information can be found in the school's Anti-bullying policy, Safeguarding policies and Equalities policy.

13. Threatening, aggressive and sexualised behaviour

The school maintains a strict zero-tolerance approach to all forms of threatening, aggressive, and sexualised behaviours, recognising them as forms of unacceptable conduct or "child-on-child abuse" that are never to be dismissed as "banter" or "part of growing up."

Initial sanctions for all such behaviours—including sexual comments, physical aggression, online harassment, or verbal threats—will be immediate, proportionate, and consistently applied in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Students demonstrating threatening or aggressive behaviour will be removed to the Student Support Provision pending a full investigation. The findings will be presented to the Headteacher to decide on the appropriate sanction.

For incidents where the alleged misconduct is of a safeguarding nature, such as harmful sexual behaviour or physical assault, the investigation will be conducted by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

For all incidents of threatening, aggressive or sexualised behaviour the Headteacher may consider a suspension is the appropriate sanction. This will depend on the nature of the incident and the intent of the perpetrators and impact on the school community.

The most severe sanction is permanent exclusion, which may be used as a last resort for the most serious breaches, such as a physical or sexual assault that is deemed fundamentally incompatible with the continued presence of the pupil on the school site and would seriously harm the education or welfare of other pupils.

In all instances of potential criminality, such as sexual violence, upskirting, or threats of violence, the school's statutory duty requires immediate referral to external agencies, including Children's Social Care and the Police, regardless of any subsequent internal school sanction.

Any form of "child-on-child abuse" will also include the Designated Safeguarding Lead implementing pastoral and supportive measures for all children involved, including therapeutic support and risk reduction plans, where necessary - in addition to any punitive sanctions imposed on the perpetrator.

Please refer to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for more information.

14. Malicious Allegations

Where a student makes an allegation against a member of staff and that allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether to discipline the student in accordance with this policy. Where a student makes an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment against another student and that allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether to discipline the pupil in accordance with this policy.

In all cases where an allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the school (in collaboration with the local authority designated officer (LADO), where relevant) will consider whether the student who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help. If so, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate. The school will also consider the pastoral needs of staff and students accused of misconduct. Please refer to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for more information on responding to allegations of abuse against staff or other pupils. The use of risk reduction plans may be used in conjunction with the safeguarding team and Lead DSL.

15. Suspensions & Exclusions

Whilst every effort is made to support student behaviour and conduct at Meopham School, suspensions and permanent exclusions 'are sometimes a necessary part of a functioning system where it is accepted that not all student behaviour can be amended or remedied by pastoral processes, or consequences within the school' (DfE guidance, 2026).

Whilst used as a last resort, suspensions and permanent exclusions may be used to ensure that the academic welfare and safety of staff and students is maintained. A student's behaviour outside of school can be considered grounds for a suspension (or permanent exclusion) and decisions made must be made in line with the principles of administrative law i.e. that it is lawful, reasonable, fair; and proportionate. When investigating the evidence in relation to a suspension or permanent exclusion the Headteacher must apply the civil standard of proof, i.e. 'on the balance of probabilities' rather than the criminal standard 'of beyond reasonable doubt' (DfE guidance 2024).

A suspension can also be for parts of the school day. For example, if a student is continually disruptive during lunchtimes, they may be suspended from the school premises.

Only the Headteacher can suspend or permanently exclude a student, however, in instances where the Headteacher is absent from school and is uncontactable for an extended period, the Acting Head of School has delegated authority to suspend a student from school. In extreme circumstances the suspension will be immediate and parents and carers may need to collect their child at short notice.

A suspension may be for a fixed period but in some cases this may lead to a permanent exclusion from school. A suspension may be for up to 45 days in a school year. Meopham school is responsible for 6th day provision if the suspension is longer than five days.

When the Headteacher suspends a student for a fixed period, parents/carers will be informed of the length of the suspension and the reason for it. When a student is suspended for a fixed period, arrangements will be made for the student to receive work to do at home. This can include online platforms such as Google Classroom or Oak Academy. There may be occasions where students re-integrate through the SSP and will require a parental meeting before the student can return to mainstream learning. On return to lessons, the student will be monitored closely and support strategies, discussed at the reintegration meeting, will be employed in an attempt to improve student behaviour.

For a suspension of more than 5 days, but less than 15 in a seasonal term, parents can make representation. The governing body would then need to convene a meeting to consider reinstatement within 50 school days of receiving the notice of a suspension. If the result of suspension would be that the student may miss a public examination (although at Meopham school we would endeavour to avoid this), a meeting of the Committee will be arranged.

The reasons below are examples of the types of circumstances that may warrant a suspension .
It is important to note that this list is not exhaustive.

- Verbal abuse against an adult.
- Physical assault against a pupil.
- Encouraging and participating in a physical assault against a pupil.
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a pupil.
- Being in possession of a prohibited item or items relating to a prohibited item, such as an offensive weapon or dangerous piece of equipment, alcohol or drugs, pornographic images, or any item likely to cause significant disruption to the good order of the school.
- Child on child abuse, including various forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- Abuse directed at race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability and any other vulnerability or protected characteristic.
- Repeated incidents of defiance, particularly those which undermine the authority of the school or disturb the learning environment for others.
- Actions which are deliberately designed to bring the name of the school into disrepute, particularly relating to false allegations.
- *Creating, generating, manipulating, uploading and sharing of images and videos which would cause distress and embarrassment to members of the school community or bring the school into disrepute.*

If a student exhibits extreme behaviour then the Headteacher has the right to pursue a permanent exclusion. As aforementioned, the Headteacher must consider if the decision to permanently exclude is lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate.

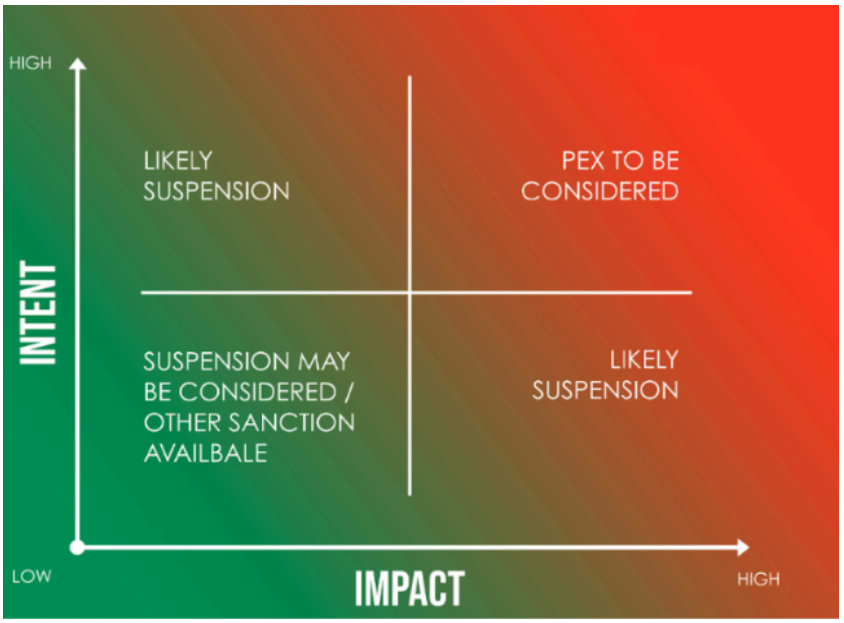
A decision to permanently exclude a student will be taken only:
- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy, and
- If allowing the student to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

The reasons below are examples of the types of circumstances that may warrant a permanent exclusion. **It is important to note that this list is not exhaustive.**

- Persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy, including, but not isolated to, the list of behaviours in the suspensions section, particularly after significant interventions have been put in place by the school or outside agencies. It is important to note that a school can only use suspensions up to a maximum of 45 days in a single academic year. At this point, a permanent exclusion is highly likely.
- Violent assault against a pupil causing significant harm or discomfort.
- Physical assault or threatening physical assault against an adult.
- Using, threatening to use, or distributing an offensive weapon.
- Using, threatening to use, or distributing a prohibited item, such as alcohol or drugs, which could cause a significant safeguarding risk to the individual or other members of the school community.
- Extreme incidents of child on child abuse including sexual violence, sexual harassment, teenage relationship abuse, consensual and non-concensual sharing of nude/semi-nude images and upskirting.

We are committed to following all statutory exclusions procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

When deciding whether to use a suspension or permanent exclusion, leaders will always consider the impact and intent of any particular behaviour. See below for guidance:



Off-site Direction and Managed Moves

Off-site direction

When a pupil is required to attend another education setting temporarily, to improve their behaviour when interventions or targeted support have not been successful. An off-site direction is used as a temporary preventative measure to permanent exclusion. The pupil might be placed at another mainstream school or an Alternative Provision. Timescales are suggested at the outset and review meetings are held at regular intervals. Detailed information about the off-site placement should be sent to parents at least two days before the placement, which includes the reasons for, and objectives of, imposing the requirement. Under the law the Local Governing Body is responsible for an off-site direction and will comply with the relevant requirements.

Managed move

When a pupil is transferred to another school permanently. All parties, including parents/carers and the admission authority for the new school, should consent before a managed move occurs. Parents and the schools must all be in agreement to ensure the move is part of a planned intervention to support the pupil. The school should be able to evidence that previous interventions have occurred and that relevant assessments and referrals to agencies have taken place. Pupils are encouraged to share their views. Managed moves do not allow for a 'trial', unlike an off-site direction. Managed moves cannot bypass normal admissions rules. If agreed by all parties then the school should ensure that any plans (such as a Personal Education Plan) are reviewed and amended.

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion - DfE guidance 2026

Swale Academies Trust Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Policy

16. Separation for Safeguarding purposes

The Headteacher and Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer can temporarily forbid a pupil from attending the premises if two or more pupils need to be separated for safeguarding purposes. This would not be considered a suspension on disciplinary grounds. It should only be used in rare circumstances and only when:

- separating pupils is essential, and
- there is not a practical way to allow one of more pupils involved to remain on school premises.

An example of a situation such as this could be because of an allegation of harm by one pupil against another which requires physical separation.

The Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer will inform and seek support from external agencies such as children's social care and the police, as required. Parents/carers will be informed about the reasons for using this protocol and the Local Governing Body and Local Authority will be informed. The Local Authority will arrange for the education of the pupil unless the school and parents choose to do so. The school will support the pupil upon their re-integration.

17. Uniform

We believe that school uniform creates a sense of belonging and pride. Wearing a uniform creates a more professional learning environment and reduces socioeconomic disparities.

We expect students to wear their uniform correctly and smartly. Although we will endeavour to remind students of the uniform expectations and ask them to correct items of clothing that are not being worn appropriately, we will issue C3 lunchtime detentions to students who do not heed reminders or deliberately try to subvert the uniform rules.

Where there is an ongoing uniform issue, we will contact parents to discuss our concerns and may issue further sanctions as appropriate.

We want to give students every opportunity to take responsibility for their conduct and we have therefore created a uniform store in school to allow students to borrow items of uniform, remove nail-varnish or make-up and correct uniform issues at the start of the day. We will ask those repeatedly rolling their school skirts to wear trousers instead.

Where a uniform issue cannot be rectified, or a student refuses our reasonable offers of support to rectify the uniform issue, we will ask students to work in the Student Support Provision until the issue is resolved. In line with the statutory guidance, we may ask parents / carers to come into school to collect a student in order to rectify a uniform issue - this course of action would generally be a last resort.

Parents / carers are encouraged to contact the school and discuss any barriers to a student wearing their uniform correctly - we will endeavour to provide appropriate support.

Further guidance on our uniform expectations can be found in the school's Uniform and Equipment guide.

18. Valuables

It is useful within this policy to remind parents about valuables and damage.

The school cannot accept responsibility for the loss of valuables which are brought to school, or for damage to the personal property of students. Mobile phones, watches, calculators etc. should have their owner's name and postal code scratched, engraved or marked in some permanent way on them for identification.

We would encourage students not to bring expensive items into school. Please note that smartwatches, headphones, Earbuds and Airpods are not permitted in school.

We are a cashless school. It is unsafe for students to bring large amounts of money to school and they should not do so.

PE staff will put mobile phones, watches and money in a locker for safe-keeping if requested (these items must be identifiable as mentioned above). PE staff accept no responsibility for loss or damage to items stored in this way)

Students are not allowed to buy, sell or trade any articles on the school premises or to bring into school any items that are intended for sale. The school reserves the right to decide if an item has been brought into school for the purpose of sale. All such items can be confiscated until collected by a parent/carer.

10. Policy on breakages by students

The school expects all students to treat the school community with respect. Where breakages, damage, defacement or loss of school property (this includes books, equipment, furniture, fittings, and the fabric of the school) are a result of a student's action, whether deliberate or reckless, there may be a consequence. Parents may be charged for the breakage or for the replacement of the damaged, broken, defaced or lost item(s) and/or the cost of materials and labour to replace, repair, or restore as necessary. A receipt will be issued for all payments made.

20. Access to the school

Students have free access to most areas of the school. However, there are certain restricted areas and students who go 'out of bounds' may be sanctioned. Out of bounds areas include, but are not restricted to:

- Non-supervised parts of the playing field (when used for break and lesson times)
- The periphery areas of the field - where there are bushes and trees
- The grassed areas to the front and side of the Killick building
- Any areas beyond the boundaries of the school fence (during the school day)
- The upper floors, corridors of the Dodmore building before school, at break and lunchtimes
- The Killick building and its corridors before school and at break and lunchtimes (except for access to the toilets at break and lunchtimes only)
- Classrooms and other indoor areas (such as the halls or studios) where there are not staff present

21. Screen, Search and Confiscate

The school retains the right to search any student who we suspect of having contraband items on their person. This is outlined in 'Behaviour and discipline in school- guidance for headteachers'. If a student refuses to be searched they will be isolated until their parent or carer arrives to conduct the search with a senior member of staff. If a student continues to refuse to be searched the school may contact the police. Students' school internet accounts will be regularly screened to ensure they are not viewing harmful content. The school does not have to return confiscated items.

For further information, refer to the Department for Education's guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Prohibited items include, but not limited to:

Category A items (illegal items or those that may cause a danger to health and safety) may include:
• *knives and other offensive weapons*
• *alcohol*
• *illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia*
• *stolen items*
• *tobacco and cigarettes / cigarette papers / lighters / matches*
• *vapes and e-cigarettes*
• *fireworks*
• *pornographic images / content*
• *any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property; and*

Category B (items that may cause disruption or disturbance to the smooth running of the school) may include:
• *energy drinks / sugary drinks such as Coca-Cola*
• *sugary sweets*
• *large quantities of unhealthy food*
• *jewellery (including rings / earrings / necklaces / bracelets / nose-studs / false eyelashes)*
• *electronic (including bluetooth) speakers*
• *any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for (such as mobile phones, iPads, airpods, smart-watches, aerosols, water based sprays, water pistols, stink bombs, water balloons).*

In order to ensure staff and student safety, vape detectors and wands (hand-held metal detectors) may be used.

Offensive weapons
At Meopham school the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors is of paramount importance. The school takes a zero tolerance approach to offensive weapons to ensure the safety of all.

An offensive weapon can be deemed as any article, made or adapted, for use for causing injury to the person, or intended by the person.

For further information on how offensive weapons will be dealt with, reference should be made to the Swale Academies Trust Offensive Weapons Protocol.

Screening
Where there is a reasonable suspicion that a student is regularly bringing prohibited items into school we reserve the right to insist that a student submits to a search each day before entering the premises. In this instance, parents will be informed of the nature of the concerns and the grounds for reasonable suspicion. The school also has access to a metal detecting 'wand' that we will use to screen students in the event of a concern relating to weapons of any kind.

Returning items
Depending on the category of the confiscated item, a decision will be made on if or when an item will be returned. Items that are illegal or dangerous (category A) may need to be reported to the Police and will not be returned. For other items, such as those in category B, they may, at the discretion of senior staff, be handed back at the end of the school day, the end of the school week or the end of the school term. Students who refuse to hand over items or continue to repeat the behaviour may face sanctions in line with this behaviour policy and items will need to be collected by parents.

22. Use of Reasonable Force

In line with the April 2026 DfE Statutory Guidance on Restrictive Interventions, the school's primary goal is to prevent the need for physical intervention through proactive de-escalation and a "Professional Neutrality" approach.

However, all members of staff have a legal power to use Reasonable Force to prevent a student from:

● Causing Incapacitating Injury: Preventing a student from injuring themselves or others.
● Committing a Criminal Offence: (Or an action that would be an offence if they were of the age of criminal responsibility).
● Causing Severe Damage to Property: Where that damage creates a further risk of harm or significant disruption.
● Engaging in Behaviour Prejudicial to Maintain Good Order: This is used only when all other non-physical strategies have been exhausted and the behavior is causing a serious breakdown in the safe climate of the school.

Core Principles of the 2026 Framework:
1. Last Resort & Proportionality: Any force used must be proportionate to the risk, reasonable in the circumstances, and strictly necessary. It must be the "least restrictive" option available.
2. Prevention First: Staff will always seek to use "Non-Physical Restraint" (such as tactical positioning or environmental changes) to resolve situations.
3. Mandatory Recording & Reporting: Under the new statutory duty, every incident involving the use of force or restrictive intervention must be recorded on the school's MIS/CPOMS system.
4. Parental Notification: The school has a legal duty to inform parents/carers of any significant incident involving the use of force as soon as is practicably possible, and ideally on the same school day.
5. Post-Incident Support: Following any restrictive intervention, a "Restorative Reset" or debrief will be offered to both the student and the staff member involved to support the rebuilding of the professional relationship.

This policy is sanctioned under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and updated in accordance with the 2026 Restrictive Interventions Regulations.

School remains committed to a trauma-informed approach where physical intervention is never used as a punishment or a disciplinary sanction.

Further details can be found in the guidance from the Department for Education Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force in schools

22. Power to Discipline Offsite

As outlined in the Department for Education's 'Behaviour and discipline in school - guidance for headteachers', the school has the power to discipline students, for their conduct and behaviour outside of the school premises (as well as online). The school will sanction any student whose behaviour could have the following impact:

- repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- poses a threat to another student, member of staff or member of the public
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school

The school is in regular contact with local service providers and will sanction when informed of incidents of poor behaviour committed by students in the local community.

23. Equality

Meopham School committed to providing all students with equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Regular monitoring and evaluation of behaviour data in school will allow for this policy to be used fairly so that all students are treated as equal. Furthermore, reasonable adjustments will be considered (and acted upon where necessary and appropriate) to ensure that the needs of each individual child are taken into account. Please refer to Appendix One for further information as to how this is applied for students with SEND.
To ensure the thoughts and opinions of students are listened to, student voice will be conducted by senior leaders

throughout the year.

Our equality policy can be found here: Equalities policy

Useful links

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools - A guide for headteachers and school staff

Searching, screening and confiscation - GOV.UK

Part Time Timetable Protocols

Keeping Children Safe in education, 2026

Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools - GOV.UK

Swale Academies Trust Offensive Weapons Protocol

Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement

Swale Academies Trust Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Appendix 1: SEND

Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and vulnerable individuals:

We fully appreciate that some children will find it more difficult to respond to the rewards and consequences in this policy. In particular, students with SEND may require reasonable adjustments to be made in line with their primary and secondary needs. These individuals require a carefully planned and personalised response involving parents or carers and the inclusion team. We also understand that a child may require increased support and care when they experience trauma and loss in their lives. The school may use a number of different strategies and also consider how the involvement of external agencies can support a child with additional needs such as:

- Positive reports to enable celebration of good behaviour
- Increased communication between home and school
- Individual behaviour plans.
- Mentoring
- Support from the special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo) or identified teaching assistants
- In house counselling service to offer 1:1 support to develop self-esteem and social skills
- Lunchtime social skills group sessions
- Additional literacy or mathematics support where this is identified as a barrier to learning and impacts on the student's behaviour
- Adjusted curriculum provision
- An adapted timetable with an agreed timescale
- Pastoral support meeting with parents and carers
- Facilitate multi agency meetings to plan next steps for a child's SEND provision
- Involve external professionals such as Planning Officers, Provision Evaluation Officers and Inclusion and Attendance Officers
- Strategies recommended by professionals are consistently implemented
- Referral to outside agencies such as: ISEND Front Door Education Support, LIFT, Behaviour and Attendance Service (ESBAS), the Educational Psychology Service, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), the local paediatric unit, (CLASS) or the Virtual School for Children in Care

Risk Assessments and Risk Reduction Plans:
The leadership team may judge it to be necessary to construct a risk assessment or a risk reduction plan for identified children. These will be constructed in collaboration with key members of staff and parents/carers. The information recorded will then be disseminated to staff.

The plan will be reviewed at the end of each seasonal term or sooner if circumstances change, e..g as part of a reintegration meeting following a fixed term suspension A whole school overview is updated to reflect the number of children on these plans and with their review dates.

If the behaviour of a child escalates suddenly, then a member of the senior leadership team will carry out a dynamic risk assessment as stated in the individual risk assessment/risk reduction plan. This is to ensure that alternative provision with specific supervision is agreed for the next session or the afternoon so that the child does not resume their scheduled, timetabled activities. This is to allow a continued period of quiet reflection for the child in an alternative, safe space. Parents/carers will also be updated

Equality Act 2010:
The governing body, the leadership team and staff will ensure there is no variation in the application of this positive behaviour policy and procedures on any grounds, particularly ethnic or national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexuality. They will also ensure that the concerns of children are listened to and appropriately addressed.