



MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL

FOUNDED IN 1480
BY WILLIAM OF WAYNFLETE

Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

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Introduction

Magdalen College School aims to provide a compassionate, civilised and friendly environment in which each pupil is able to realise his/her full potential in every sphere. Its values are based on respect for every member of the community, on thoughtfulness and on courtesy. The school rules – printed in the Red Diary each term – are intended to encourage the development of these values.

We expect our pupils to be honest, to practise good manners in all their relationships, to be reliable and punctual and to be tidy in their appearance. All pupils are expected to support each other, and intimidation or bullying will not be tolerated. (The anti-bullying and safeguarding policies can both be found on the school's website). They should be proud of their school and see themselves as members of a long-established community with traditions and values which it falls to them to uphold.

The good reputation of the school can only be maintained by regular reminders to pupils of our expectations of them. The standards of the school will be as high as the standards expected of the pupils by our staff.

The purpose of this policy is to support effective teaching and learning by providing a structure within which positive behaviour is encouraged and supported through:

- the recognition and appreciation of achievement in all aspects of school life.
- the application of a fair and consistent system of sanctions which addresses the needs of the individual pupil (including those with special educational needs or a disability) as well as those of the school community as a whole.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Behaviour in Schools (2024), which is intended to promote good behaviour, self-discipline and respect; prevent bullying; and ensure that pupils complete assigned work. Further guidance on managing pupil behaviour in schools can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2024) and associated documentation.

The Recognition and Appreciation of Achievement

It is important that pupils should perceive that our first instinct is to notice and applaud their achievements rather than look for deficiencies in their performance. This includes the promotion and identification of the school dispositions and the cultural values intrinsic to the school ethos.

In the classroom

The most valuable form of praise and encouragement is that offered by a subject teacher. This can be offered verbally, during or at the end of a lesson, or as part of the marking process. Teachers are also encouraged to make use of the Commendation system.

Commendations are awarded to pupils in the Lower and Middle Schools in recognition of exceptionally praiseworthy effort, be it for classwork or prep, on the games field or around the school in general. As a rule of thumb each prep set might yield at least one and possibly two, three or more commendations per set. It is likely that they will be more freely given to pupils at the lower end of the school, but the practice should not exclude those in the Middle School if it is believed it will encourage and reward effort. However, this does not include the Sixth Form who may receive encouragement, praise or commendation from a member of staff on the blue 'Cause for Comment' form.

The commendation slip (copies of which are available in the pigeon hole area of the Senior Common Room) is completed by the teacher and handed to a Lower School pupil. He passes the slip to the House Tutor who then countersigns it and records it in his/her mark book (or equivalent), thereby registering a tally for each pupil in the houseroom. The pupil retains the commendation slip to take home to parents. On the accumulation of 10, 20, 30 and 50 commendations, Bronze, Silver and Gold and Platinum certificates signed by the Head of Year, Head of Section, Usher and Master respectively, are awarded to pupils and taken home to parents.

To encourage the award of commendations in the Middle School, the system is now electronic and staff award the commendation via iSAMS. The progress of commendations remains in the Middle School as in the Lower School.

The blue 'Cause for Comment' form (copies of which are also available in the Senior Common Room) is completed by the teacher and handed to the pupil's Housemaster or Tutor and then to the Head of Sixth Form.

Heads of Department should monitor marking and give advice on the handling of pupils who are not successful in their work. It is very important that unsuccessful pupils should not be made to feel inadequate. Consideration should be given to issues related to special educational needs and disabilities: reasonable adjustments are made for these pupils and further details are available on the Learning Support and Disability Policies. Differentiation in the classroom is important as a means of ensuring that all pupils feel a sense of achievement in their work.

Emphasis should always be on the steady measurement of success rather than on the measurement of failure.

Pieces of work which exemplify outstanding effort on the part of the pupil who produced them should be shown to the Head of Department or other senior teacher, as well as being recognised by a commendation. Examples of good work can be displayed as an incentive to improvement but care must be taken to ensure that the less academic pupil is not made to feel inferior.

We promote positive academic behaviour in the classroom and throughout the school community. Magdalen College School is unashamedly academic. The school is a community of bright and inquisitive pupils guided by intelligent and inspiring teachers. We are a school that values scholarship and a love of learning for its own sake. Our teachers know how to inspire bright young minds, and our pupils feed off each other's talents and enthusiasm.

One of the challenges of a highly academic and high performing environment is managing competitiveness among pupils. We are clear with pupils that overt competitiveness, especially where this tends to the unkind, is unacceptable, but as with so many aspects of life in a school, not all pupils get this right all of the time. "Unashamedly academic" does not mean "right at all costs" or "always top of the class", but rather to be confident to talk about, ask about or read about what happens next, or why something is the way it is. It is loving learning for its own sake, regardless of the end goal or outcome. Some competitiveness between pupils can be helpful where it is good spirited, but focusing more on one's own outright progress, rather than relative progress, is what

we try to encourage – for example in feedback through lessons and marked work and in our reflections booklets that follow assessment cards and reports.

In the house room

The House Tutor with his/her excellent knowledge of the pupil has a very important role to play in boosting pupil confidence:

- congratulating pupils who receive commendations;
- showing an interest in and appreciation of their involvement in extra-curricular activities;
- nurturing a climate of praise in each house room.

With their overview of a pupil's contribution to the wider life of the school, Tutors are well-placed to award commendations to pupils for significant and/or consistent service that may otherwise go unnoticed.

In the wider school

The Master's announcements after Chapel each Monday offer the most frequent opportunity to recognise achievement and communicate praise and appreciation. Individual and group/team achievements, whether in or out of school, are announced and pupils are invited to come forward to receive awards/medals and are applauded by the school. It is very important that staff responsible for such fields of achievement ensure that the Master is kept informed of all significant achievements. Platinum Awards for 50 Commendations are presented to recipients by the Master in end of term Assemblies.

Colours and half-colours are awarded to pupils for success in sport, drama or music, and other school activities where appropriate to reward particularly notable endeavour and achievement.

Prizegiving is the occasion in which we most publicly reward achievement in our school. Prizes generally relate to academic excellence, but prizes are also awarded for service to the school and for particular forms of non-academic achievement.

Dispositions

Good cultural values are fostered by the promotion of School Dispositions.

Independence

the confidence to pursue all the aims of the school; the creativity and adaptability to develop new skills and improve them over time; the organisation and responsibility to oneself and others to manage time and expectations.

Collaboration

respect and consideration toward others in both collaboration and competition; the ability to articulate both winning and losing well; the generosity and gratitude to thank all those who have helped us through successes and disappointments.

Perseverance

the bravery to try – and to try again; the industriousness and resourcefulness to try harder; the nurturing of resilience in ourselves and others to make disappointment as helpful a learning experience as success.

Motivation

the highest aspirations; the attentiveness and curiosity to engage in new experiences and opportunity; the eagerness and boldness to accept challenge and risk.

Reflection

the honest and open-minded appraisal of our actions and learning; the self-regulation to be generous to ourselves; and fair-minded justice in our dealings with others.

Disciplinary Procedures

In carrying out any disciplinary procedures, regard should be had to the school's legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010. As such, prior to issuing sanctions, consideration should be given to pupils with special educational needs or a disability or particular religious beliefs by, for example, allowing them extra time to fulfil a task or by scheduling detentions outside of hours set aside for adherence to religious beliefs. The School rejects the use of corporal punishment.

Behaviour in the classroom

Classroom discipline is the responsibility of the class teacher. Each department has its own specific guidelines in its handbook and it is the responsibility of each Head of Department to make all teachers and pupils within that department fully aware of what is expected.

Throughout the school, plagiarism and misuse of Artificial Intelligence is prohibited; teachers will encourage pupils to develop appropriate research skills and promote individual creativity. A teacher new to a class should discuss in the first lesson exactly what is expected of the pupils so that no reasonable doubt can exist. Thereafter, it is important that the teacher remains firm, fair and consistent. Staff should always respond promptly and firmly to unsatisfactory academic work. A pupil may be given a reprimand, a warning, asked to repeat a piece of work or given an appropriate punishment exercise. Equally, the teacher may decide to keep a pupil behind in break or at lunch to go over work. If this is done, the Tutor/Housemaster should be informed. It is important to make the punishment as relevant as possible and proportionate to the offence. It may be better to give an immediate reprimand or punishment than to threaten sanctions 'next time'. When a punishment exercise is given, it is important that the pupil is made fully aware of why he/she is being punished and when the work has to be handed in. Persistent work offences should be notified by the subject teacher to the Head of Department and to the pupil's Tutor or Housemaster. If the piece of work is poor because the pupil is genuinely struggling, then the teacher should report the problem to the pupil's Tutor.

Teachers should feel free to use 'whole school sanctions' for offences associated with academic work (e.g.: poor or inadequate work or prep not done) but only for repeated offences.

The usefulness of parental contact should never be underestimated and whenever a pupil is giving regular cause for concern this should be considered. It is essential, however, that reference should be made to the Tutor before doing so.

A pupil about whom there is concern - usually in the light of poor work and/or assessments - may be issued with a "Satis" card by his/her Tutor or Head of Year. This is not a punishment but rather a means of monitoring a pupil to encourage him/her to make better progress by trying harder and working more effectively. However, a poor "Satis" card is likely to result in a disciplinary sanction. The card is signed by each teacher at the end of every lesson and a grade is allocated as appropriate.

At morning registration, the pupil reports to his/her Tutor to discuss the grades awarded the previous day. Appropriate targets can then be set for the new day. The significance of the “Satis” card should not be underestimated by pupils. If the card reflects little effort by them to improve their standard of work, then their position at the school will quickly be jeopardized. It is essential that, should a ‘Satis’ regime lead to negligible improvement, then the Usher or Head of Sixth Form (as appropriate) should be brought in so that further action can be considered.

If a pupil is having particular difficulties with his prep, he/she may be put on a Prep Report. The same procedures apply except that, in this case, parents are required to sign the form each evening stating that the prep has been monitored and to the best of their knowledge, has been completed satisfactorily.

In the event of serious misbehaviour in a classroom a member of staff should send the pupil, with a note, to the Usher’s Office to await (under supervision) the Usher or Master. If the pupil in question is in a volatile state of mind, then they should not make their way unaccompanied.

In nearly all cases physical contact between pupils and staff is inappropriate. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint; but there are certain circumstances in which it is reasonable. Details are made available in the staff code of conduct and in the key policies section of the Staff Handbook. All teachers new to the school are advised of these expectations.

No member of staff should ever lay hands upon a pupil in anger and all forms of corporal punishment are forbidden.

Behaviour outside the classroom

All teaching staff are expected to accept responsibility for the maintenance of good order and discipline not only in their lessons but also in and around the school, including appropriate use of technology and Artificial Intelligence. Pupils will inevitably interpret non-intervention by a member of staff as tacit approval of the misdemeanour and it is therefore very important that a member of staff should point out inappropriate behaviour to a pupil there and then. In many cases a timely word from a member of staff will be all that is required and teachers should not resort to the use of sanctions unless they feel a serious or repeated offence has been committed. Very often,

a stern word from a member of staff will be perfectly adequate. This may also be reinforced by referring the incident to members of the pastoral staff. The pupil's Tutor should be the first contact. He/she will then, if appropriate, involve other members of staff such as the Head of Year, Head of Section, Usher or Master.

The Master appoints prefects, senior prefects and Heads of School to work with the staff to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school. A school prefect is an important link between the pupils and the staff and plays a very important role in maintaining a co-operative and ordered environment in which all can prosper.

Prefects are issued with clear guidelines as to their responsibilities and duties. They are encouraged to maintain discipline by reason rather than compulsion but where reason fails to have an effect, prefects are asked to seek the immediate support of a member of Common Room. Where there has been an obvious breach of discipline, prefects should refer the matter as speedily as possible to the relevant Tutor/Housemaster.

Mentors are volunteer members of the L6th who are trained at the start of the year and will be partnered with younger pupils as appropriate to help guide them through challenges they might face, both inside and outside the classroom. Consideration will be given to getting the most appropriate mentor possible, usually by tutors and Heads of Year involved.

School councils provide, amongst other things, a chance for pupils to reflect on the promotion of Good Behaviour and Conduct in the school, as well as input into the rules and guidelines used by the school, for example through pupil-written 'Codes of Conduct'. The Parent Forum provides a similar opportunity to ensure that the school has shared principles engaged in by all.

The Master also reserves the right to take a view on the behaviour of pupils outside the school, including that which might bring the school into disrepute.

Physical Contact & Restraint

- In nearly all cases physical contact between pupils and staff is inappropriate
- Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint
- Staff are entitled to intervene in self-defence or in an emergency

- Reasonable force or physical contact is only reasonable by law and as a last resort to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to: commit a criminal offence, cause significant damage to property, including their own, injure themselves or others, engage in behaviour which has a high and immediate risk of death (e.g. running on to a busy road; hitting someone with a dangerous object), behave in a way that seriously disrupts a lesson, a school sporting event or school visit. To be judged lawful, force used needs to be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent
- Reasonable physical contact may be passive (e.g. standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path) or active (e.g. ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of the back)
- Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. Before intervening physically staff must, wherever practicable, tell the pupil to stop and what will happen if he/she does not
- The staff member must continue to attempt communicating with the pupil throughout the incident and make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary
- Any force used must be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result and must be appropriate for the age, sex and understanding of the pupil
- All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the Usher/Master/Bursar (for non-teaching staff) to prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident
- The Usher/Master/Bursar (for non-teaching staff) should be informed of incidents where a staff member considered the use of force may have been necessary or threatened a pupil with the use of force
- This applies when a staff member is on school premises or in charge of the pupil elsewhere e.g. field trip, authorised out of school activity
- Some physical contact may be proper or necessary e.g. to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE, drama or sports coaching. All such planned contact must be demonstrably unavoidable. Staff should explain the intended action to the pupil, should not proceed if the pupil appears to be apprehensive or reluctant and should ensure that other pupils or colleagues are present during the demonstration. Any concerns should be reported to the Master/Usher/Bursar (for non-teaching staff) without delay
- Staff have a duty of care to pupils: sometimes physical intervention (e.g. preventing a pupil from jumping out of a window) is more appropriate than doing nothing

- Touching may also be appropriate if a pupil is in distress and needs comforting or if a member of staff has to administer first aid. Staff should use their professional judgement and be aware of any special circumstances relating to the pupil. Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time

Pupil Engagement

Pupil engagement in the promotion of good behaviour is achieved through School Councils, Welfare Committees, Tutor Time, Liliium discussions, discussion groups (such as those for induction into the 6th form, and those formed as part of the School Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment). Examples of pupil led input are Codes of Conduct and Potential Targets of Discrimination.

Investigations

Should a pupil's behaviour merit an investigation, speed and confidentiality are of the essence in such disciplinary enquiries. It is school policy that, save in the most exceptional circumstances, parents are not present at investigatory interviews whilst these are at an enquiry stage. However, if at all possible, another adult will be present during any pupil interview. If possible, that adult should be a teacher preferably of the same sex as the pupil concerned.

If the conclusion of an investigation at the enquiry stage is that permanent exclusion may need to be considered, parents will be invited to be present at a further interview. In the intervening period a pupil may be suspended and sent home.

Sanctions

The school keeps records of sanctions imposed upon pupils for disciplinary offences and the following are the various sanctions used in the school. The school records all behavioural incidents and sanctions in accordance with this policy which will be used to monitor behavioural issues in the school and to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy.

Sanctions will typically lead to, or result from, a meeting with the Tutor, and beyond that as appropriate the Head of Year and Head of Section. The school does not have 'group' or 'collective' sanctions.

Referral

A Lower - or Middle - School pupil may be referred to his Tutor by filling in the appropriate form available in the Senior Common Room and handing it in to the Tutor/Housemaster. Each referral is logged on iSAMS. The Tutor will interview the pupil, issue a reprimand for his actions, and set appropriate targets for improved behaviour. When a pupil has accumulated three referrals in the space of half a term, he will automatically receive a school detention as outlined below unless, after discussion with the Head of Section and Usher, it is decided that such a punishment would be inappropriate or counter-productive.

The award of referrals is at the discretion of teachers but typical offences may include:

- a. repeated failure to submit prep on time;
- b. eating or drinking where not permitted;
- c. chewing gum;
- d. repeated breach of dress regulations;
- f. dropping litter;
- g. repeated lateness;
- h. rude or inconsiderate behaviour.

All referrals should be handed by the tutor to the Head of Year, then Head of Section, and then to the Usher. The Usher's PA will then store them on a pupil's electronic file.

Referrals are not given to members of the Sixth Form. If a Sixth Former is guilty of some misdemeanour or is not making satisfactory academic progress a teacher should fill in a Blue "Cause for Comment" form (obtainable from the Staff Common Room) and hand it to the pupil's Housemaster or Tutor. The Housemaster or Tutor will deal with the matter in a reasonable and appropriate manner and pass on the CfC to the Head of Year and then Head of Sixth Form and Usher, as for Referrals.

School Detention

A detention is the most serious punishment a teacher can give a pupil and is therefore reserved for more serious misdemeanours and offences. It should normally be given to a pupil only after

consultation with the Tutor and Head of Year. A pupil also receives a detention if he/she accumulates three referrals/CfCs in the space of half a term unless, after discussion with Heads of Section and the Usher, it is decided that such a punishment would be inappropriate or counterproductive. To place a pupil in detention, members of staff should fill in the appropriate form available in the Senior Common Room and put it into the pigeonhole of the pupil's Tutor/Housemaster. Heads of Section and the Usher should be kept informed. In the case of Sixth Formers, the withdrawal of privileges may be a more appropriate sanction than the award of a detention. This should be discussed with the Head of Year and the Head of Sixth Form. If the problem is one that spreads across a number of houserooms, the Usher, the Heads of Section (Sixth Form, Middle School, Lower School), as appropriate, will coordinate the disciplinary process.

Detention takes place for one hour each Friday from 4pm. Those in detention may be asked to perform work for the community (e.g. preparing the school for Open Morning). The list of those in detention is emailed to the Surmaster and to the appropriate Tutors/HoYs/HoS the day before the detention takes place.

The Usher's Office sends out a standard letter informing parents of the detention, signed by the Head of Year or Head of section. This should allow parents sufficient time to amend their son/daughter's travel arrangements if that should prove necessary (24 hours is the normal requirement).

All detentions are filed electronically.

Saturday (Master's) Detention

This is given by the Usher or the Master, on the advice of a senior colleague (most likely Head of Section) for more serious offences. It is supervised by a member of the Master's Advisory Committee on a rotational basis.

The Head of Section will arrange for the School Office to send out a standard letter informing parents of the detention. Ideally, parents should receive 24 hours' notice of this. The detention takes place from 10.00am to 12 noon on Saturdays.

All detentions will be recorded in the pupil's electronic file.

Suspension

The Master, or the Usher, may suspend a pupil for particularly serious misbehaviour. For further details, please consult the Discipline and Exclusion Policy on the school's website.

Exclusion

The Master or, in her absence, the Usher, may decide to exclude a pupil for an extremely serious transgression of the disciplinary code. Sometimes the pupil will be excluded because it is evident that, while none of his/her misdemeanours is in itself worthy of expulsion, the repeated nature of them calls into question the purpose of his/her remaining at the school.

Parental Conduct

Parents act as role models to their children and the school seeks to work in positive partnership with parents in support of pupils. Conversely, and as set out in the School's Parent Contract, the School may also require the removal of a pupil in circumstances where the Master considers in their discretion that the behaviour or conduct of a parent (or both parents) is unreasonable; and/or adversely affects (or is likely to adversely affect) their child's and/or other children's progress at the School, and/or the wellbeing of School staff; and/or brings (or is likely to bring) the School into disrepute (among the School community or the general public); and/or is not in accordance with their obligations under the Parent Contract. A non-exhaustive list of the sorts of behaviour that could merit required removal of a pupil on the grounds unacceptable parental behaviour or conduct includes the following:

- treating the School or a member of staff unreasonably;
- making a malicious allegation about a member of staff or the School;
- communicating with the School in person or in writing (directly or indirectly), in a manner which is deemed voluminous, and/or relentless, and/or confrontational, and/or unreasonable, and/or overly aggressive;
- behaving in a manner which adversely affects (or in a manner which is likely to adversely affect) the welfare of a member or members of the School community; and
- breaching the Parent Contract.

The School reserves the right to impose sanctions for parental behaviour falling short of required removal, including but not limited to placing restrictions on a parent's access to School / School events, communications with the School and/or the imposition of a warning (up to and including a final written warning).

Related Policies

- Safeguarding policy (also on school website)
- Anti-bullying policy (also on school website)
- Discipline, expulsion, and required removal policy (also on school website)
- Learning Support Policy
- Disability Policy
- Staff code of conduct

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