

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

2024/25

To be read alongside

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Search and Confiscation Policy
- SEND policy
- Teaching and Learning
- Reasonable Force
- Anti-Bullying
- Complaints Procedure
- Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Informed by:

- The Equality Act 2010
- DfE Behaviour in Schools 2022
- Keeping Children Safe In Education 2024
- DfE Suspension and permanent exclusion guidance 2023
- DfE Use of Reasonable Force in Schools July 2013
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding 2022

Purpose

In order that students have an enjoyable and successful experience of college and to maximise the chances of exam success, we expect students to possess an honest determination to work hard and behave well, enabling students to contribute to and learn in a calm, safe and supportive environment, protected from disruption. In order that students flourish in adult life, we aim to develop a culture in which all students learn to take responsibility for the choices they make, in which they are equipped to select the appropriate behaviour for the situation at hand and maintain that behaviour for the duration needed. Through adult modelling and explicit conversations we enable all students to learn from their mistakes, providing the support necessary for students to modify their behaviour where necessary. Our positive behaviour culture creates a calm environment which benefits pupils with SEND, enabling all to learn.

How we teach is as important as what we teach. We wish to create a culture in which students consistently exhibit curiosity and scepticism, creativity and adventurousness, ethics, environmental-mindedness and independence.



At Rochester Independent College we want everyone to feel comfortable and happy in the College environment.

We expect students to:

- follow the school rules as published in the Lower School, Sixth Form and Boarding handbooks
- follow instructions and directions given by all staff, whether teaching or non-teaching
- behave sensibly and responsibly at all times, both in and out of the classroom

These expectations cover behaviour both in-person and online or via text, on school journeys and instances where students are off site but under the supervision of the College.

We will discipline students for their unacceptable behaviour outside of the College premises in line with Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 “to such extent as is reasonable.” The misbehaviour could be witnessed by a staff member or reported to the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leaders

It is the role of the Senior Leaders (Heads of School, Director of Boarding, Academic Director (Boarding), Designated Safeguarding Lead and Vice Principals) to support subject teachers and Personal Tutors in encouraging positive behaviour. This includes monitoring rewards and consequences to ensure consistency, prevent discrimination and establish whether strategies are working. Senior Leaders provide supportive presence during the school day, operate the exit room system where students are removed from lessons for serious discipline reasons, supervise students when they spend a limited time out of the classroom, impose behaviour contracts monitored by reports, contact parents and chair reintegration meetings to support teachers.

Governors

Governors monitor the college's behaviour log at least termly as a standing agenda item in governors' meetings and in regular safeguarding reports as appropriate. Should a parent/carer wish to appeal any disciplinary measures taken they are directed to the college's complaints procedure, which can be found on the college website.

Subject teachers

Subject teachers build and model respectful academic relationships, they explain appropriate behaviour for learning and they praise and reward it. Where disruptive behaviour occurs, the priority is to swiftly enable learning to resume. Subject teachers record significant positive and negative behaviours for learning on iSAMS.

Personal Tutors

The role of the Personal Tutor is to provide coaching to students to recognise and reflect on their own behaviour and meet their learning goals. They will contact home regarding concerns



with behaviour where this is necessary, except in instances of serious negative behaviour that have been referred to the Leadership Team.

Personal Tutors monitor positive and negative behaviour referrals on iSAMS and act accordingly, using tools such as putting students on report, setting Supervised Study and/or using the four step disciplinary procedure. Where strategies have been implemented, Tutors should evaluate their success and refer to the Heads of School if things are not working. Personal tutors may also refer behaviour concerns to a relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Boarding Team

The role of the boarding team is to create a cohesive and harmonious environment collaboratively with the boarding community. Staff follow the 'Rewards and Sanctions in Boarding Guidance', in which normal consequences are designed to be restorative to the community. A record is kept of instances of positive and negative behaviour in Orah. Boarding staff work closely with Personal Tutors and academic staff to ensure a holistic approach to a student's care and progress.

SENCOs

Where students have additional needs that may affect their behaviour, the SENCOs may be consulted on what reasonable adjustments should be made to any consequence or to the classroom environment to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour. In such circumstances, students will be supported, where necessary, by assessing their needs, making reasonable adjustments and reviewing this as appropriate. As with any other student, those with SEND are expected to allow others to learn and an adjustment will not be considered reasonable if it disrupts the learning of others. We aim to move students with SEND towards meeting the same high expectations of in-class behaviour as their peers in order that they feel a part of our community and to enable other students to learn and to feel that treatment of students is equitable.

Students

Students will be made aware of the College's behaviour policy and will take responsibility for their own behaviour. They will assist in maintaining the safety of the learning environment by reporting all inappropriate behaviour.

Partnership with parents

We expect parents and carers to encourage their children to show respect for others and to support the College rules and policies. The Behaviour Policy is published on the College website and emailed to parents annually. The College will work in partnership with families, supporting them to achieve the desired behaviours for their child.

Partnerships with outside agencies



Some disciplinary procedures will also run concurrently alongside our statutory duty to cooperate with safeguarding partners such as children's social care, health and the police as required. As a College, we will refer to these agencies where appropriate as soon as possible but at a maximum within 24 hours unless there is a safeguarding reason to delay this. In addition to this, we may work with charities or medical services supporting a student's physical and/or emotional health. The list of organisations is not exhaustive and where appropriate will always be communicated with the parents/carers and students.

College Systems

School systems of rewards and consequences is based on the following model:

Recognise - staff encourage students to recognise positive and negative choices in self and others

Reflect - Staff support students in learning how to **reflect** on the impact of these choices and how to repeat positive choices and prevent negative choices

Restore - Staff support students in how to restore relationships and balance through action based on the reflection.

Recognition & rewards

The College promotes positive and improved behaviour through a rewards system that seeks to reward the pro-social and academic behaviours mentioned above. We also aim to promote **intrinsic motivation** in students, where rewards, as far as possible, seek to develop a love of learning and a sense of communal responsibility rather than simply personal gain.

In addition to offering sincere, specific, meaningful praise as appropriate, a range of other rewards is open to staff, including the Lower School merit system and sending postcards home. Student accumulated merits are rewarded in various ways including extra-curricular trips, certificates and lunches. Individual year groups and forms are rewarded in similar ways for accruing merits in comparison to other groups and forms in the Lower School.

Rewards should be applied consistently and not as 'bribery' for doing what should normally be expected.

Consequences

Where behaviour inappropriate to the context is exhibited, the College adopts a graduated response, moving from class to department to whole school consequences with the capacity to move to the four step disciplinary procedure or suspension or permanent exclusion for more serious behaviour or where persistent poor behaviour has not improved in response to normal consequences.

Consequences should be appropriate to the age of the student and their specific circumstances. Staff will respond to students predictably, promptly and assertively in a consistent, fair and proportionate way. We will always ensure the safety of all staff and students



is the priority along with restoring a calm environment.

Although not exhaustive, the college recognises the behaviours below as unacceptable and will be managed using the most appropriate consequence within our college systems:

- persistent low level disruption or poor behaviour that has not responded to normal consequences
- Child on Child abuse (see Safeguarding Policy & Child Protection policy for full details on prevention)
- bullying, including relational (emotional), cyber, verbal, physical, racist, sexual, transphobic, homophobic, religious, cultural or related to a physical or mental disability
- persistent class disruption
- ignoring a direct instruction from a member of staff
- stealing
- vandalism and graffiti
- refusing to cooperate with a search where a student is suspected of having a prohibited item eg knives, illegal drugs, pornography, alcohol, stolen items
- possessing or under the influence of drugs
- smoking inside or directly outside College premises
- repeatedly not signing out of boarding
- repeatedly ignoring boarding room check times
- leaving bedroom in boarding house persistently untidy
- rudeness
- intimidation
- any behaviour that disrupts or hinders learning taking place in the classroom or beyond
- malicious allegations against staff or students

Subject teachers may use any of the following supportive measures or consequences as appropriate:

- Keep students behind for a discussion after class
- Put students in a lunchtime departmental Supervised Study or 1:1 session
- Put students in a Lower School after school Supervised Study
- Exit students from a lesson, followed by a reintegration meeting with a member of Senior Leadership Team
- Put in place a behaviour contract for the specific subject in concert with a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Subject teachers can request a reintegration meeting with a member of Senior Leadership Team where a students' behaviour is consistently disruptive but has not warranted a student being exited

Personal Tutors may use any of the above and:

- Liaise with parents via telephone, email or in person meetings.



- Lower School: Put a student on report across all subjects (attendance, punctuality, behaviour or academic)
- Refer Lower School boarding students to Study Hub (7:00pm-9:30pm) every evening.
- Sixth Form: Refer students to Sixth Form Supervised Study

Disciplinary Procedure

For more serious or repeated behaviour concerns, Senior Leaders may use any of the above consequences and can use the four-step disciplinary procedure, detailed below:

Verbal warning

Parents/Carers will be given written (email) notification of the warning.

First written warning

Parents/Carers may be asked to come into college to see the Personal Tutor and/or the Head of School. The student will be issued with a copy of the written warning and this will also be forwarded to the parents/carers.

Final written warning

Parents/Carers may be asked to come into college to see the Personal Tutor and a Vice Principal.

At this stage, the parent/carer and student will be advised that any further breaches of college rules and regulations may result in a suspension or permanent exclusion (step 4).

The student will be issued with a copy of the written warning and this will also be forwarded to the parents/carers.

Notes

Unless otherwise advised, if the student maintains good behaviour for three months (excluding holiday periods when the college is closed), the student will drop a stage or off the scale completely as applicable. For very serious problems or incidents it may be appropriate to move immediately to Steps Two, Three or Four. There may be occasions when special extenuating circumstances need to be considered, so a lesser sanction may be applied. Appropriate sanctions, including loss of free time or suspension/exclusions may be enforced at any of the first three stages in the process. Minor misdemeanours may merit a sanction without the student necessarily moving up a stage on the disciplinary process. Appeals against any disciplinary decisions made by the College are governed by the Complaints Procedure.

Suspension/Permanent exclusion

Not all behavioural issues can be amended or remedied by pastoral processes or other consequences within the College. In these circumstances suspension and permanent



exclusion are sometimes necessary. The decision to permanently exclude a student is not taken lightly. It usually follows a number of disciplinary offences and the student and their parents/carers will have been warned that this may occur. Depending on the seriousness of the offence it may, however, be appropriate to move directly to suspension or permanent exclusion. A student's behaviour outside College can also be considered grounds for a suspension or permanent exclusion (Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006).

Suspension

A suspension is when a student is removed temporarily from College, it may be used to provide a clear signal of what is unacceptable behaviour and show a student that their current behaviour is putting them at risk of permanent exclusion. A suspension may be put in place whilst the College continues to investigate a disciplinary concern if it is deemed in the best interests of the College community or the students. Following the investigation any further disciplinary measures may be put in place such as warnings, further suspension or permanent exclusion.

Permanent exclusion

A permanent exclusion is when a student is no longer allowed to attend the College. The decision to exclude a student permanently can be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the College's behaviour policy;
- where allowing the student to remain in College would seriously harm the education or welfare of the student or others such as staff or students in the College.

Whilst we will always seek the student voice within this process, when establishing the facts in relation to a suspension or permanent exclusion decision the Principal will apply the civil standard of proof, i.e. 'on the balance of probabilities' it is more likely than not that a fact is true, rather than the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt.' This means that the Principal should accept that something happened if it is more likely that it happened than that it did not happen.

All suspensions or exclusions will be communicated with parents/carers and directly to students over 18 verbally and/or in writing. Parents/carers will be asked to collect the student from College premises, or make arrangements for their collection or journey home. Any reference given will refer to the circumstances and facts of the exclusion. The Principal will inform the governors of all suspensions and permanent exclusions.

Use of reasonable force

Corporal punishment by staff is illegal. We do not practise corporal punishment nor threaten to use it under any circumstances. It may, however, be necessary for a member of staff to use reasonable force to prevent a student from coming to harm, injuring themselves or others;



damaging their own or others' or College property; or engaging in behaviour that obstructs good order and discipline at the College or amongst its students in the classroom and elsewhere in the College, including authorised activities outside College. This will be carried out with the minimum necessary to restore order to the situation and following the guidance given in the DfE publication Use of Reasonable Force in Schools July 2013.

All incidents should immediately be reported to the Principal or Senior Vice Principal. In the absence of the Principal it should be reported to the DSL. See *Physical Intervention and Positive Handling* policy for full details.

Student Support

We recognise that behaviour is often a form of communication and students that display negative behaviours or interactions can benefit from support alongside consequences to modify behaviours and find more appropriate ways to communicate their needs. We also recognise that victims of poor behaviour choices may need continued support. We have a Pastoral Team within the college that offers this support alongside the academic team to cater for the holistic needs and development of all. The pastoral care encapsulates the support offered from all staff and is overseen by the Director of Safeguarding and Pastoral Care who may look at an individual plan of support. We have staff trained in Mental Health First Aid and a full time counselling service available onsite, this can be accessed through speaking to a member of the Pastoral Team.

Banned Items

A list of banned and prohibited items can be found in the Search & Confiscation Policy.

| Created/Updated | Author | Approved by | Date |
|------------------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------|
| August 2021 | EC | AB | August 2021 |
| August 2022 | EC | KF | August 2022 |
| July 2023 | EC & KS | AB | July 2023 |
| January 2024 | KS | KF | January 2024 |
| September 2024 | KS | KF | September 2024 |