St Mary’s Catholic Primary School Axminster

Living, loving and learning with God

St Mary’s consideration of changes to the behaviour policy

1st June 2020

St Mary’s is a community based on Gospel Values. Our motto is ‘living, loving and learning with God’.

We pride ourselves on being a community with God at the centre; the heartbeat of our community is summed up by

John 13; 34

Love one another as I have loved you.

These are not empty words. We live by these at all times.

St Mary’s has been open during lockdown. On 1st June we will return more of our pupils to school.

We are aware and sensitive to the fact that children have been out of school for 10 weeks. Their home contexts will have varied considerably; each having their own opportunities and pressures.

We have considered Government guidelines in relation to pupil behaviour. ( see below for full details of Government guidelines with respect to behaviour ) .

As children return to school we will draw on good practice and CPD already embedded at St Mary’s.

We will use Trust wide and our own school values to remind and support children to show the respect that they would have shown to each other prior to entering lockdown.

Throughout the lockdown parent we have had a range of systems, communications and support in place to ensure that we are aware of any changes in family situations that may adversely affect the well being of children and to have systems in place to support these.

In the return from lockdown we have worked to establish calm structures that include time for children to reflect within class or individually about their experiences and to be in a position to support any adverse experiences shared.

Children will be accepted for who they are and as previously we will continue to see all behaviours as an expression of their voice.

If children present with low levels of behaviour that are unacceptable we will refer to known systems within school, particularly our values the class charter and behaviour chart. As previously we will use a positive approach to rewarding good behaviour.

If children present with high level behaviour which is unacceptable we will refer to known systems within school as above. In addition we will work with parents and other agencies to create positive actions that can move these behaviours forward.

If children spit at others, then in the context of Covid 19 concerns that child will be asked to sit away from others and parents will be called. Spitting at this time has to be seen as a red action on our behaviour chart and subject to exclusion.

We would always work to avoid excluding pupils but we have always used this as a positive tool to give space and time to calmly review actions that can be taken to move situations forward. We would continue to see exclusion as an embedded part of our positive behaviour approach.

**E Mannix**

**Headteacher**

**30 th May 2020**

**Government Guidance May 30th 2020 source Gov. UK**

**19. Behaviour and exclusions**

**19.1 Will pupils be punished if they deliberately disobey rules on protective measures?**

It is important for schools to be calm and disciplined environments, where everyone follows the rules. Before they reopen, schools should update their behaviour policy to reflect the new [protective measures](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings) and new rules and routines. It should also include appropriate consequences (such as sanctions and rewards), so that staff can ensure pupils understand them and can enforce them rigorously. The disciplinary powers that schools currently have, including exclusion, remain in place. Schools will be aware that the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents in a way that affects behaviour. Our guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2) sets out how mental health issues can bring about changes in a young person’s behaviour or emotional state and how this can be reflected within the approach to behaviour set out in [Creating a Culture](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools).

**19.2 How can schools make reasonable adjustments when they devise and implement new rules?**

Some children will return to school having been exposed to a range of adversity including bereavement and long term anxiety. This may lead to an increase in social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) concerns. Additionally, where children have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), their provision may have been disrupted during partial school closure and there may be an impact on their behaviour. Some children will need additional support and access to services such as Educational Psychologists, social workers, and counsellors. For children and young people with SEND, it will be especially important to teach new norms and routines around protective measures and personal hygiene clearly and accessibly.

**19.3 Can head teachers exclude pupils?**

Head teachers retain the power to exclude pupils on disciplinary grounds. Any decision to exclude should be lawful (with respect to the legislation relating directly to exclusions and a school’s wider legal duties, including the European Convention on Human Rights and the Equality Act 2010); rational; reasonable; fair; and proportionate. Permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort, in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches of the school’s behaviour policy, and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

We expect schools who have permanently excluded a pupil to work with parents or carers and the local authority to arrange a place at an alternative educational setting as soon as possible so as to minimise any further breaks in education provision. Where the child in question is vulnerable, the school should notify the local authority/social worker immediately and should work with the local authority to ensure that the child is found a place in another educational setting quickly. During any gap in provision, education providers, social workers, local authorities and other professionals will need to work together to ensure adequate and appropriate arrangements are in place to keep in touch with vulnerable children and young people.

**19.4 What is the effect of coronavirus on governing boards’ duties to consider reinstatement of excluded pupils, and the process for independent review panels (IRPs)?**

The timeframes set out in the School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012 remain in force. This applies to all exclusions, including those that were issued before 23 March.

The government appreciates that it may not be possible to meet the timeframes set out in regulations for review meetings and IRPs, due to the disruption caused by the coronavirus outbreak and the health risks of holding meetings. The Regulations themselves envisage that the timeframes may not always be met, which is why they specify that meetings and panel hearings must still go ahead even if the relevant deadline has been missed. It is for the governing board or arranging authority to assess the facts of the case and decide whether the statutory deadlines are achievable or whether, in the circumstances, the meeting has to be delayed. Governing boards and arranging authorities should continue to take reasonable steps to ensure meetings are arranged for a time when all parties are able to attend.