

# Stepping Stones School Behaviour Policy

**Adopted** February 2020                      **Review** August 2021

Stepping Stones School is dedicated to ensuring that our school environment supports learning and the wellbeing of pupils and staff through a strong sense of community cohesion. Cooperation, support, and respect are the foundations of our community and we work hard to provide a safe school where pupils feel included in every aspect of school life and comfortable to voice their opinions.

This policy outlines what we expect from all our pupils in terms of their behaviour, and the sanctions that will be consistently enforced if this policy is not adhered to. The policy applies in and out of school time and premises. It extends to all members of our school community and is written in line with our governing body's statement of behaviour principles. Good behaviour and self discipline have strong links to effective learning and are vital for pupils to carry with them both during and after their school years.

The policy is based on the good practice outlined in DfE guidance on behaviour and discipline and is in line with the duties set out in Schedule 1 to the Independent School Standards Regulations 2014.

## 1. Aims

Stepping Stones School believes that all pupils should be aware of the school's values and standards of behaviour that are expected of them and takes responsibility for promoting these values and standards. We hope that by encouraging positive behaviour patterns we can promote good relationships throughout the school that are built on trust and understanding, and that through the use of this policy we can support all of our pupils in developing a high level of social awareness. Our aim is to ensure that all our pupils leave the school with the key skills they need to continue to progress to the best of their ability in all areas of life. We work to share our values of Respect, Endeavour, Tolerance and Resilience at all times. At Tower Road we have simplified this to: Be Kind and Try Hard.

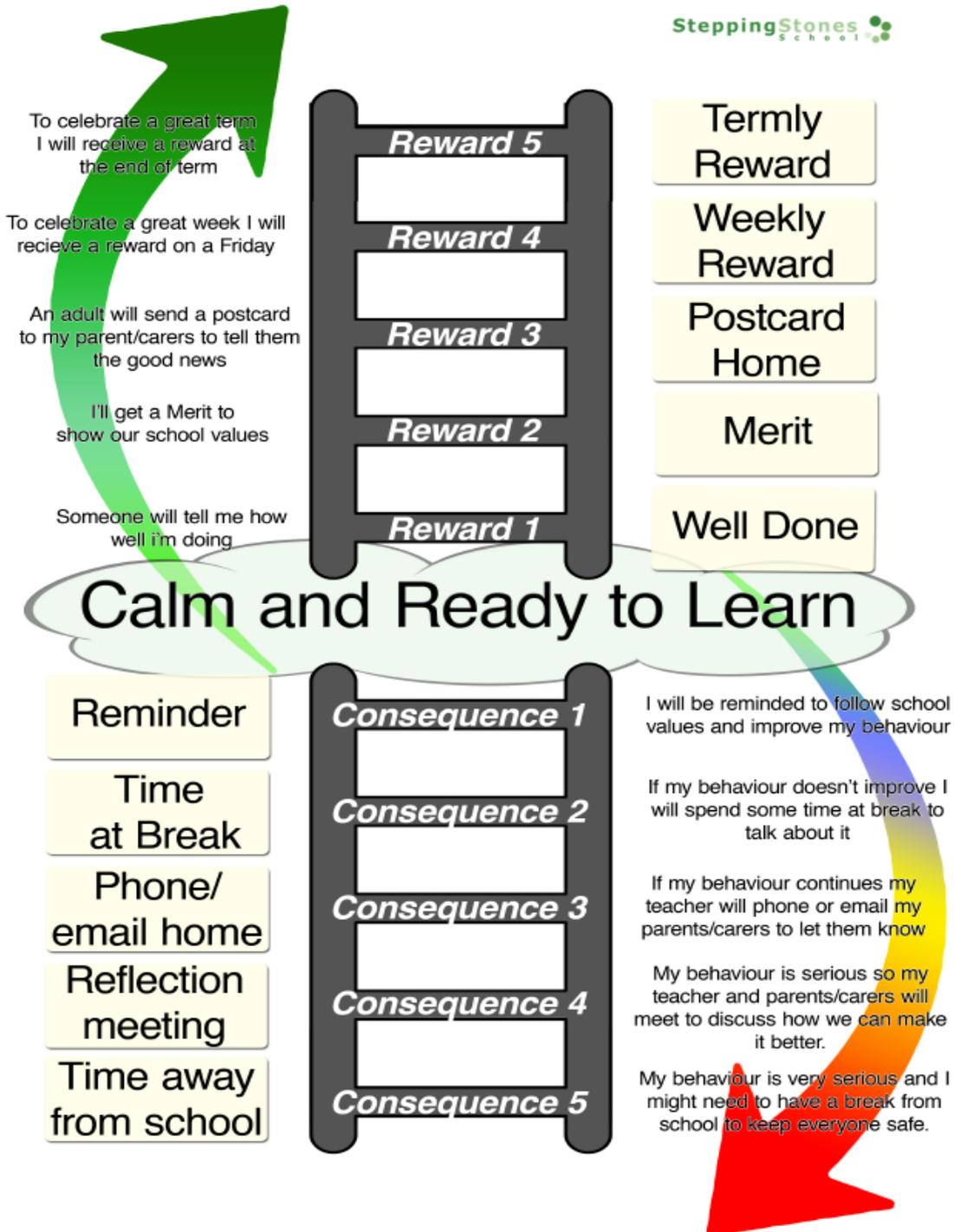
**RESPECT**  
**ENDEAVOUR**  
**TOLERANCE**  
**RESILIENCE**



**BE**  
**KIND**  
**TRY**  
**HARD**

## 2. School Consequence Ladder

We aim to ensure all students are calm and ready to learn and that positive behaviour is promoted throughout the school.



### 3. Standards of behaviour

#### 3.1 School

The school understands that the first step to modelling good behaviour is to lead by example, which means that all staff, volunteers, and anyone else who comes to the school must act responsibly and professionally and will never denigrate pupils or colleagues. We work hard to ensure that discipline is consistent across the school so that behaviour boundaries and sanctions are clear to all and are applied fairly, proportionately, and without discrimination, taking into account SEN needs and disabilities as well as the additional challenges that some vulnerable pupils may face. Staff are trained to deal with behavioural strategies as part of their continual professional development and are well informed of the extent of their disciplinary authority.

We work with parents to understand their children and their behaviour and believe that in conjunction with behaviour boundaries and sanctions, good support systems, praise, and rewards for good behaviour are an important part of building an effective learning community. The school will report behaviour, good or bad, to parents regularly. We encourage parents to communicate with the school if they have a concern about their child's behaviour, and we will do as much as is possible to support parents as and when they need it. We promote good behaviour within the school curriculum and reminders of school rules, values and expected standards of behaviour are up on walls in classrooms and situated around the school.

Staff are a constant presence around the school, in-between classes, during breaks in the school day, and at lunch times, to check that pupils are using the school grounds respectfully and behaving appropriately.

We recognise that where individual pupils are engaging in continuing disruptive behaviour this can be as a result of unmet needs. If such needs are identified, we will do all we can to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate support. We recognise our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 in respect of pupils with SEN and/or disabilities. Whilst all pupils identified with SEN and/or disabilities are covered under this behaviour policy, we recognise that these pupils often require support which is different from, or in addition to, that required by their peers in order to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to all pupils. All students have an engagement plan which is used by all staff and *Pastoral Support Plan* may be used for pupils whose SEN and/or disabilities cause them to display challenging behaviour. Advice will be sought from external agencies where necessary to assist with putting in place appropriate support strategies, which will be monitored and reviewed. Please read the school's special educational needs policy for more information.

The school will take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff and this includes protection from bullying. We aim to combat bullying and other harmful behaviour using, amongst others, preventative strategies through the active development of pupils' social, emotional, and behavioural skills. For more information, see section 5 of this policy.

#### 3.2 Pupils

The school expects all of its pupils to show respect to one another, to school staff, and anyone else that they may meet. Incidents of bullying, belittling, or bringing intentional harm to other pupils or staff will not be tolerated. Pupils are ambassadors to our school even when off school premises, and we expect them to act accordingly. They are expected to follow school values and obey school rules, listen, follow instructions by staff, and accept and learn from any sanctions that they receive. This extends to any arrangements put in place to support their behaviour, such as *pastoral support programmes or parenting contracts*. School work should be well presented, completed to the best of their ability, and completed in a timely manner. If pupils are

struggling to meet the requirements of their workload for any reason, they should discuss this with their tutor who will work with them to draw up a support plan. *The school asks that pupils carefully read and then sign the **home-school agreement** to show that they have understood what is expected of them and acknowledge the responsibility that they have for their own behaviour.*

Under no circumstances will illegal or inappropriate items be tolerated in school, and all pupils will respect and look after the school premises and environment. The following behaviour is regarded as completely unacceptable and will result in disciplinary actions and possibly in exclusion, depending on the circumstances:

- verbal abuse to staff and others
- verbal abuse to pupils
- physical abuse to/attack on staff
- physical abuse to/attack on pupils
- any form of bullying (to the extent not covered above)
- indecent behaviour
- damage to property
- misuse of illegal drugs
- misuse of other substances including “legal highs”
- theft
- serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff
- sexual abuse or assault
- supplying an illegal drug or other substances including “legal highs”
- carrying an offensive weapon
- arson
- unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which school sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the pupil’s behaviour
- malicious allegations against staff
- racist, sexist, homophobic or other forms of discriminatory behaviour
- persistent truancy/lateness
- possession of items prohibited under the school rules as set out in section 4

### 3.3 Parents

Parents play a big part in ensuring that their children are responsible for their own behaviour in school. We ask that parents sign the **home-school agreement** to indicate that they will respect and support the school’s behaviour policy and the authority of the school staff. Building school life into a natural routine – ensuring that your child is at school on time, appropriately dressed, rested, and equipped – will encourage your child to adhere to school rules and procedures.

We ask parents to work with the school in support of their child’s learning, which includes informing the school of any special education needs or personal factors that may result in their child displaying unexpected behaviour. We ask that parents be prepared to attend meetings at the school with staff or the headteacher to discuss their child’s behaviour and to adhere to any parenting contracts put in place.

In the case of exclusions, parents are expected to provide appropriate supervision for their child during the first 5 days of exclusion, ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification and, if invited, to attend a reintegration interview at the school with their child.

## 4. School rules that apply at all times to all members of the school community

*Conduct at Stepping Stones is guided by adherence to our values.*



*From this we expect all member of the school community to:*

- Be on time.
- Keep your appearance smart, tidy and appropriate for school.
- Rude, derogatory, racist or defamatory language will not be tolerated.
- Be considerate of your peers and the extended community.
- Be polite and respectful at all times. This applies to staff, other pupils, any visitors to the school, and to members of the general public.
- Take care of your environment, both on the school site and outside, and keep it tidy. Do not litter and do not vandalise property in any way.
- Unauthorised absence from school will not be tolerated.
- Health and safety equipment is only for use in emergency situations and should not be tampered with under any circumstances.
- Disobeying staff is not tolerated.
- The following items are not allowed in school under any circumstances:
  - Alcohol and drugs including “legal highs”
  - E-Cigarettes, Cigarettes, matches, and lighters
  - Chewing gum
  - Weapons of any kind or instruments/substances intended to be used as weapons
  - Material that is inappropriate or illegal for children to have, such as racist or pornographic material
  - *Mobile phones should be handed in when arriving at school.*
  - *Any article which a staff member reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil)*
- Gambling is not allowed on school property.

### 4.1 Drugs

The school will not tolerate drug use of any sort on school property or during off-site school activities. The school takes its anti-drugs policy very seriously and will discipline any person found to be in possession of drugs. This includes solvents and any other substance that can be misused or harmful. Pupils may be permanently excluded if they are found to be involved in drug-related incidents. This includes supplying, possessing, or taking drugs.

#### **Prescription drugs**

Carrying, supplying or taking prescription drugs without lawful reason could result in a permanent exclusion.

### **Non-prescription drugs**

Some over-the-counter drugs can be harmful if misused. We advise that pupils should not carry these in school. If they need medication, they can go to the school nurse.

### **Medication**

We are aware that it may be necessary for some pupils to take medication during the school day. Parents should make the school aware of this in writing as soon as their child starts taking the medication. Further details around medication is set out in a separate medical/first aid policy.

## **4.2 Alcohol**

Consuming, carrying or supplying alcohol is strictly prohibited. Any pupil involved in any alcohol-related activity may be excluded.

**All of these rules also apply when travelling to and from school.**

## **5. Bullying**

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

Stepping Stones School wants to make sure that all pupils feel safe at school and accepted into our school community. Our ethos is one of inclusion and equality; bullying of any kind is regarded as a serious breach of our behaviour policy and will not be tolerated.

Bullying can be verbal or physical, by person or by electronic, on-line or written means and can be directed at both staff and pupils. The school practices a preventative strategy to reduce the chances of bullying, and our anti-bullying policy is instilled in our curriculum and everything we do at the school. It is made very clear to pupils what is expected of them in terms of respecting their peers, members of the public, and staff, and any intentional breach of this will result in disciplinary action.

If an allegation of bullying does come up, the school will:

- take it seriously
- act as quickly as possible to establish the facts
- record and report the incident; depending on how serious the case is, it may be reported to the headteacher
- provide support and reassurance to the victim
- make it clear to the 'bully' that this behaviour will not be tolerated. If there is a group of people involved, they will be spoken to individually and as a whole group. It is important that children who have harmed another, either physically or emotionally, redress their actions, and the school will make sure that they understand what they have done and the impact of their actions
- ensure that if a sanction is used, it will correlate to the seriousness of the incident and the 'bully' will be told why it is being used
- consider whether exclusion is appropriate in light of the circumstances.

## 6. Disciplinary sanctions

Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a statutory power for teachers and certain other staff to discipline students. Stepping Stones School uses its consequence ladder to guide our decision making process regarding sanctions. In determining whether a punishment is reasonable, section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 says the penalty must be reasonable in all the circumstances and that account must be taken of the pupil's age, any special educational needs or disability they may have, and any religious requirements affecting them.

Sanctions may include but are not limited to

- A verbal reminder
- Extra work or repeating unsatisfactory work.
- Loss of privileges
- Missing break time to speak to a member of staff about their conduct
- In more extreme cases schools may use temporary or permanent exclusion

Sanctions are adapted relating to the seriousness and frequency of the behaviour.

### 6.1 Searching and confiscation

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 authorises our members of staff to use confiscation as a disciplinary sanction if it is lawful. This means that staff may confiscate or seize items in the possession of pupils that are illegal or banned by the school. It is our first priority to ensure that pupils are in a safe and secure environment when they are in our care, and any items that may jeopardise the safety of other pupils or themselves will be taken off pupils without notice.

A teacher or someone who has lawful control of the child can search a pupil **with their permission** to look for any item that the school's rules say must not be brought into school. Headteachers and other members of staff authorised by them have the power to search a pupil **without the pupil's consent** if they suspect they are in possession of 'prohibited items'. Prohibited items that can be searched for without consent include:

- knives or weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- "legal highs"
- stolen items
- e-cigarettes, tobacco and cigarette papers
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm.

The Education Act 2011 allows for staff seizing an electronic device to examine any data or files on the device if they think there is good reason to do so. These data or files may be erased before returning the item if they believe there is good reason to do this.

Any cigarettes and e-cigarettes confiscated in school will be destroyed.

### 6.2 Use of force

Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables school staff to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing any offence (or, for a pupil under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older pupil);
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any pupil (including him or herself); or
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

Stepping Stones School does not encourage the use of force and it will be used very rarely in special circumstances. There is no definition of when it is reasonable to use force, and every situation will have to be judged by the person in charge at that time. The degree of force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

All staff at the school have the authority to use force when reasonable, and this extends to any other person whom the head has given the responsibility to be in charge or in control of the pupils. Staff can also use this power when they are lawfully in charge of pupils but off the school premises – i.e., on a school trip.

Following serious incidents involving the use of force, the school will speak to the parents concerned. It is up to schools to decide whether it is an appropriate occasion to report the use of force to parents.

Such serious incidents involving the use of force will also be recorded by the school.

## **7. Attendance**

Regular attendance at school is required by law, and Stepping Stones School takes attendance very seriously. There is a register taken twice daily and at the start of each lesson, and disciplinary action will be taken against any pupils who are discovered to be truanting or are repeatedly late. Parents or carers will be contacted to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help. More information can be found in the school's **attendance policy**.

## **8. Uniform and appearance**

Effective teaching and learning need proper organisation, and this starts with a smart and tidy appearance which helps to instil discipline and pride in appearance in pupils and reduces the risk of distraction in lessons.

We expect all students to dress in a manner that is suitable for an educational environment. This means clothing is not ostentatious; it fits with our priorities of health and safety for students and staff, their security and is suitable for learning. We think that it is a fitting privilege to have a reasonable amount of personal choice, but you also have a responsibility to dress in the expected manner. It is possible that at times you may not meet our expectations and then we will intervene to let you know and we will then expect you to respond by adapting your dress. Please remember that we are a diverse community and we have a responsibility to consider the sensibilities of all members. We do not wish to have a big list of rules with specific measurements of clothing like some schools but we have provided some guidance below. These are “dos and don’ts” but the list is not exhaustive and we reserve the right to point out other issues as they arise. The overriding principle is that it is the judgement of the staff that determines what is suitable or not.

- Outfits should not reveal too much flesh.
- There should not be any slogans that could be considered abusive or offensive.
- Footwear should be safe and offer appropriate protection.
- Underwear should not be on show.
- Faces should not be covered.

## 9. Regulating pupil's offsite conduct

Pupils who are caught or known to have been misbehaving on the way to or from school, near the school premises or where it would be considered reasonable to impose sanctions for behaviour outside school e.g. cyberbullying, will be disciplined by the school. This also applies to pupils who break school conduct during work experience, school trips, or extended school activities such as sports events, or any event where poor behaviour might jeopardise the chances of future pupils participating.

Any off-site misbehaviour could result in sanctions. The school will take into consideration:

- the severity of the misbehaviour;
- the extent to which the reputation of the school has been affected;
- the effect such an action may have on the other pupils;
- the extent to which the behaviour has repercussions for the orderly running of the school/or might impose a threat to another pupil or member of staff;
- whether the misbehaviour was on the way to or from the school or the pupil was taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity; and
- if it was at a time when the pupil is in some other way identifiable as a pupil of the school or might be expected to act as an ambassador for the school.

## 10. Rewards policy

Rewards and celebrating success is important part of life within Stepping Stones School, student's success both within and outside the class room is rewarded. Rewarding students makes them feel valued, builds confidence and motivates them to achieve. In addition, rewarding good behaviour enables students to realise that desirable behaviour, self-discipline and responsibility to self and others is highly valued in our community.

We understand the importance of recognising, praising and rewarding our students in a way that is meaningful to them. We seek to use methods that students are motivated by and that inspire the students to achieve well. We will ensure that, regardless of ability and age all students across the school will be able to benefit from the rewards process.

Student achievements are rewarded as merits which students collect over the course of the year; these are recorded as a running total. Parents are notified at notable milestones of accumulated merits and awards are given in assembly.

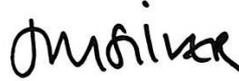
Each term celebration assemblies are held on each site to celebrate achievements and significant improvements for individuals and groups of students. Students received any certificates they have achieved, d along with any other achievements earned by students in this term.

## 11. Complaints

The school has a standard complaints procedure. We encourage parents to take any complaints or concerns to a staff member or the headteacher, and the school will do everything in its power to help resolve conflict or complaints swiftly and effectively. For details of the full complaints procedure see our **school complaints policy**.

Claire Cookson  
Chair of Governors

Jacqueline Silver  
Headteacher



Date 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020

Date 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020

This policy will be reviewed annually

## COVID Appendix

The following policy appendix has been designed with reference to the Department for Education guidance document found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schoolsfrom-1-june/planning-guide-for-secondary-schools>

If a child's behaviour is deemed high risk, for example, refusing to adhere to safety measures, such as, hand washing, social distancing, remaining in their pods or deliberate behaviours that put themselves or others at risk, such as spitting, deliberately coughing at people or any act which may increase the chances of transmission. The following sanctions and disciplinary procedures could be used:

- Conversation(s) with pupil(s) which could include a verbal warning, moving seats if logistically possible and other behaviour management strategies in line with our current behaviour policy.
- Once all appropriate behaviour management strategies have been exhausted, contact should be made with pupil's parent/carer.
- If the health and safety of other pupils and staff members are put at risk by the pupils not adhering to social distancing measures, then the parent/carer will be expected to collect the pupil and a fixed term exclusion will be applied in line with Exclusion guidance.

School acknowledges that children will have had a range of different experiences during the lockdown period which may have an impact on their behaviour presentation upon return to school. Some may present with frustration as a result of being isolated from friends or having missed a significant event or experience, e.g. exams, school trip, etc. Others may have experienced bereavement or loss or another, real or perceived, traumatic episode. For many, the process of re-engagement with learning and the school community, under unusual circumstances, may require some additional input and encouragement. As a result of these varied experiences children may present with behaviour that is not usual, this may include;

- Anxiety; lack of confidence
- Challenging behaviour; fight or flight response
- Anger; shouting, crying
- Hyperactivity and difficulties maintaining attention

For some children, including those with attachment concerns or SEN, and especially those with autism, the change in routines and lack of familiarity will require additional adjustment.

School recognises that behaviour could be a sign that for some individual children there is an unfulfilled need and that the behaviour is communicating that there is a problem. The school will undertake an individual risk assessment for the child and use reasonable endeavours to make the necessary adjustments to reduce the stimulus that may be triggering the challenging response.

Children with SEN are recognised as being particularly vulnerable and therefore have an urgent need to be re-integrated back into school as soon as reasonably possible. School will work closely with parents to implement supportive strategies that will inform an appropriate response. If necessary, school will seek external support from other agencies such as Educational Psychologists or Early Help.