



## Engagement for Learning, Establishing a Climate for Learning – Process Document

### Climate for Learning - A Rationale

*Mill Chase Academy is committed to providing an excellent educational experience for its students in a safe, orderly and nurturing environment. In order to fulfil this we firmly believe that staff, students and parents must work together in a three way partnership. Within this partnership, each stakeholder has particular rights and responsibilities.*

**Teachers have a responsibility** to plan and deliver effective lessons which engage learners and help them to make progress. **Teachers have a right** to deliver these lessons as planned without disruption.

**Students have a right** to receive an education which helps them to achieve and prepares them to lead fulfilling lives after school. **Students have a responsibility** to make the most of the learning opportunities provided for them and to ensure that their behaviour does not interfere with the education of other students or undermine the safety or well-being of others.

**Parents and carers have a right** to send their child to a school where they will receive an effective education which prepares them for life. **Parents and carers have a responsibility** to send their child to school and do all they can to ensure their child makes the most of the education offered to them and supports the academy in the implementation of its policies.

### **Statement of Intent**

At Mill Chase Academy we operate a 'Zero Tolerance' approach to behaviour which

- causes disruption to learning and teaching
- threatens to undermine the safe and orderly running of the school.

### **What is meant by 'Zero Tolerance'?**

In practice zero tolerance means that any behaviour which potentially disrupts teaching and learning or the good order of the academy must be challenged. However, it does **not** mean that a student behaving in this way should immediately be removed from a lesson or from general circulation.

As adults we have a role to teach young people about behaviours which both promote learning and allow them to function in a socially acceptable way. Teachers should therefore employ a variety of strategies to help a student modify their behaviour before taking the step of removing them from their lesson. However, although teachers are expected to make every reasonable effort to include the young person, this cannot be at the price of unacceptable disturbance to the climate for learning in classrooms or around the school. It is therefore ultimately down to the professional judgement of each member of staff to identify that the point has been reached when to continue to allow a student to remain in lesson or in general circulation around the academy unfairly compromises the learning and well-being of others.

Further guidance is provided later in this document about steps which a teacher could use in lessons before taking the step of removing the young person.

## Establishing the Climate for Learning – Policy and Practice in the Classroom

## Starting Points

As teachers we must strive to create a learning environment where students feel safe, welcome and valued. This is the sort of environment in which students' learning and progress is heightened; where they have the security to accept challenges and attempt difficult tasks without inhibition. The creation of a learning climate of this nature is a complex process which is influenced by many factors; however there are certain features of a teacher's behaviour and actions which can clearly be seen to make a significant contribution to developing the desired ethos in the classroom. These are outlined below and are expected aspects of professional behaviour which should be demonstrated by teachers at Mill Chase Academy:

- Lessons must be thoughtfully planned with the aim of engaging students' interest, helping them to make progress and providing opportunities for them to be actively involved in their learning.
- Students should be provided with a variety of approaches to learning, providing opportunities for students to work both independently and collaboratively.
- Classrooms should be welcoming, inviting spaces which are tidy, uncluttered and stimulating. Teachers should take positive steps to ensure students are greeted and welcomed positively into the classroom.
- Teachers should actively manage the seating and grouping of students, being prepared to change these arrangements according to the nature of the task or learning needs of individual students.
- Students work must be explicitly praised and valued. This is achieved in a number of ways, but particularly through reward and encouragement, through classroom displays and by the prompt and thorough marking of work in accordance with academy policies.
- When planning lessons, teachers should give equal consideration to the behaviour which will best promote good learning in that lesson. This must be given a high profile when discussing a task with a class so that students are able to develop an appreciation of what constitutes effective behaviour for learning in different circumstances.

Aspects of behaviour which merit particular attention are as follows:

- Conversation - necessary at all? Who with, what about, at what volume?
- Movement around the classroom
- In group tasks – working collaboratively and inclusively, roles and expected outcomes.
- What to do if you think you might need help?

All of the above will require constant reinforcement during the lesson, using praise and reward as a means of recognising and highlighting behaviour and attitudes which are supporting good learning.

The overarching importance of praise and reward cannot be emphasised enough. Teachers should base their rewards on academy policy, but should also consider how they adapt their approach to best suit the individual and the class. Students must be left with the overall impression that their teacher likes and respects them and recognises the efforts they take, both with their work and with how they behave in their classroom.

## Preventing Disruption to Teaching and Learning

In keeping with the 'zero tolerance' approach, any behaviour which disrupts teaching and learning must be challenged. The teacher must issue the student with a clear warning that if the unacceptable behaviour continues

they will be removed from teaching and learning. The teacher should also make use of other strategies to help the student modify their behaviour so that it does not cause disruption to others. Possible strategies include:

- Draw the student's attention back to the behaviours which are expected in the lesson which promote good learning for themselves and others. Try to help the student understand why their behaviour is causing a problem and how they should change it.
- Change of seating position
- Short Time-Out

(A short time-out means that the student spends a maximum of five minutes outside the classroom. Before using this strategy, the teacher must ensure that it is safe for the student to be outside the room and that they will not cause further disruption to other classrooms. Teachers should consider if there are already other students outside neighbouring classrooms and if this is likely to undermine the intention of a short time-out, namely a period of quiet reflection on the part of the student. If possible, it may be best to ask a colleague to accept a student into their classroom during the period of a short time-out.)

- Lesser sanction such as break or lunchtime detention.
- One warning clearly stating that the next step will be removal – issue a warning card.

If a student's behaviour continues to cause a problem the teacher should weigh up the balance between the desire to include the student in the lesson and help them develop as an effective learner and the right of other students to learn in an undisturbed environment. Teachers should not overlook the impact of an excessive amount of time being absorbed by attempts to ameliorate the behaviour of one student.

In order to help make their judgement about the situation teachers should ask themselves the following three questions:

1. Will the student's continued presence prevent the teacher from teaching or prevent other students from learning?
2. Have reasonable attempts been made to help the student understand why their behaviour is unacceptable and have other strategies been attempted first in an attempt to address the problem? Strategies used should include some or all of those listed above.
3. Has the student been given a clear warning that failure to change their behaviour will lead to removal from this lesson and to removal from general circulation for the rest of the day?

If the answer to all of these questions is a clear 'yes' then the student should be removed from the lesson. Any student removed from a lesson in these circumstances has demonstrated that they are not fulfilling their responsibilities as a learner. They will therefore forfeit their right to a normal educational experience for the rest of that day and will remain in internal exclusion.

### **The Role of Adults Other Than Teachers**

All adults in the classroom share a responsibility for students' learning and development, including the development of their awareness of good behaviour for learning. Staff in support roles should challenge behaviour which disrupts teaching and learning in the same manner in which the teacher in charge of the class would. However, in order to ensure a consistency of approach within the classroom the teacher in charge should be notified by the member of support staff of any concerns. Decisions about steps to support the student to modify

their behaviour and the point at which a student should be removed from the lesson should be made by the teacher in charge of the lesson.

### **Procedures for the Removal of a Student**

In the first instance the student should be removed using a Block Management approach. The student will be instructed to leave the lesson and enter the supervision of a nearby colleague until the end of the current lesson.

At the end of the lesson the relevant HoD will be asked to confirm the decision to remove the student. (If the HoD is not readily available then confirmation should be made with another middle leader, member of SLT or with a pastoral team member). Arrangements must then be made for supervision of the removed student for the remainder of the day. **If possible, the first intention is that the student remains under the supervision of the member of staff whose lesson they were removed from originally.**

If this is not appropriate, then the student should be placed with the HoD, Mentor, APL, SLT or any other member of staff.

If a student is removed during period 5 their internal exclusion will continue until the **end** of lunchtime the following day.

If assistance is required with the removal and placement of a student then assistance should be summoned by phoning the school office. The student must be kept with a member of staff from the block until assistance arrives. Any student refusing to co-operate will attend Twilight or be sent home under a fixed term exclusion. A reintegration meeting will be arranged with the student's parents or carers. The internal exclusion will be completed on return.

### **Recording Removal of a Student**

1. At the end of the lesson the teacher from whose lesson the student was removed must complete a 'Removal Form'. This consists of basic details about the incident and the teacher and student concerned, along with a series of tick boxes to indicate the steps taken leading up to the student being removed. This form should be handed into the academy office as soon as possible and by 3.00pm that day at the latest.
2. The teacher should also at the end of the lesson e-mail Sheila Ruttle in the office with the name of the student removed, placing **REMOVAL** in the subject box of the email. The office will add a note to the student in SIMS so that subsequent teachers of that student can see that they have been removed for the rest of the day. If another member of staff believes that the student will be missing an essential piece of work by being in internal exclusion (e.g. a controlled assessment task) they should notify the student's Academic and Pastoral Leader or SLT so the matter can be resolved.
3. The member of staff instigating the removal should also complete a SIMS entry into the student's behaviour log as soon as possible, again, preferably on the day of the incident itself.

### **Completion of Internal Exclusion**

The member of staff who takes over supervision of a removed student for the rest of the day must ensure that the internal exclusion is completed as required according to the following expectations:

- The student should be handed an Internal Exclusion Instruction card. This lists for the student the expectations they are required to meet during the day as follows:

- Your mobile phone must be turned off and handed to the supervising member of staff.
- You must follow all instructions from the supervising member of staff
- The member of staff supervising your internal exclusion will provide you with work. You must make an acceptable effort to complete the work to avoid the internal exclusion being prolonged.
- You will remain under supervision at break and lunchtime.

The instruction card also includes details of a self-reflection task students are required to complete. This asks them to reflect on the events which led to them being in internal exclusion.

- A student should be given work to complete during an internal exclusion. Other staff may send work they need the student to complete, or work can be set from a central work bank.
- The supervising member of staff must ensure that the student is allowed toilet breaks as necessary and is accompanied to the canteen to collect food at break and lunch if required. The student must not be allowed to do this alone or spend any time at break or lunchtime socialising with other students.

### **Notification of Parents**

On the day of a removal, the office will send a text message to the parents informing them of the fact. This will be accompanied by a standard letter which will be posted home as soon as possible.

### **Monitoring of the System**

Completed removal slips must be handed by the relevant class teacher to the office by 3.00pm on the day of a removal. The class teacher must also as soon as possible complete a more detailed account of the events in the student's SIMS behaviour log. This should be circulated for the information or attention of other colleagues in the manner described by the school's referral and recording procedures.

In addition, the basic information about the incident contained within the removal slip will be entered that day into a simple Excel spreadsheet. APLs and the member of SLT responsible for behaviour and inclusion will scrutinise this spreadsheet on a daily basis. In particular they will be looking for patterns of repeat occurrences of removal (see section below).

A more detailed analysis of occurrences of removal by Teacher/Subject/Year Group/House Group will be carried out each term. This information will be shared with Middle Leaders and any emerging issues will be followed up accordingly.

### **Maintaining a Positive Climate for Learning - Behaviour out of Lessons**

Students' behaviour out of lessons needs to be compatible with them maintaining the right frame of mind for learning. Students are therefore expected to behave in a way which is safe, considerate and sensible at all times. All staff should be prepared to challenge any student demonstrating behaviour which is not acceptable, with the clear expectation that they will modify their behaviour immediately. Staff may also apply a sanction against a student if they feel that the behaviour warrants more than just a warning or if the student does not modify their behaviour when originally corrected. Appropriate sanctions in this situation could be detention at break, lunchtime or after school. In the case of after school detention, this should be communicated to the student's APL so the student is added to the House Detention.

If a student is involved in particularly serious behaviour which significantly threatens the safety or well-being of others, then a more serious sanction such as internal or even external exclusion may be appropriate. A more serious sanction of this nature would be administered in consultation with the APL and SLT.

A student who is persistently in breach of academy rules at break and lunchtimes, or repeatedly behaves in a way which undermines the safe and orderly running of the school should be internally excluded under the removal system as if they had been removed for a lesson. Any removal instigated in this way could count towards repeated occurrences of removal and could lead to the student being issued with Level 1 or 2 disciplinary warnings or even result in entry to the Bridge Programme. Dealing with repeated occurrences of removal is explained in the following section.

### **Responding to Repeated Occurrences of Removal**

The removal spreadsheet will record the date of each instance of removal from lesson. Should a second instance of removal for any particular student occur within a 6 week period, this will lead to the student receiving a **Level 1 Disciplinary Warning**. This takes the form of a formal letter to the student and the parents. The letter includes an invitation for a parental meeting with the student's Mentor or APL. A member of SLT could conduct this meeting if necessary; however, in order to preserve a sense of increasing seriousness, this should be avoided if possible at this stage. The student in question will remain out of circulation until the meeting is held with a parent or carer. The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

- Identification of issues which led to removal, emphasising that this is a repeat occurrence and that the student will have had on both occasions opportunities to change their behaviour and avoid removal.
- A restatement of the school's 'zero tolerance' position on behaviour which disrupts teaching and learning.
- An opportunity for the student to comment on their perception on why difficulties arise.
- Discussion of any support the student may benefit from to help them improve their learning behaviour.
- Consequences of further instances of removal within a specified period.
- Placement on a DW1 report

Notes should be taken of the content of the discussion and any support measures which were identified.

If a further instance of removal occurs within 6 weeks of a Level 1 Disciplinary Warning the student will be issued with a **Level 2 Disciplinary Warning**. This again includes a requirement for parents or carers to attend a meeting, however, this time the meeting should include the student's APL or the SLT line manager. As previously, the student will be kept out of circulation until the meeting is held. The agenda for the meeting will be as for a Level 1 Disciplinary Meeting, including a review of and changes to any support measures in place. Discussion of consequences of further incidents of removal should include a discussion of the Bridge Programme and the implications for a student's timetable of being placed on this programme. Student is placed on DW2 report.

If a further instance of removal occurs within 6 weeks of a Level 2 Disciplinary Warning a meeting will be held with the Assistant Principal. At this point the student crosses the threshold into the Mill Chase Bridge Programme. An alternative curriculum will be agreed for the student, the details of which will be individual to the needs of each student. The aim is to provide a valid educational experience for the student while preventing disruption to the learning of others. Where appropriate, the student can return to the mainstream curriculum where they can demonstrate they are able to meet behaviour expectations.