

Rishworth School: Promoting Good Behaviour, Discipline and Sanctions Policy

<i>Review Initiated by</i>	<i>PSe, ASG</i>
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***Issued to: Parents and Prospective Parents via Parents' and Pupils' Handbook and website
Available to: Teaching Staff via same, Staff Handbook and School's Internal Policy Files***

This Policy is intended to cover Discipline (including the promotion of good behaviour) as well as Rewards and Sanctions (from informal sanctions to exclusions). It should be read in conjunction with the Anti-bullying Policy and has the following 2 Appendices:

1. Guidelines on Physical Contact between Staff and Pupils (including guidance on the use of physical force to control or restrain)
2. Searches

In accordance with statutory regulation which requires a statement to this effect, the School confirms that corporal punishment is not used.

This Policy is to be understood in conjunction with the School Rules as set out in the Parents' and Pupils' Handbook and which amount to the following ('the Five Cs'): *Behave with Care, Consideration, Courtesy, Co-operation and Common Sense.*

Aim

The aim of all discipline is self-discipline.

Specific desired outcomes for the School of developing and sustaining self-discipline within the community include:

- an orderly, co-operative, purposeful atmosphere,
- high standards and expectations,
- the promotion of good behaviour,
- good relationships based on respect for other people and on courteous and considerate behaviour,
- an industrious approach to work,
- care for the school environment.

1. Roles and Means

1.1 The Pupil:

- a) In the Parents' and Pupils' Handbook, under 'School Rules', the opening paragraph (quoted below), addressed to pupils, delineates the behavioural expectations the School has of its students:
- b) "Rishworth is your school; respect it and take active interest in all your work and in the School generally. Your happiness and success, and its reputation, depend upon your efforts. Do all you can to make the School even happier and more successful. Do nothing to lower its reputation."

- c) Pupils are expected at all times , whether in or outside school and whether during a school activity or otherwise, to respect the School's central rule, which is the "Five C's", as set out in the Parents' and Pupils' Handbook: "Behave with courtesy, care, consideration, co-operation and common sense".
- d) In addition, pupils are expected to comply with requests, rules and regulations which are standing or which come into effect from time to time.
- e) Given that the core purpose of a student is to study, serious and/or persistent deficiencies in such areas as effort and application in academic work may also be considered as disciplinary matters.

1.2 The Parents:

- a) One of the reasons that many parents will have chosen Rishworth for their children is because they want them to grow up in an atmosphere conducive to learning where high standards of behaviour are expected and prevail. Should measures to apply disciplinary sanctions have to be taken in respect of a pupil, it is vital that the parents of that child support the School in its actions so that the message received by the pupil is consistent between school and home. Where there is no such, or inadequate, support from parents, not only can this give unsettling and confusing mixed messages to the child and reduce the chances of improvement, but it could also jeopardise the validity of the contract parents have signed with the School;
- b) Understanding and respecting what is set out in the section entitled "What about discipline?" in the Parents' and Pupils' Handbook is an essential part of the parents' and guardians' role. The section in question contains the following sub-sections:
 - Orderliness prevails!
 - How is orderliness at Rishworth nurtured?
 - The Educational Approach
 - When necessary, how does our community protect itself against the damage done by disorderly conduct?
 - Sanctions
 - What about my son or daughter?
 - What can I as a parent/guardian do to help?

1.3 The School

- a) Discipline should:
 - be constructive and purposeful
 - be clearly defined and understood within a graduated framework
 - be preventive rather than reactive whenever possible
 - balance freedom and responsibility
 - be part of, not in conflict with, pastoral care
 - be explored and better understood through the academic, PSHCE and broader curricula

- be supported by, and reflected in, the standards expected and upheld day to day by the School
- be practised by the whole community, not just by a few individuals
- involve parents whenever necessary
- be systematic and consistent, but also flexible
- combine sensitively both rewards and sanctions
- be fair and, where possible, help pupils and parents to appreciate the fairness

2. Discipline Procedures

2.1 The purpose of both rewards and sanctions is to promote good behaviour. A graduated structure of formal rewards and sanctions to complement less formal measures is necessary. The purpose of a reward is to recognise worthy achievement or effort, to motivate and encourage. The purpose of a sanction is to correct, to deter or, on occasion, to protect. The imposition of a sanction should never be an act of retribution.

3. Principles of Application

- 3.1. It is important, in order that discipline is fair and meaningful, for there to be systematic and consistent use of rewards and sanctions throughout the School. It is equally important, however, for the same reasons that there is sufficient flexibility in the application of disciplinary procedures to allow differing circumstances, such as disabilities and particular learning needs, to be taken into account in individual cases. A balance needs to be struck between the need for consistency on the one hand and for flexibility on the other.
- 3.2. For this reason, few are the cases where a direct equation can *automatically* be made between a given offence and a particular punishment, although there needs to be a generally accepted view of the kind of misbehaviour that is likely to result in a certain type of punishment: it is important that pupils as well as staff understand, for instance, that throwing a snowball is (depending upon circumstances) likely to fall within the sanction range of verbal reprimand to detention, whereas stealing from another pupil's wallet would (depending upon circumstances) be more likely to warrant expulsion. The School's enforcement of its no chewing-gum rule is robust: a pupil can expect to be sent home if found to be in breach of this rule; an equivalent, appropriate sanction can be expected for boarders whose homes are a long way away
- 3.3. It should be understood that, as one of the main purposes of any sanction is to correct behaviour, pupils are expected to learn from their mistakes (and from any sanctions imposed), and not to repeat them. Persistent misbehaviour, even of a kind that may, initially, and as a one-off, be relatively low level, can quickly become serious, if only as a mark of disobedience, and a pupil can in consequence quickly escalate through the graduated sanctions. This is an example of how a given misdemeanour in one instance can lead to a particular sanction, and ostensibly the same misdemeanour in another instance can lead to a more severe sanction.
- 3.4. That a misdemeanour in one set of circumstances might fairly lead to one course of action while ostensibly the same misdemeanour in another set of circumstances might fairly lead to a different course of action can be a point which both pupils and parents at times struggle to see as equitable. This difficulty can be made worse by the fact that the School, bound by confidentiality, is unlikely to be able to explain to a pupil or parent querying the justice of measures taken in their regard either what, or even that, action has been taken in respect of

another pupil who they believe also might have offended and who they therefore believe should be treated in a given way.

- 3.5. The latter difficulty notwithstanding, the best way to ensure both consistency and flexibility is for staff to liaise, as necessary, with relevant parties and for parents to contact the appropriate member of staff at the appropriate stage/level. (See 'Chains of Communication' below)

4. Informal Rewards and Sanctions

- 4.1 These are frequently used as a natural and integrated part of a teacher's interaction with pupils: words of encouragement, smiles of approval and other approbatory demonstrations go hand in hand with the authoritative stance, the stern look, the cautionary gesture, the 'quiet word' and the firm rebuke.
- 4.2 A particularly effective way of recognising a pupil's good performance or conduct is not only for the teacher concerned to congratulate the pupil personally but also to mention this to a relevant member of staff (Form Tutor, Head of Department, etc.) who can then also congratulate the pupil. This creates a positive climate in which pupils feel their efforts are known and appreciated. Verbal praise and written praise are given for good work and examples of pupils' work is displayed in classrooms and around the School.
- 4.3 Such referral and feedback also work well as a semi-formal sanction in the case of poor effort or conduct, whereby pupils realise that 'being unsatisfactory' is noticed and taken seriously by more than just the teacher initially concerned.

5. Formal Rewards and Sanctions

5.1 Rewards

- a) **Credits:** These are awarded by the teacher and usually recorded in a pupil's exercise book although they may take the form of a 'credit slip' or a 'Positive Comment Sheet'. Credits are collected from the pupil by the tutor once a week and collated for the purpose of inter-team prizes. Pupils earn credit certificates for each multiple of 100 credits gained (a 1-star award for 100 credits; a 2-star award when 200 credits are gained, and so on). Credit certificates are normally presented in assemblies.
- b) **Commended Work:** Staff are invited to commend a pupil's good work to the Headmaster who then congratulates the pupil in Friday morning's Assembly. Commendations may be given for academic work of a high standard, or for community activities. Major awards such as those in sports, and drama and concert achievements, as well as being announced in Assembly, may be published on the School's web site and in the newsletter.
- c) **Prizes:** Subject and year group prizes are awarded each year on Speech Day to recognise success, academic or otherwise, over the year. Academic awards are given for both effort and achievement, as well as for a wide range of other accomplishments
- d) **Letters of Commendation:** The Headmaster may send such a letter to the parents of a pupil who has, for instance, received outstanding end-of-term reports.

5.2 Sanctions

- a) The member of staff should try to deal with any minor misdemeanours in the first instance. If appropriate, a note for parents and tutor may be entered in the pupil's Planner, which parents of pupils in Years 7 – 11 are asked to check regularly and to sign, as checked, each week (with or without comment in the space provided), the Planner being a key point of contact between school, home and pupil.
- b) When warranted, a complaint should be recorded electronically where it will be picked up by the relevant tutor who should then take the appropriate action in accordance with established procedure. A complaint will remain on a pupil's record.
- c) More serious or recurring misdemeanours should be referred to the pupil's Tutor and/or Head of School Section/Senior Member of Staff, and suitable action will be considered, again in accordance with established procedure, including whether or not parents should be contacted at a given stage and whether or not the pupil should be placed in any of the detentions listed below.
- d) Any apparently-significant disciplinary matter will have been investigated as thoroughly as is appropriate before any sanction is imposed.

5.3 Complaint Slips

- a) Teachers may give a Complaint for any appropriate misdemeanour, including:
 - Inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour
 - Poor classwork
 - Poor homework or homework not done
 - Inappropriate uniform or appearance
 - Chewing gum
 - Any other misdemeanour
- b) What are the consequences of being given a complaint?
 - The teacher giving the complaint may decide on a sanction to be applied (see below)
 - The pupil's Tutor will always be informed when a complaint is given. If the pupil is a boarder, his or her Housemaster/Mistress will also be informed.
 - The pupil's Tutor records the number of complaints given and may decide on a sanction to be applied (see below)
- c) If a pupil is given three complaints in a 2-week period:
 - The pupil's Head of School Section will be informed
 - The pupil's parents/guardians are very likely to be informed in the first instance of the pupil receiving three complaints in a 2-week period and will certainly be informed should there be any further occurrence of the pupil receiving three complaints in a 2-week period
 - The pupil's Tutor or Head of School Section will decide on an appropriate sanction to be applied (see below)

5.4 Some offences have their own particular sanction e.g. a pupil caught chewing gum in school will be sent home.

5.5 **The Detention System:** The sanctions are outlined below and ordered in level of severity.

Level 1 Detention

These take place in classrooms, usually at lunchtime. A pupil receiving three Level 1 detentions in any one half-term period will, in addition, receive a Level 2 detention.

Level 2 Detention

This takes place in the Library after School on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons from 4.00 – 5.00 p.m. and is supervised by the member of staff on duty. A form must be collected by the pupil from the appropriate Head of School Section or Senior Member of Staff concerned, to be signed by the parents/boarding staff at least 48 hours before the detention. The signed form will then be kept in the pupil's file. A pupil receiving two Level 2 detentions in the same term will, in addition, receive a Level 3 detention.

Level 3 Detention

This takes place under the supervision of the Deputy Headmaster on Friday afternoon from 4.00 – 5.30 p.m. The procedure for giving notice is identical to that set out in **Level 2 Detention** above.

Level 4 - Headmaster's Detention

This is held on Saturday morning, from 9.15 am to 12 noon. The detention is supervised by the member of Senior Staff on duty and the work done is set by the Headmaster. A letter to parents/guardians is issued by either the Head of School Section or a Senior Member of Staff.

5.6 **Suspension**

a) Authorised only (and rarely) by the Headmaster or the Deputy Headmaster for severe disciplinary breaches such as certain kinds of bullying, or for a repetition of less serious offences, any one of which, on its own, may warrant a lesser sanction but which, taken together, form a graver picture. As with any apparently-significant disciplinary matter, the case will have been thoroughly investigated before any disciplinary action is taken. This will normally include the offender and other relevant parties being interviewed. Parents will also normally be contacted by the Headmaster or Deputy Headmaster or other senior colleague and invited into school for consultation.

b) A formal letter confirming the School's action will be sent.

5.7 **Rustication**

a) Authorised only by the Headmaster or the Deputy Headmaster, rustication is the release of the Pupil to his/her home or to an education guardian for a specified period of time but without further disciplinary consequences. Rustication is only temporary, and after a period of reflection, the student can resume his or her studies.

5.8 Requirement to Leave and Expulsion

- a) Authorised only by the Headmaster and always after extensive consultation with staff concerned, these are the School's ultimate sanctions and their use is very rare. The offence will be very serious or will be the culmination of less serious offences that have already led to repeated sanctions, usually (but not necessarily) including suspension.
- b) The difference between 'expulsion' and 'requirement to leave' is very significant indeed, even if both share the same central outcome: that the pupil has to leave the School permanently.
- c) Expulsion implies an enforced departure in disgrace, with a permanent stain left on that pupil's disciplinary record; 'requirement to leave' enables the School to provide a supportive (truthful) reference for the pupil. (Parental 'agreement to withdraw' in such a situation, in addition to allowing the School to provide a supportive (truthful) reference, implies a level of co-operation on the part of the parents, which tends to be a particularly well-received sign on the part of schools that may be considering an application from a pupil in such circumstances. Parental 'agreement to withdraw' is therefore a way not only of avoiding the stigma of expulsion or the unpleasantness of a pupil's being required to leave but also of improving a pupil's prospects of joining a school of his or her choice).
- d) Examples of behaviour that could warrant Requirement to Leave or Expulsion include the following. It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list:
- Drug abuse
 - Alcohol abuse
 - Theft
 - Fraud
 - Gambling on school premises
 - Bullying, including racist, sexist or discriminatory bullying or abuse
 - Physical assault/ threatening behaviour
 - Fighting
 - Sexual harassment
 - Sexual misconduct
 - Violence
 - Arson
 - Disobedience
 - Improper behaviour towards a member of staff or another pupil
 - Using pornography in school
 - Jeopardising the health, safety and/or well-being of others
 - Damage to property
 - Persistent, or one (or more) very serious instance(s) of, disruptive behaviour
 - Refusal to do work or to apply sufficient effort
 - Damaging the School's reputation or acting in such a way as this might happen or might have happened
 - Infringing school rules
 - Acting in ways which are at variance with the School's values

- Where the continued presence of the pupil is incompatible with the interests of the School
 - Unacceptable or unsupportive parental behaviour Any activity that is illegal under English Law
 - Interfering with the work of the School
 - Misuse of Information Technology
 - Some other substantial reason
- e) As with any apparently-significant disciplinary matter, the case will have been properly investigated before any disciplinary action is taken. This will normally include the offender and other relevant parties being interviewed. Parents will also normally be contacted by the Headmaster or Deputy Headmaster or other senior colleague and invited into school for consultation. A formal letter confirming the School's action will be sent.
- f) Pupils who persistently fall below the standards expected of a pupil at Rishworth School can expect to be moved up through these sanctions. For example, not doing homework is likely to result in a Level 1 detention. A pupil receiving three Level 1 detentions in any one half-term period will, in addition, receive a Level 2 detention. The pupil's Tutor keeps a record of all of complaint slips and all detentions at all levels for all pupils in his or her Form and so can monitor easily how pupils in that Form move through the different sanctions. Some offences will result in a higher level sanction being applied straight away, therefore bypassing the lower level sanction.
- g) At Rishworth School a record is kept by the Deputy Headmaster of serious offences, which are entered onto the pupil's record. Examples of serious offences include those listed above (under 'Requirement to Leave and Expulsion').

6. Chains of Communication

- 6.1. When disciplinary action relates to academic matters, the typical chain of communication is: Subject Teacher – Head of Department – Tutor – Head of School Section – (Senior Staff -) Deputy Headmaster.
- 6.2. When disciplinary action relates to non-academic matters, the typical chain of communication is: Teacher – Tutor – Head of School Section – (Senior Staff -) Deputy Headmaster.
- 6.3. Where a pupil is a boarder, his or her housemaster or housemistress is kept informed of disciplinary issues and, when appropriate, the disciplinary issue and any subsequent allocation of a sanction may be dealt with by the housemaster or housemistress.
- 6.4. Most (though not necessarily all) problems should follow this 'chain'. There will be times when this does not happen and a disciplinary matter is 'fed' in at the middle of a chain, at the far end of it or beyond it altogether: typically, this occurs when a parent, perhaps unwittingly, effectively 'short-cuts' proper process – for example, by seeking to speak to the Deputy Headmaster or Headmaster about a matter which should be dealt with (or is indeed being dealt with) by another member of staff. The important principles here are:
- a) that staff should communicate with each other, each piece in the chain 'linking' securely with the next – and be prepared to refer a matter to the correct colleague in the system;

- b) that parents should accept that a matter which they may, for any number of understandable reasons, bring to the attention of a particular member of staff may be best referred on to another, or others, by that member of staff, so as to ensure proper process and the best outcome

7. Prefects

- 7.1 Prefects, who are appointed in part to help the staff run the School, are a part of its discipline structure. They receive training and on-going advice from the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster and Head of Sixth Form who monitor their progress. Prefects do not impose sanctions but may require pupils to take certain actions (which include requiring pupils to see a member of staff in order for a disciplinary matter to be dealt with). Pupils are expected to comply.

8. Expulsion / Requirement to Leave: Governor's Review

- 8.1 Where a pupil is expelled or required to leave, parents may ask for a panel of Governors to review the decision made by the school. If they choose to do this they should:
 - a) Submit the grounds for review and the outcome that they seek in writing to the Clerk to the Governor's within 7 days of the decision to expel or be required to leave
 - b) The Chair of the Governors will consider the grounds for review and the outcome that they seek. For the avoidance of doubt, a mere disagreement with the Headmaster concerning the decision would not normally form sufficient grounds for review
 - c) A Panel of three Governors will be convened to hear the review. They will have no prior knowledge of the individuals involved or the incident or matter that has led to the decision to expel or be required to leave
 - d) The role of the Panel would be to consider the information and arguments presented by the parties (the Headmaster and the parents or people who requested the review) and to decide whether to uphold the decision to expel or be required to leave, or refer the decision to expel or be required to leave back to the Headmaster with recommendations so that he may consider the matter further.
 - e) Should the Review Panel refer the matter back to the Headmaster for reconsideration, the decision to expel or be required to leave will be reconsidered. The Headmaster's decision will be final.