



WOODCOTE HOUSE SCHOOL

STUDENT BEHAVIOUR, DISCIPLINE & EXCLUSION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Woodcote House School aims to encourage pupils to adopt the highest standards of behaviour, principles and moral standards. We aim to promote trust and mutual respect for everyone. We believe that good relations, good manners and a secure learning environment play a crucial part in the development of intellectually curious pupils, who are motivated to become life-long learners. We develop qualities of team-work and leadership through our extensive programme of extra-curricular activities. In developing this policy, the school has taken due regard to the Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and schools 2022

Woodcote House School is an inclusive community. We welcome pupils from a wide variety of ethnic and social backgrounds and faiths. We treat everyone as an individual, and aim to develop the whole person, equipped to take his place in the modern world.

Woodcote's aims are centred around the message of:

“Be Your Kindest, Try Your Hardest.”

At Woodcote we promote and reward good behaviour by:

- verbal and written praise for good work
- plus marks for kindness, effort and excellence
- annual subject and year group prizes
- posting examples of excellent work on notice boards/website/etc.

DISCIPLINE AND REWARDS

The school fully recognizes the need to balance promoting good behavior amongst pupils as well as the sanctions adopted, therefore, Woodcote has adopted a system of plus and minus marks as detailed below.

For a comparatively trivial offence, the system of 'Minuses' is used. It is split into 4 different categories – unkindness, classroom misconduct, general misconduct and kit—thus covering most misdemeanours. Minuses operate on a daily basis. If a boy receives a minus in one given period, he will do a detention with a senior member of staff at 12:35

the following day. One minus is equal to 10 minutes detention. The Director of Studies keeps a record via Engage which serves as a record of all minuses given.

More serious examples of bad behaviour should always be reported to the Headmaster and are described below.

It is very important that staff recognise the value of praising good behaviour, privately or publicly, and rewards throughout the school in terms of plus marks, extra tuck, special privileges or public congratulation are certainly in order.

Woodcote recognizes the need to manage pupils transition through the school and that a minor offence committed by a new 7 year old might warrant different handling to that if it had been committed by a 12 year old who had been at the school for several years. All punishments and rewards are discussed regularly at staff meetings and it is through these discussions that they are moderated to ensure they are appropriate for the age and experience of the boy.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Woodcote House School community of staff, parents and pupils adhere to a code of behaviour. We see education as a partnership. Our staff are committed to excellence, aiming to achieve a spirit of trust and cooperation. We expect the highest values and standards of behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom, as well as outside the school and in any written or electronic communication concerning the school.

We expect pupils to treat staff and each other with consideration and good manners and to respond positively to the opportunities and demands of school life. They should follow the school's Code of Behaviour.

Everyone has a right to feel secure and to be treated with respect, particularly the vulnerable. Harassment and bullying will not be tolerated. The school is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, gender, gender orientation or physical disability.

Woodcote takes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 seriously and makes appropriate reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs/disabilities. All the protected characteristics outlined in said Equality Act are just that – protected.

We expect pupils to be ready to learn and to participate in school activities. They should attend school and lessons punctually. They should care for the buildings, equipment and furniture. We expect pupils to behave at all times in a manner that reflects the best interests of the whole community.

INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Parents and Guardians who accept a place for their child at Woodcote House undertake to uphold the school's policies and regulations, including this policy. They will support the school's values in matters such as attendance and punctuality, behaviour, uniform/dress and appearance, standards of academic work, extra-curricular activities and homework/private study.

We will always telephone the home on the first day of an unexplained absence in order to make sure that your child has not suffered an accident. Please note that it is the school policy usually not to allow holiday to be taken during term.

In the event of any behaviour management issue the school will liaise closely with parents and, if relevant, other support agencies. This will include consultation/access to the school counsellor and educational psychologist as appropriate to set up an appropriate support system for individual pupils.

INVOLVEMENT OF PUPILS

Our experience shows that the ethos of and respect for the school is enhanced by listening to our pupils and by encouraging constructive suggestions from them, e.g. via the School Council, Food, and Boarding Committees which meet regularly.

SCHOOL RULES AND REGULATIONS

The school's Rules and Regulations (our Code of Behaviour) are designed to encourage positive behaviour. Its sanctions are to help us to manage challenging behaviour. Copies of the Code of Behaviour are set out in the termly calendar given to pupils, parents, guardians and staff. It is also displayed around the school for boys to see. They may change from time to time. Parents and Guardians undertake to support the authority of the Headmaster in enforcing them in a fair manner that is designed to safeguard the welfare of the community as a whole.

The Head for his part undertakes to apply any sanctions fairly, and, where appropriate, after due investigative action has taken place. Sanctions may undergo reasonable change from time to time but will not involve any form of unlawful or degrading activity. Corporal punishment is illegal and Woodcote's staff will never threaten, or use, any form of corporal punishment when setting out its sanctions for poor behaviour amongst pupils. Examples of sanctions include:

- Detention;
- Withdrawal of privileges;
- Confiscation of property that is being used inappropriately or without consideration;
- Withdrawal from a lesson, school trip or team event; or
- Suspension for a specified period, removal or exclusion.

SERIOUS MISBEHAVIOUR

The school's policy on exclusion is set out below and all parents and pupils should be aware of the more serious sanctions, including suspension and exclusion, that the Head Master can impose for serious breaches of the School Rules, including but not limited to criminal behaviour. Examples of serious breaches (non-exhaustive) of the School Rules which may result in serious sanctions include

- Drug abuse;
- Alcohol and tobacco abuse;
- Theft;
- Bullying;
- Physical assault/ threatening behaviour against pupils or adults;

- Verbal abuse/threatening behavior against pupils or adults;
- Fighting;
- Sexual harassment;
- Racist, religious or sexist abuse;
- Abuse on grounds of disability, Special Educational Needs(tec);
- Sexual misconduct;
- Damage to property;
- Making malicious false accusations against staff;
- Persistent disruptive behaviour; or
- Parental behaviour.

Serious sanctions may also be imposed where unsatisfactory behaviour has continued despite previous disciplinary sanctions and/ or warnings or as a sanction for a series of minor misdemeanours.

In applying sanctions, especially those with serious consequences, we undertake to take reasonable steps to avoid placing children with a disability at a disadvantage compared to children who are not disabled.

Sanctions for breaches of discipline that do not merit exclusion

When poor behaviour is identified a range of disciplinary measures may be applied which could include:

- A verbal reprimand from a member of school staff;
- Reports to parents (which are always worded to be as constructive as possible);
- Additional school work or repeating unsatisfactory work until it meets the required standard;
- The setting of written tasks as punishments, such as writing lines or essays;
- Loss of privileges;
- Missing break time;
- School detention
- Regular reporting, including early morning reporting; scheduled uniform and other behaviour checks; or being identified for behaviour monitoring; and

If a boy receives four minus marks in a week, the tutor will email and arrange a conversation with the parents, to work collaboratively to ensure there is no repeat offence.

Should a boy receive four minuses in a week for a second time, within a half term period, one of the Deputy Heads will be in contact to discuss suitable steps to find a suitable corrective solution.

If there is a third instance of four minuses within a half term, the boy in question will be sent to the Headmaster.

Persistent lateness to bed, disrupting other members of the boarding house, etc. may result in the Duty Master/Matron requiring the pupil to attend a detention.

Breaches of discipline outside of the school grounds

The school takes the conduct of its pupils outside of school grounds extremely seriously. A pupil's misbehaviour outside of school can be damaging to the reputation of both the pupil and the school. Where an incident is reported to the school of a pupil/s' poor behaviour outside of the school grounds and the incident has not been witnessed by school staff, the school will take an evidence-based approach and/or talk to witnesses before identifying further action and any sanctions required for such behaviour.

The school will report to the police any activity which it believes may amount to a criminal activity which takes place either within the school grounds or outside of its grounds. Drugs and weapons will be confiscated immediately and held for the police as potential evidence. If the school believes a pupil may have taken drugs then the school will seek immediate medical advice and may involve the police.

Sexual offences will generally be reported to the police immediately, including in cases where a pupil is only suspected or alleged to have committed such an offence provided a reasonable amount of evidence is available. The alleged victim's parents will also be informed immediately of the incident and told that the police have been informed. Whether the victim and parents then speak to the police is a matter for them.

Appeals against exclusion

The school will always offer the right of appeal to any pupil excluded from the school. Any appeal against exclusion will be dealt with under this Policy rather than under the school's Complaints Policy, and should be made in writing to the Head Master within one week of the pupil's exclusion.

An appeal meeting will follow as soon as practicable, to which the parent may be accompanied by a friend or relative if they wish (although legal representation is not appropriate). The appeal will usually be heard by at least two of the school's Advisory Board.

The school will accept the appeal decision as final.

Physical Restraint

Like all schools, we reserve the right for our staff to use reasonable force to control or restrain a pupil in specific circumstances. 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 any person (including the pupil themselves)"
- "Causing damage to the property of any person (including the pupil themselves)"
- "Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school, and among any pupils receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise"

The Act also defines to whom the power applies as follows:

- "Any teacher who works at the school"
- "Any other person whom the head teacher has authorised to have control or charge of pupils"

All of our staff are trained in the circumstances in which reasonable minimum force may be used, both as part of their induction and regular refresher training on managing pupil behaviour. In particular, they are advised always to use their voices first and to use the minimum force necessary to restrain a child for the shortest possible period. Their training deals with the factors that must be considered in reaching a judgement as to whether the use of physical restraint is appropriate that are set out in the ATL's Guidance "Restraint," that include:

- "The seriousness of the incident, assessed by the effect of the injury, damage or disorder that is likely to result if force is not used"
- "The chances of achieving the desired result by other means"
- "The relative risks associated with physical intervention compared with using other strategies"

Searching

This section takes into account the latest guidance on **Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools July 2022**

The school reserves the right to search pupils and their possessions without consent if there is justified cause to do so. Knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks and pornographic images can be searched for according to law along with any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to property. A search may also be undertaken for any item banned by School Rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.

The Head or staff authorised by them may search a pupil, provided that the staff member is the same sex as the pupil being searched and there is another staff member as witness. The school may carry out a search of a pupil of the opposite sex to the staff member conducting the search and without a witness present but only where the school "reasonably believes that there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if you do not conduct the search immediately and where it is practical not to summon another member of staff" ('Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Headteachers, School Staff and Governing Bodies' July 2022)

When exercising their powers, Woodcote will always consider the age and needs of pupils being searched or screened. This includes the individual needs or learning difficulties of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and making reasonable adjustments that may be required where a pupil has a disability.

A search will only take place on the school premises or where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil, for example on a school trip.

The person conducting the search will never require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing – i.e. no item shall be removed that is wholly next to the skin

The headmaster oversees the school's practice of searching to ensure that a culture of safe, proportionate and appropriate searching is maintained, which safeguards the welfare of all pupils and staff with support from the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

The DSL (or deputy) will be informed of any searching incidents where the member of staff had reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of a prohibited item as listed above. The staff member will also involve the DSL (or deputy) without delay if they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk.

Confiscation of Prohibited or illegal items

Controlled drugs will be delivered to the police as soon as possible unless there is a good reason not to do so. In these cases, the member of staff will safely dispose of the drugs

If a member of staff finds a pornographic image, they may dispose of the image unless they have reasonable grounds to suspect that its possession constitutes a specified offence (i.e. it is extreme or an indecent image of a child) in which case it must be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable

Staff must never copy, print, share, store or save such images.

Where a member of staff finds stolen items, these will be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable, unless the member of staff, using their professional judgement deems that not necessary

Any weapons or items which are evidence of a suspected offence will be passed to the police as soon as possible.

If the member of staff conducting the search suspects they may find an indecent image of a child (sometimes known as nude or semi-nude images), the member of staff should never intentionally view the image, and will never copy, print, share, store or save such images. When an incident might involve an indecent image of a child and/or video, the member of staff should confiscate the device, avoid looking at the device and refer the incident to the DSL (or deputy) as the most appropriate person to advise on the school's response.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Woodcote House School aims to raise the aspirations of all its pupils and to help them to appreciate that there are no barriers to their potential achievements both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. We celebrate success, emphasise the positive and deal with the negative in a sensitive and tactful way. Our teaching staff offer every child a high level of individual attention, together with consistent and helpful advice. In return, we expect every pupil to cooperate and to work hard. With particular regard to promoting good behavior there are lessons in morality and manners for boys in the bottom of the school and this is reinforced through tutor sessions, assemblies and chapel services throughout each term. The boys also have a copy of the code of behavior in the back of the school booklet.

COMPLAINTS

We hope that you and your child do not have any complaints about the operation of our behaviour policy; but copies of the School's complaints procedure can be sent to you on request.

September 2023