



## **Exeter Steiner School *Behaviour and discipline policy***

---

This Policy also incorporates the School Rules, Procedure on the Use of Physical Restraint, and the Exclusion Policy.

This Policy will be reviewed annually and whenever necessary in the light of new legislation, experiences, and feedback.

This Policy will be kept in the Policy Binders in each classroom and in the school office. The relevant parts of this Policy will be included in the School Parents Handbook and the full Policy is available for all to read on request.

### **School ethos on behaviour and discipline**

The intention of these policy guidelines is to help create a learning environment in which moral, social and intellectual qualities can equally flourish. In this environment civil, positive, co-operative behaviour is expected as the norm and anything other than this is experienced as an exception to be appropriately challenged.

We place a very high premium on responsible behaviour, empathy and respect for others and the environment. These are behavioural virtues which all of the adults involved in our school, teachers, staff, parents/guardians, will do their very best to model for the children whose education has been entrusted to us.

## **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

### **General**

Steiner Waldorf Education recognises the changing nature of children's perception of and participation in their natural and human environment. In the light of this, the School deals with behavioural issues in an age-appropriate manner.

Strategies aim to respect each teacher's individual approach to discipline whilst also supporting consistency and clarity across the school. This will rest on the following principles:

- Children have a right to be cared for
- Teachers have a right to teach
- Children have a right to learn
- Children and Staff have a right to be safe
- Children and Staff have a right to be heard
- Everybody has a right to grow and to make mistakes.

Along with these school 'rights' go obligations:

- Teachers have a duty to teach to the best of their ability
- Children have a duty to do their best in school

- Children have a duty to allow others to learn
- All adults have a duty to maintain a safe environment
- Everyone has a duty to help look after each other
- Everyone has a duty to listen
- Everyone has a duty to support and assist those who make mistakes.

Teachers have a responsibility to observe the development of the children in their class closely and engage with their colleagues and class parents/guardians. In seeking to understand this find appropriate responses for specific situations founded on sympathetic, but firm insight. Parent's evenings and home visits by teachers support this process.

It is essential that staff, parents/guardians and children are fully aware of the School Rules. They are issued in full in the School Parents Handbook issued to all parents and on the school website.

### **Responding to behaviour viewed to be unsatisfactory**

No child should be allowed to disrupt the education, or cause distress or discomfort to others. In the event of such behaviour the following strategies may be adopted:

- If appropriate to the child's age, the teacher will first seek to divert such behaviour towards a more positive course. Examples of this might include drawing the child's attention to something else, or providing more positive activities.
- While a sympathetic response to genuine unhappiness is needed, the child should be encouraged where appropriate to put the matter right.
- Teachers may also make use of narratives to help the child understand the situation and move through it.
- In the event of extreme behaviour – where the child may cause harm to themselves, other children or staff, or cause prolonged disruption to the learning environment – temporary exclusion from the classroom may be necessary. Such exclusion will be under the supervision of a member of staff.
- Teachers should inform the parent in all cases of repeated or serious misbehaviour, in which case clear factual records of the incident and any meetings will be kept.
- The parents are expected to support the techniques and behaviour management strategies used within the classroom.

### **Long-term concern about specific misbehaviour**

It is important that parents' help is enlisted wherever this is possible. Parents must be kept informed about their child's behaviour at each step and clear factual records kept of all meetings. Letters sent to the parents in relation to this matter should be kept brief and factual. A copy should be put in the child's file.

The following indicates a series of measures to be taken in order to remedy the situation:

- A discussion of the problems, involving observations from all those who teach the child, should take place in the Teachers' meeting.
- The teacher will meet with the parents to discuss the concerns. If appropriate, a third person may be there to take notes.
- If matters do not improve a behaviour management strategy will be drawn up with the child concerned and their parents, identifying both the problems and actions to be taken to improve the situation. The strategy will have an agreed timetable for review.
- If, at the review, it is decided that further measures are needed, these will be agreed with the parents. A new review timetable will also be agreed.
- Where it is felt to be appropriate a suitably qualified person may be appointed to mentor the situation and provide support for the teacher mainly responsible. The teacher may also seek external advice.
- Simultaneously, or subsequently, the situation may be referred to other support agencies.

## **EXCLUSION PROCEDURE**

Exclusion will only be considered if all other options have been exhausted or it is felt that it is necessary for the good of the child concerned or the group. The aim still is to encourage and support a change of behaviour.

### **Procedure**

- The matter will be discussed in the Teachers' meeting. If that is not possible, an emergency meeting will be held.
- A meeting will be held with the child's parents to inform them of the circumstances of the exclusion. If appropriate, the child may be invited to the meeting.
- Restricted exclusion – the child will be excluded for a period of 1 -3 days. The teacher will give appropriate work for the child to complete during their time at home. The gravity of this sanction will be emphasised to both parents/guardians and child, making it clear that there must be an immediate and concerted improvement in behaviour once the period of suspension is over.
- Temporary exclusion - the parents will be asked to keep the child at home until such time as the child is able to commit to appropriate behaviour. The child will only be allowed to return to the school on the condition that they behave appropriately at all times.
- Clear arrangements will be made for the setting and marking of the pupil's work during the period of exclusion, with the parents/guardians being duly informed of the arrangements.
- Parents/guardians would be informed at this stage of their right to see their child's full school record if requested. The procedure for an appeal by the parents/guardians of an excluded pupil are outlined below.

- In the event that a suspension/suspensions lead to no discernible and sustained improvement in the situation, the Teaching group may give notice to the family involved of the effective termination of the contract upon which the child's education in the school has been based, on the grounds that the school is unable to provide adequately for the needs of the child without significantly and unacceptably compromising the education of other children in the school.
- At this stage the Teaching group will inform both the parents/guardians and the Chair of Trustees of the exclusion decision.
- The school will negotiate the withdrawal of the child by the parents/guardians as soon as possible. The school may help in attempting to identify a more suitable placement.

### **Appeal**

Parents have a right to appeal any decision to temporarily or permanently exclude a child.

- The notice of appeal must be given in writing to the Chair of Trustees via the Administrator. At the earliest opportunity, and no later than one week from receiving the appeal, the Chair will convene a hearing by a panel of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters leading to the suspension. At least one of the panel will be independent of the day to day management and running of the school.
- Such a hearing will involve detailed interviews with all those most closely involved in the case – typically, the class teacher and any other teacher(s) with significant experience of the behaviour in question, the parents/guardians and, where age appropriate, the child.
- The strictest standards of confidentiality should be respected and followed by all involved. Parents/guardians will be offered the opportunity to bring a third party of their own choice as a 'supporter' to the procedure.
- The Panel will retire to consider their decision, which will then be conveyed verbally to relevant parties. A summary report of the panel's findings will be written and submitted to relevant parties, and the decision of any such hearing will be binding on all participants.

### **Record keeping**

The staff involved will keep a written record of every incident leading up to suspension or exclusion. These will be securely stored in the child's file in the Administrator's office.

Similarly, all written records of hearings and panel meetings will be securely stored, along with any relevant notes from teachers' meetings. The record is to be available to all parties involved but will otherwise be confidential, except when statutory or other legal obligations prevail.