

Merton Junior School



Behaviour Policy

'Be wise, together we succeed'

Review date: May 2026		
Next review date: May 2027		
Headteacher	Signed:	Date: May 2026
Chair of Governors	Signed:	Date: May 2026
Date approved: November 2021		
Reviewed October 2021 –No amendments		
Reviewed: November 2022 – policy updated to be inline with current school procedures		
Reviewed: May 2026 Inclusion of information around restorative conversations added, improvements made to wording of policy throughout. Further explanations added to why sanctions are implemented; School Code removed and school values added and referred to.		

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies.

Behaviour is the way we act and respond to people and to situations we find ourselves in.

Our Ethos & Vision

Merton Junior School is an inclusive, friendly, and safe community. Our curriculum and ethos are designed to shape learners into motivated, enthusiastic, respectful, optimistic, and nurturing individuals. We strive to develop well-rounded citizens who are equipped with the resilience and growth mindset necessary to overcome any challenge and take pride in their successes.

We believe in educating the whole child within a positive environment where high standards of behaviour are rooted in mutual respect, praise, and reward. Our goal is to meet children where they are today, guiding them toward socially responsible behaviours that will serve them throughout their lives.

Our school's values—captured in the acronym MERTON (Motivated, Enthusiastic, Respectful, Tenacious, Optimistic, and Nurturing)—serve as the "North Star" for all behavioural expectations. Rather than a list of "don'ts," these values provide a positive framework for how pupils should conduct themselves:-



Here is how each value translates into clear, everyday behavioural expectations:

M – Motivated

The Expectation: Pupils are expected to take ownership of their learning and actions.

In Practice: This means arriving at school ready to learn, setting personal goals, and engaging with tasks without needing constant reminders. A motivated student sees the value in their education and strives to do their best because they want to succeed.

E – Enthusiastic

The Expectation: Pupils should approach school life with a positive energy and a "can-do" attitude.

In Practice: Behaviourally, this looks like active participation in class, volunteering for school responsibilities, and supporting school events. It's about contributing to a vibrant, "buzzy" atmosphere where learning is celebrated.

R – Respectful

The Expectation: This is the cornerstone of the school community. It involves recognising the rights, feelings, and property of others.

In Practice:

- **To Staff:** Following instructions the first time and using polite language.
- **To Peers:** Listening when others speak and valuing different perspectives.
- **To the Environment:** Taking care of school equipment and keeping the grounds tidy.

T – Tenacious

The Expectation: Pupils are expected to show perseverance and a growth mindset when facing challenges or when things get difficult.

In Practice: In terms of behaviour, tenacity means staying on task even when a concept is hard to grasp. Instead of giving up or disrupting others when frustrated, a tenacious student uses their "growth mindset" strategies to keep trying.

O – Optimistic

The Expectation: Maintaining a hopeful and confident outlook on the future and one's own potential.

In Practice: An optimistic student views mistakes not as failures, but as opportunities to grow. Behaviourally, this manifests as a resilience to "bounce back" after a sanction or a difficult day, trusting that a "fresh start" is always possible.

N – Nurturing

The Expectation: Looking out for the well-being of others and contributing to the "friendly and safe" ethos of the school.

In Practice: This involves being a "bucket filler"—offering a kind word to someone who is upset, helping a younger student find their way, or simply ensuring that no one is left out on the playground.

We believe that for effective teaching and learning to take place, it is essential that good behaviour is present.

Our Approach to Behaviour Management

Children excel when they experience a consistent and positive approach. At Merton Junior School, we utilise Assertive Discipline to provide clear, reliable boundaries.

By maintaining a secure understanding of rewards and sanctions, we ensure that every child understands our routines and procedures, allowing them to feel safe and confident in knowing exactly what is expected of them.

Our Commitment to a Positive Learning Environment

We foster a supportive and inclusive atmosphere by:

- **Modelling Respect:** Treating all staff and pupils with dignity and ensuring polite communication at all times.
- **Building Character:** Actively promoting self-discipline, resilience, and high self-esteem.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Utilising "Assertive Discipline" strategies to recognise and celebrate desired behaviours.
- **Consistency & Fairness:** Maintaining a balanced and predictable approach to both rewards and sanctions.
- **Inclusive Support:** Acknowledging that every child is unique and may require tailored behavioural support.
- **Ensuring Safety:** Maintaining a secure environment free from disruption or fear.
- **Restorative Guidance:** Providing clear explanations and alternative strategies when children make mistakes.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Building strong relationships with parents and involving them in our behavioural processes.
- **Celebrating Success:** Praising effort in all forms and highlighting student accomplishments.
- **Constructive Language:** Ensuring all adult communication is supportive and free from sarcasm or criticism.

Unacceptable Behaviours

To maintain the safety and well-being of our community, Merton Junior School has a zero-tolerance approach to the following:

- **Abusive Language:** Swearing, rude, unkind, or aggressive verbal communication.
- **Physical Aggression:** Hitting, kicking, biting, or any other harmful physical contact.

- **Intimidation:** Threatening behaviour of any kind toward peers or staff.
- **Discriminatory Conduct:** Any remarks or actions that are racist, disablist, sexist, or ageist.
- **Prejudice:** Derogatory comments regarding an individual's gender identity or personal choices.

Protocol for Managing Behavioural Incidents.

In the event of unacceptable behaviour, the school will implement the following staged response:

1. Investigation & Context

Fact-Finding: We will investigate the incident thoroughly, gathering accounts from all involved parties to ensure a fair and balanced understanding of events.

Identifying Triggers: We aim to identify the underlying reasons for the behaviour to ensure the subsequent response is both effective and supportive.

2. Intervention & Guidance

Reflective Discussion: Staff will speak with the child(ren) to identify exactly why the behaviour was unacceptable. We will provide clear guidance on appropriate alternative actions or words for future situations.

Restorative Practice: If other children were affected, a formal apology may be required to repair the relationship and encourage empathy.

3. Consequences & Communication

Escalation: Should the behaviour persist, or if the initial incident is severe, the school's agreed sanctions will be applied.

Parental Engagement: Parents will be informed or consulted where necessary to ensure a consistent approach between home and school.

Reporting: All incidents will be recorded on CPOMs, using the appropriate categories to ensure accurate tracking and monitoring.

Formal Recording: All incidents will be logged on CPOMs, utilising specific categories (tabs) to track trends and ensure accurate safeguarding records.

System of Sanctions

Children who make poor choices will face the following sanctions;

- V** Verbal warning
- 1** Name moved to 'unhappy face'
- 2** Time out at a separate table in classroom
- 3** Second verbal warning
- 4** Class inclusion/isolation for the rest of the day in another classroom
- 5** Teacher will contact child's parents

Sanctions and Behavioural Support

Staff Discretion & Individual Plans

Staff reserve the right to apply sanctions proportionally based on the severity of the incident. When specific support is required, Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs) - also known as 2 or 3-point plans - will be developed.

Collaboration: Plans are written by Teachers in consultation with Year Leaders, the SENDCo, and the child.

Communication: These plans are shared with parents/carers and reviewed regularly.

Consistency: All relevant staff are briefed on these plans to ensure a unified approach to the child's needs.

Break and Lunchtime Procedures

Our behaviour system is upheld by all staff at all times.

Reporting: Inappropriate behaviour is met with an immediate sanction. Persistent issues are reported to the Class Teacher and logged on CPOMs under 'Negative Behaviour'.

Serious Incidents: If violence or abusive language occurs during social times, the child will be removed from the playground to a supervised internal area with a member of the Leadership Team.

Follow-up: Serious midday incidents may result in a 'class inclusion/isolation' for the afternoon, as physical aggression is not tolerated.

Internal Inclusion/isolation & The 'Fresh Start' Philosophy

The Fresh Start: We believe every child deserves a fresh start each day. Internal inclusion/isolations typically don't roll over into a new day.

Year 3 Transition: To support the transition from Infant to Junior school, Year 3 inclusion/isolations are limited to half-days (e.g., from the incident until lunchtime).

Exceptional Circumstances: Inclusion/isolation may carry over to the following morning only if a severe incident occurs at the very end of a school day or if a suspension is being considered but is not yet appropriate.

Developmental Understanding

We recognise that some behaviour stems from immaturity rather than malice. In these instances, our role is to:

- **Correct and Guide:** Help the child reflect on their actions and understand the consequences.
- **Alternative Strategies:** Model positive ways to respond in the future.
- **Patience:** Provide ongoing reminders rather than relying solely on strict punishment.

Celebrating Success: Rewards

A positive, praise-led environment is the foundation of our policy. We celebrate children who demonstrate caring and appropriate behaviour through:

ClassDojo: Points are awarded consistently and promptly to celebrate positive choices. We ensure they are meaningful, accessible to all, and that the child understands exactly why they earned them.

In-Class Recognition: Stickers and "Star of the Day" awards recognise daily effort, while postcards are sent home for exceptional achievements.

Weekly Achievement Assemblies: These sessions celebrate successes in handwriting, times tables, courtesy, and general class achievement. Each year group also crowns a "Year Group Champion."

Annual Achievement Ceremony: A formal end-of-year event celebrating subject excellence, Governor Awards, and the appointment of Head Pupils and Prefects.

Specialist Support & External Agencies

For children requiring additional emotional or behavioural support, we offer:

- **In-School Support:** Access to our ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) / TALA (Therapeutic Active Listening Assistant) / Play Therapist, if appropriate
- **External Partnerships:** We work closely with professional agencies, including:
 - Primary Behaviour Service (PBS)
 - School Nurse
 - CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
 - Early Help Hub (EHH)

Suspensions

A suspension is a serious measure taken only if school rules are severely breached or if a child's presence poses a risk to the education or welfare of themselves or others.

Procedure: The Headteacher manages all suspensions. School will provide work for the duration of the absence and complete all necessary Hampshire County Council documentation.

Reintegration: Upon return, a mandatory Reintegration Meeting is held. The Headteacher (or a member of the Senior Leadership Team) will meet with the parent/carer and child to set clear expectations and outline support for a successful return to school.

The Role of Restorative Conversations

At Merton Junior School, we believe that silence or exclusion alone rarely changes behaviour; meaningful dialogue does. Restorative conversations are the bridge between a mistake and a better choice.

The Purpose of the Conversation

Restorative practice moves away from "What rule did you break?" and toward "Who has been affected and how can we fix it?" This approach:

Develops Empathy: Children are encouraged to stand in the shoes of others to understand the emotional impact of their actions.

Promotes Accountability: Instead of simply "serving time" in a sanction, the child must take active responsibility for their role in a conflict.

Preserves Relationships: It ensures that once a sanction is complete, the bond between the child, their peers, and staff is repaired, preventing resentment.

The Restorative Framework

During these conversations, staff use a structured set of questions to guide the child's reflection:

What happened? (Establishing the facts)

What were you thinking/feeling at the time? (Identifying triggers)

Who has been affected by what you have done? (Building empathy)

What do you need to do to make things right? (Taking action)

The Design of Sanctions and Consequences

Sanctions at Merton Junior School are never intended to be purely punitive; they are designed as educational interventions to improve future behaviour.

1. Clear Cause and Effect

For behaviour to improve, a child must see a logical link between their action and the consequence. We ensure that sanctions are:

Proportional: The consequence matches the severity and frequency of the behaviour.

Predictable: When children know exactly what the "if/then" outcome is, it reduces anxiety and empowers them to make better choices to avoid known outcomes.

2. Consequences as a Learning Tool

We view sanctions as a "pause button" that allows for a shift in perspective.

Class Inclusion/isolation: This is not just a removal from the peer group; it is a dedicated space for the child to complete their work successfully in a calm environment, proving to themselves that they can meet school expectations.

Loss of Social Time: Used primarily when behaviour occurs during break or lunch, this consequence reinforces that being part of the playground community is a privilege based on following the safety and respect rules that keep everyone happy.

3. The 'Choice' Model

Our language centres on agency. Staff will often state: "If you choose to continue [behaviour], you are choosing [sanction]." This shifts the power back to the child, teaching them that they are the architects of their own school experience. By making the "wrong" choice uncomfortable, we nudge the child toward the "right" choice-not through fear, but through a growing understanding of self-regulation.

4. Supporting Long-Term Change

While a sanction addresses the immediate incident, Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs) address the pattern. By identifying whether a behaviour is driven by a lack of skill (e.g., struggling to manage

anger) or a lack of clarity, we can tailor the consequence to include specific coaching, such as sessions with our ELSA, to ensure the behaviour doesn't just stop, but is replaced by a positive habit.