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St Berteline's Church of England Primary School

Behaviour and Discipline Policy

The following section is taken from our school prospectus.

St Berteline's is a modern school serving an area of relatively new housing. A significant proportion of our families have come to this area from elsewhere. We foster a family atmosphere within the school and encourage the children to develop a caring attitude towards others. We do not see the school as a place where children come from 9.00 am to 3.15 pm, but rather as a part of the child's whole development. A place where children are helped with everyday problems, where they are encouraged to learn and where the school becomes an extension of the family. An understanding and caring attitude is uppermost amongst the staff and helpers and day to day problems are dealt with as any caring parent would deal with them.

St Berteline's aims to create a Christian environment providing a broad education and so aiding the development of children, teachers, parents and the local community. The school strives to promote quality and endeavours to build the foundations of a good academic, social and Christian education.

The school nurtures the characters and personalities of the children and helps them to mature. It envelops the social, academic and Christian skills required to assist in their growth, creating a favourable environment for the children to develop a love of reading and literature and increase their skills in mathematics, sciences and the arts. The school welcomes all the latest technologies and strives to include them wherever possible.

We want our children to receive a balanced view of the world in which we live and prepare them for the next stage of their education.

Putting the words into practice.

How do we go about creating a school which tries to live up to these high ideals?

The role of the teacher is crucial. Teachers are our single most important asset in creating a Christian caring school.

The school behaviour policy starts here with the teachers being honest. We are all people who have good days and bad days and our aim is to work alongside the children in an atmosphere of calm and enjoyment. A good analogy might be the idea of the child being a traveller and the teacher being a guide through the journey of education.

Whichever model the teacher feels comfortable with, the truth is that we, as teachers, have an immense effect on our pupils. "My teacher says....." is a usual comment at home, and the teacher's values are a major building block in the development of children. We can all look back to our own educational process to confirm this fact.

How then do we begin to create something new, something lasting and something special for our children?

This is the simple policy for our school;

- Be yourself - and rejoice in all your strengths and weaknesses. The children see teachers as a role model and learn far more from them in an informal way than they ever realise. Our governors' overriding factor in appointing staff is that they should be optimistic, caring people, with a love of life and an eye on what could be.
- Treat the children as if they are your own. We are just as concerned about children's development as their parents. The academic curriculum is important, but so is
 - saying "No" to strangers
 - healthy eating
 - looking after your body
 - making friends
 - learning to share
 - dealing with bullies
 - working for fairness
 - humility
 - living in a multicultural society
 - etc. etc. - the list is endless!.
- Use your own values to create a classroom atmosphere. Think about the way in which children grow and develop. Be aware that many of our children have a different set of values which are based on their own family background. Things in our world are rarely "black and white". As Christians we must be constantly aware of the diversity of God's creation.
- Behaviour in the school starts with the teachers. If they are understanding, full of fun, optimistic and caring, then this is the role model taken by the children.
- The behaviour of all the children in the school is the responsibility of all the teachers. Someone else's class is just as important as your own. Do not feel that you cannot correct a child because they are not in your class or area. We all work together with all of our children.

- The way in which teachers treat each other and the way in which we treat other members of the school community is crucial. All members of staff and parents are important pieces of the jigsaw.

If the teachers adopt this policy, then the children will follow. They should be guided along a road which will lead them to maturity and self discipline and allow them to have a socially aware view of the world and their place in it.

Pastoral Care & Discipline

Below are two further sections from our school prospectus.

Pastoral Care

Teachers share with parents the responsibility for the children. We try in school to provide the care which any responsible parent would be expected to give. We regulate the life of the school to ensure as far as possible a civilising influence; taking courtesy, respect for others, respect for property as our main criteria. In general, the rules of common sense apply and a sturdy sensible independence is encouraged.

General points such as sensible movement around the school and general behaviour in the teaching and dining areas are obvious and will be explained, with reasons, to the children as part of school life. We value close co-operation between home and school and the support of parents is essential. Every child experiences some difficulties at school from time to time. Sometimes these difficulties are related to friendships, issues in the classroom or maybe problems at home. Obviously, all parents are concerned when problems arise but close co-operation between home and school can keep them to a minimum or prevent them from being blown out of all proportion.

Discipline

When your child starts at the school you will be given a copy of our 'School Rules for Parents' booklet which is designed to help you with the day to day organisation of the school. Should problems concerning disruptive behaviour arise, then the teacher concerned will decide how best to deal with the problem and bring about an acceptable conclusion. More serious matters will be brought to the attention of the head teacher and depending on their frequency, nature or severity, parents may be informed.

Correcting children

There are many ways available to create a classroom atmosphere where children can be helped to grow emotionally and socially and have positive behaviour encouraged, and poor behaviour discouraged.

Group work can be an important tool to use in the classroom and we have numerous examples of games and activities available in school. Regular group activities can form a strong group feeling in the class and help create tolerance, understanding and responsibility amongst the members. Peer pressure often helps correct children who have difficulties working in groups.

Each teacher has a copy of ‘Values and Vision’ produced by MMU. This is an invaluable resource for teachers in an aided school.

Children who display particular difficulties will be discussed with the SENCO and with parents. Support plans can be a valuable way to plan an approach to modifying a child’s behaviour. Assistance and expertise is available throughout the staff and, in extreme cases, through the Educational Psychology Service and through the Attendance and Behaviour Team. We have many suggestions and ideas for behavioural modification in the form of hand-outs. Colleagues will always lend a sympathetic ear to members of staff experiencing difficulties with children’s behaviour.

Some important things to remember

DO	DON'T
Be positive - always try to look for good. Be calm yourself.	Accept anything you are uncomfortable with.
Show a Christian attitude to the children.	Let anything distract you from the importance of good class control and atmosphere.
Have high expectations of the children.	Allow details to pass you by. Probably the most important element in class discipline is having the correct system and an eye for detail.
Be consistent.	Set up thoughtless class rules/ star charts etc. - they usually do more harm than good ! Teach children the rules of self-discipline, fairness and honesty instead.
Take time to get to know the children and their families.	
Be concerned about the ‘whole child’. Speech, manners, attitude etc.	

Sanctions

Corporal punishment has been abolished in state and ‘aided’ schools. Corporal punishment means the intentional application of force as punishment. This is not consistent with our mission statement.

Teachers and other staff however may have to intervene physically, often on the spur of the moment to avert an immediate danger. They should do this with confidence and use reasonable and moderate intervention, as would be done by any caring parent. Teachers should never put themselves at risk.

Physical restraint will only be used to prevent a child hurting themselves, other children or adults or school property. Please refer to policy entitled “Safer Handling Policy” within the general Safeguarding folder in the school office.

The use of appropriate sanctions when dealing with children is part of the professionalism of teachers and a necessary tool to have at your fingertips. Sanctions are an everyday part of teaching, and yet the choice of such sanctions should be in line with the schools general philosophy and aims.

Here are some sanctions which would be acceptable and could be used as part of the total picture of discipline in the school;

- Talking to children - verbal reprimand. Taking care to accentuate the 'do's' in the previous list.
- Minor penalties - related to misconduct. Missing playtimes etc. - These should be used with care as they can often be negative for certain children. i.e. The same children can often miss playtimes - the very children who need to develop skills on the playground!
- Time out. - This is a useful sanction if it is used sensitively - five minutes out of playtime etc. The MDAs are trained to use this as a major sanction.
- Loss of privilege - standing away from the play-area or not being allowed to do a particular school job.
- Referral to classteacher or to headteacher - This is a sanction which should be carefully thought out. There is a down-side for the teacher using the sanction (it undermines authority), and there is also a down-side for the classteacher or headteacher - (they become the 'ogre'!).
- Consultation with parents - this is a useful tool with some families where parental pressure is significant. Again it should be sensitively used, taking into account the child's family background.
- Official exclusion from school - ref LA guidelines. A very rare occurrence which would be discussed with staff and chairman of governors before taking place. This has only ever been used if other children at the school are at risk.

This policy is intended to be a balanced and sensitive document, taking into account the ethos of our school, as well as having regard to the practical difficulties of a teacher's role in today's society.

We hope that our staff as a whole is supportive and that our school discipline is consistent, from secretary to MDAs, from caretaker to teachers. In this way we hope to put forward a set of values and beliefs which are consistent with our mission statement and enable both teachers and children to thrive in the school setting.

See Re-directing Behaviour – staff discussion paper