BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING POLICY

Policy/Procedure Creator: Senior Management Team
Policy/Procedure created/reviewed: 25/03/2024

Centre Name	**MEPA Academy**
Centre Number	**61710**
Date Policy First Created	**01/09/2021**
Current Policy Reviewed by	**Lewis Muir**
Current Policy Approved by	**Mandy Ellen**

Role	**Name**
Exams Officer	**Emma Finch**
ALS lead/SENCO	**Tilly Cook**
Senior Leader(s)	**Mandy Ellen, Emma Finch and Lewis Muir**
Head of Centre	**Mandy Ellen**
Other Staff (if Applicable)	**Tilly Cook**

BEHAVIOUR, REWARDS, SANCTIONS AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The following policy was revised in March 2025 and is in accordance with *Behaviour and Discipline in Schools* (2016).

Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy Statement

The school has a moral duty to all pupils, parents/guardians and staff to maintain an environment where everyone can work in physical and emotional security, free from the negative effects of unacceptable or anti-social behaviour.

Aims of this Policy

The aims of this policy are:

1. To promote positive behaviour for learning;

2. To define the role of teachers in establishing and maintaining excellent standards of behaviour in the school;

3. To state what is expected of pupils;

4. To state what is expected from parents/guardians and carers;

5. To provide guidance on available rewards and sanctions;

6. To prevent bullying; to co-exist with *The Education and Inspections Act 2006, The Equality Act 2010,* Safeguarding Policy, Acceptable user, e-safety and Code of Conduct. To produce a safe and secure environment where all children can flourish, an environment where bullying is unacceptable, and measures are in place to reduce its likelihood.

1. Positive behaviour for learning

It is the aim of the school to provide a working environment where all pupils can realise their full potential in a non-disruptive, happy and stimulating environment. The school expects a high standard of good behaviour, and value is placed on the qualities of self-discipline, independence, initiative and mutual respect. Our aim is to have firm but fair discipline in a relaxed, caring and friendly atmosphere. Pupils are expected to consider other people and their feelings. They should treat others as they would expect to be treated themselves. Praise, encouragement and rewards for achievement, contribution and good behaviour are central to our philosophy.

Rationale for a positive learning environment:

- Pupils learn more effectively and enjoyably when there is a sense of order and the behaviour around them that is polite and reasonable.
- By making the expectations of good behaviour explicit, the school can create a positive atmosphere that supports effective learning.
- Pupils are encouraged to understand the advantages of good behaviour in pursuit of happy and positive relationships with others both now and in the future. This is done through positive reinforcement, strong role modelling and affirmation, as well as using rewards and sanctions when necessary.
- Staff and pupils must share responsibility for ensuring that Health and Safety obligations are not jeopardised by unruly behaviour.

- There may be times when pupils at the school experience emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. In this eventuality, the school, where possible, will remedy or at least positively manage such difficulties. This will be achieved through the use of appropriate support networks and ensuring effective communication throughout. As such, all pupils will have the opportunity to take part fully in the educational experiences and opportunities offered to them.
- Pupils are expected to consider other people and their feelings. they should treat others as they would expect to be treated themselves.

BULLYING, OF ANY KIND, VIOLATES THESE STATEMENTS AND, THEREFORE, WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

2. Role of teachers in establishing and maintaining excellent standards of behaviour in the school

- Teachers set the tone for good learning behaviour by maintaining positive attitudes at all times and promoting high expectations for all school activities.
- Teachers should ensure that learning intentions are clear, and lessons are well organised, interesting and appropriate.
- In the classroom, teachers should set clear expectations, be fair and engage pupils while applying a positive approach towards discipline.
- Teachers should show appropriate appreciation for effort and achievement by pupils, using encouraging words and providing merits.
- Teachers must encourage good behaviour by all pupils when at school and off site (on school excursions or residential trips, for example). Staff are expected to intervene when these expectations are not met by pupils.
- Teachers are expected to demonstrate to pupils courteous, considerate, polite and pleasant behaviour at all times – staff must never use any abusive or humiliating remarks and are expected to be good role models (see the Staff Code of Conduct).
- Staff should always aim to manage behaviour positively, especially when dealing with challenging behaviour. They should encourage the pupil to maintain dignity and be able to make a fresh start.
- Staff should use physical restraint only in lawful circumstances; for example, to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others (see 'Use of reasonable force' in this document).
- Staff to provide a happy, friendly school environment where bullying is not tolerated.
- Staff to promote an anti-bullying message and to encourage all members of the school to act with tolerance, courtesy and consideration towards others always.
- The school will involve all staff, parents and pupils in combating bullying and making it unacceptable at MEPA Academy.
- The school will encourage pupils who are being bullied or who observe bulling to inform staff.

3. Behaviour expected from pupils

Pupils are expected to be polite and show consideration towards each other and towards school staff.

- Pupils are required to observe the following basic rules in the classroom:
    - Arrive on time with all the equipment needed for the lesson (including planners, vocational folders, water etc)
    - Listen when the teacher is giving instructions;

- Follow instructions promptly and accurately;
- Stay in their allocated seat or workspace unless given permission to move;
- Treat others with respect and consideration at all times.
- Pupils are required to dress cleanly and neatly in the correct uniform including following the jewellery and hair standards particularly in vocational subjects.
- Pupils must obey all Health and Safety regulations in the classrooms and around the school, including helping to keep the school site clear of litter and moving sensibly and calmly around the buildings and grounds.
- Pupils should never make racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic or other abusive or humiliating remarks.
- *Pupils must never resort to physical violence.
- Pupils must avoid behaviour that disturbs or distracts others.
- *Pupils must not engage in any discussions of a sexual nature or around anything sexualised including videos, toys – where the content is deemed age inappropriate.
- In circumstances where a pupil has failed to meet the above expectations of the school, MEPA Academy has clear sanctions in place to tackle the unacceptable behaviour. See the 'Sanctions' section below.

***These behaviours will result in immediate isolation from peers**

4. Partnership with Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers are encouraged to work with the school to ensure that their children contribute to the maintenance of a safe and secure learning environment.
- Parents/carers must endeavour to guarantee that their children's behaviour does not prevent others from learning effectively.
- The school has clear expectations when it comes to behaviour. We believe that a close partnership with parents encourages good behaviour in pupils.
- Parents/carers are entitled to an explanation of actions taken by the school, which will always strive to be fair and proportionate, particularly the application of sanctions and the treatment of anti-social behaviour. The school will endeavour to notify parents as soon as possible regarding the actions that the school has taken. Any parental concerns and complaints should be made with reference to MEPA Academy Complaints Procedure.
- Parents must sign their child's planner each week, this way they can keep an eye of any merits or comments the student may have been given.
- Bullying is a highly emotive issue, and the parents/carers of victims can rightly become very distressed on behalf of their child and can feel helpless. The parents/carers of bullies often do not know this is happening and may also feel very vulnerable and defensive when they find out.
- Not every single case of bullying will necessarily be reported to parents, but the expectation is that most will be. It will depend on the circumstances and severity.
- Staff should make the actions that were taken, why we are taking them and what they can do to reinforce our actions clear to the parents/carers of victims and bullies. We urge parents/carers to contact us immediately if they have any suspicion of bullying; we are sometimes unaware of the problem

5. Guidance on Rewards and Sanctions

Rewards

It is the school's policy to recognise, acknowledge and reward individual achievements by pupils. The rewards system has been reviewed in consultation with staff and pupils. The following are examples of areas considered to be worthy of individual recognition:

- Improved standards of work;
- Exceptional class work or homework;
- Effort in class and/or for homework;
- Exemplary subject knowledge demonstrated
- Kindness/helpfulness
- Progress in attitude
- Following through with targets set by teachers
- Consistently improved attendance and punctuality.

MEPA Merits

Rewards are in the form of merits. Teachers or staff can distribute merits for a variety of reasons, as stated above. At the end of each week a winner will be drawn from the merit box, and they will be rewarded with a small prize. At the end of each term the student with the most merits will earn a reward for their key stage.

MEPA Mantra Awards

Students are required to follow the MEPA Mantra (mindful and respectful, enthusiastic and creative, progress or attainment, aiming high) as set out by staff and students. At the end of the school year staff will nominate pupils who will best represent the mantra. For those pupils who will, they will receive a trophy.

Sanctions

MEPA Academy recognises the need for a positive learning environment where it is hoped that all pupils will be fully involved in their learning. We have high expectations of our pupils' behaviour, with the emphasis lying on the self-discipline and personal responsibility of each pupil. Occasionally, when a pupil has failed to meet the expectations as set out in this policy, the school has clear sanctions in place to tackle the unacceptable behaviour.

Staff should consider whether the behaviour in question gives cause to suspect the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this may be the case, staff should follow the Safeguarding Policy.

It is important that comments are used consistently, and that teachers and other staff make it very clear to the recipient why a sanction is being applied. At the heart of our discipline must be a real respect for the pupil. In ensuring good discipline, we recognise the importance of listening to pupils' views. We believe that communication with parents regarding any sanctions issued is fundamental in securing their support for our procedures and encourages good behaviour from pupils.

The comment will be written straight into the students' planner and logged weekly by their tutor. If a student receives three comments across the term, they will be booked into a Friday after school detention and parents/carers will be notified. Three detentions a half term with result in an Academy report.

Reflection, Warning and Comment

MEPA Academy looks to educate and develop students understanding of appropriate behaviour. Classroom and studio management is to be dealt with by all teachers consistently by using the reflection, warning and comment system as set out below:

- Reflection - Stage 1 - Students will receive a reflection conversation to remind them of expectations.

- Warning - Stage 2 – Students will receive a formal warning from the teacher

- Comment - Stage 3 – Students will receive a comment after two reminders of expectations for the following but not exhaustive to:

    - Lack of effort in class / incomplete work – students will be required to complete this work in their lunch time (20 minutes maximum) and will be supervised by the class teacher
    - Persistent interruption of the teacher
    - Misuse of computers or equipment
    - Defacing school equipment
    - Persistently not following instructions
    - Unkind or rude behaviour towards peers.

Instant Comment
Students can receive instant comments for the following but not exhaustive to:

- Incorrect uniform including jewellery and hair.
- Lack of equipment including planners, water, books (vocational and academic)
- Lateness after 3 minutes maximum but not form time.
- Phone in class (to then be removed from student and kept until end of the day)
- No homework (to include not learning words or dance routines)
- Defacing school equipment
- Direct rudeness towards a member of staff or peer.

As comments are recording in students' planners to inform parents, if a students does not have their planner due to leaving it at home or not being prepared this will result in a instant lunch time detention either on the same day or the next day (20 minutes maximum).

Sanctions – Isolation

The following list are examples of when a student may need to be immediately removed from lesson for the remainder of the lesson (and/or day). Removal from the classroom should be considered a serious sanction. It should only be used when necessary and once other behavioural strategies in the classroom have been attempted, unless the behaviour is so extreme as to warrant immediate removal. The student should be taken to a senior member of staff:

- Refusal to correct uniform e.g. take earring out, remove jewellery, put hair up
- Persistent rudeness
- Persistent disruption
- Continuing to argue back after a warning
- Incorrect use of any equipment e.g. Science, that are known to cause harm.
- Discussions which are inappropriate especially of a sexual nature
- Persistent lack of effort

- Threatening behaviour
- Throwing of equipment
- Being deliberately hurtful to another student e.g. making nasty comments, deliberately leaving someone out.
- For a student to stabilise their emotions and de-escalate in a safe space.

A resolution meeting should be held after any incident of isolation from a lesson. The student will automatically receive a comment and then a decision will be made about whether a detention will be given. After isolation the parents/carers will be informed by the teacher that removed the student from the lesson, where possible.

Schools have the power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside of the school premises to such an extent as is reasonable.

Sanctions – Exclusions

Exclusion from school will usually only be used after other sanctions and support have been applied, unless the offence is a serious one-off event.

MEPA Academy take the view that disruption to the good order and discipline of the school, whatever form it takes, can damage the life chances of other students, and must therefore be taken seriously. Students could be excluded from school, for example, for repeated behaviour concerns, persistent failure to follow instructions, deliberate refusal to comply with the school's procedures or reasonable instructions from a member of staff, repeated or serious defiance, persistent lesson disruption, all forms of bullying including for example persistent racist, sexist or homophobic remarks and behaviour or remarks and behaviour that are targeted at differently-abled students, including those with a learning difference, swearing at staff, mischievous or malicious allegations against staff, theft, and purposeful violence to others.

The number of days' exclusion will vary according to the offence and the disciplinary history of the student, and will be decided after an assessment of the evidence and discussion with the Principal/Proprietor and relevant staff, usually the SMT.

Where there has been a deliberate serious sexual or physical assault or harassment of staff or the threat of physical violence, the matter will always be referred to Principal/Proprietor and SMT with immediate effect.

Permanent exclusion is likely to be used as a sanction in cases where all other intervention strategies have been unsuccessful, and where there is a history of persistent serious behaviour concerns over time. Permanent exclusion will be used in extreme cases, which may be one-off, but so serious that there is a threat to the health and safety of the student or others in the school community. Permanent exclusion may be used where students are found selling illegal drugs or to have brought a weapon into school, with deliberate intent to harm. A decision on permanent exclusion would not normally be taken in the Principal's absence, except in exceptional circumstances. An interim position, in the case of a serious incident, would be for the Deputy Principal to exclude in the first instance, subject to review or further investigation by the Principal/Proprietor. Before making the decision to exclude, the school will ensure that a thorough investigation has been carried out, including allowing the student to give an account, seeking any witness accounts and considering any evidence

of the particular circumstances. Any record of previous behaviour concerns will be taken into consideration and referred to in the correspondence with parents/carers. No student will be sent off site before the end of the day unless contact has been established with parents/carers. In the event of contact not being made, the student must remain on site, withdrawn from class until the end of the normal school day. At the point of exclusion, a letter will be sent home both by hand and by first-class post, stating the reason for the exclusion. Wherever possible, telephone contact will be made with the parent/carer of the student informing them of the exclusion. All exclusions will be recorded and held on the student's file.

The guidance in full can be accessed on the DFE Website:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion .

Exclusions from School

Consideration for fixed term and permanent exclusion from school is in the judgement of the Principal. All recommendations will have regard to the legal framework and will take into consideration the following:

Typical Fixed Term Exclusion – e.g. up to 15 days

- Consistent bullying/intimidation
- Persistent disruption
- Assault on staff/other pupils
- Abuse
- Fighting
- Petty theft
- Attack on a victim after he has reported earlier bullying
- Illegal activity (e.g. taking illegal drugs/banned substances)
- Potential Permanent Exclusion
- Persistent failure to follow instructions
- Violent assault with intent (pre-meditated on a pupil by an individual or group of individuals)
- Persistent failure to respond to advice and/or expectations set by the school
- Persistent theft
- Dangerous/violent behaviour to pupils or staff
- Grievous bodily harm
- Serious assault on staff
- Behaviour that endangers self or others
- Sexual assault on other students or staff
- Major violent incident
- Illegal activity (e.g. supplying or selling drugs/taking illegal drugs/serious theft)
- Bringing/possession of a weapon in school, with intent to harm
- Persistent bullying: Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally (DfE - *Preventing and Tackling Bullying*, October 2014). Areas of potential bullying include racial, religious, cultural, cyber, sexual/sexist, homophobic, biphobic transphobic, disability or intimidation. It can occur directly or through cyber-technology (social, websites, mobile phones, text messages, email and photographs)

Bullying can be:

- Persistent;

- Intimidating, fearsome, stressful;
- Pre-meditated;
- Demoralising;
- Physical;
- Psychological;
- Humiliating, demeaning, threatening;
- The use of a superior position of strength to intimidate;
- A process designed to lower self-esteem; and carried out by individuals or by groups.

Bullying includes:

- Name calling or mocking;
- Physical violence - hitting, kicking, punching, damaging property;
- Demands for money or possessions;
- Hiding someone's possessions;
- Pressurising others to do something they do not want to do - for example, another pupils homework;
- Threatening behaviour;
- Initiating and spreading nasty or false rumours;
- Deliberately leaving people out or not talking to them;
- Teasing and tormenting a person about their social class, race, gender, personal appearance, school performance, possessions, disabilities or other personal traits;
- Sending unpleasant notes or making someone the subject of graffiti;
- Touching another person against their will;
- Sexual harassment; and
- Using technology such as email, the Internet, texts and the like, to insult, provoke, threaten, demean or otherwise intimidate and upset the victim.
- Anything that comes under the umbrella term of banter.

A bulling incident will be addressed as a child protection concern when there is reason to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Where this is the case, that staff member should report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) . See Safeguarding Policy

Students recognised at risk of Permanent Exclusion

Students at risk of permanent exclusion must attend a meeting with the Principal and the parents/carers. The meeting should ensure that, as appropriate to the concern, support has been put in place and expectations have been made clear to the student and their family. Expectations of all parties will be agreed and if appropriate the student will begin a tailored Behavioural Support Plan. Failure to successfully meet the expectations in the Behavioural Support Plan or the seriousness of the incident, may result in a permanent exclusion.

Searching Students and Use of Reasonable Force

Relates to:
Education Act 1996/2011
Education and Inspections Act 2006;
The Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012;
The School Behaviour (Determination and Publicising of Measures in Academies) Regulations 2012;
and Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Searching without consent
The Principal and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search students or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student may have a prohibited item. Prohibited items are:
• knives or weapons
• alcohol
• Illegal drugs
• stolen items
• tobacco and cigarette papers
• fireworks
• pornographic images
• banned items such as so called 'legal highs'
• vaping equipment
• drug paraphernalia

Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used:
• to commit an offence
• to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student)

Also note: Schools are not required to have formal written consent from the student for this sort of search – it is enough for the teacher to ask the student to turn out his or her pockets or if the teacher can look in the student's bag or locker and for the student to agree. A student refusing to co-operate with such a search raises the same kind of issues as where a student refuses to stay in a detention or refuses to stop any other unacceptable behaviour when instructed by a member of staff – in such circumstances, schools can apply an appropriate disciplinary sanction.

Can I search?
Yes, if you are the Principal or a member of school staff and authorised by the Principal.

Under what circumstances?
You must be the same sex as the student being searched, and there must be a witness (also a staff member) and, if at all possible, they should be the same sex as the student being searched. There is a limited exception to this rule. You can carry out a search of a student of the opposite sex to you and without a witness present, but only where you reasonably believe that there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if you do not conduct the search immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.

When can I search?
If you have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student is in possession of a prohibited item. Also note: The law also says what must be done with prohibited items which are seized following a search. The requirement that the searcher is the same sex as the student and that a witness is present will continue to apply in nearly all searches. Where it is practicable to summon a staff member of the same sex as the student and a witness then the teachers wishing to conduct a search must do so.

Legal requirements of a search
There should normally be 2 members of staff present during the search - the person doing the search and the search witness. Searches should normally be done by someone the same sex as your child. The search witness must also be the same sex as your child if possible. Your child must not be asked to remove clothes, other than outer clothing like a coat. If there's a risk of serious harm to a person if the search is not conducted immediately, a child may be searched by a person of the opposite sex and without another member of staff present.

Authorising members of staff
Principals should decide who to authorise to use these powers. There is no requirement to provide authorisation in writing. Staff, other than security staff, can refuse to undertake a search. The law states that head teachers may not require anyone other than a member of the school security staff to undertake a search. Staff can be authorised to search for some items but not others; for example, a member of staff could be authorised to search for stolen property, but not for weapons or knives. A Principal can require a member of the school's security staff to undertake a search. If a security guard, who is not a member of the school staff, searches a student, the person witnessing the search should ideally be a permanent member of the school staff, as they are more likely to know the student.

Establishing Grounds for a search
Teachers can only undertake a search without consent if they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student may have in his or her possession a prohibited item. The teacher must decide in each particular case what constitutes reasonable grounds for suspicion. For example, they may have heard other students talking about the item or they might notice a student behaving in a way that causes them to be suspicious. In the exceptional circumstances when it is necessary to conduct a search of a student of the opposite sex or in the absence of a witness, the member of staff conducting the search should bear in mind that a student's expectation of privacy increases as they get older. The powers allow school staff to search regardless of whether the student is found after the search to have that item. This includes circumstances where staff suspect a student of having items such as illegal drugs or stolen property which are later found not to be illegal or stolen. School staff can view CCTV footage in order to make a decision as to whether to conduct a search for an item.

Searching for items banned by schools
An item banned by the school rules may only be searched for under these powers if it has been identified in the school rules as an item that can be searched for. The school rules must be determined and publicised by the head teacher in accordance with section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. In the case of Academies, the school rules must be determined in accordance with the School Behaviour (Determination and Publicising of Measures in Academies) Regulations 2012. Separate advice on school rules is available in 'Behaviour and Discipline – a guide for Principals and school staff' via the link under associated resources.

Location of search
Searches without consent can only be carried out on the school premises or, if elsewhere, where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the student, for example on school trips in England or in training settings. The powers only apply in England.

Extent of the search – clothes, possessions, desks and lockers
What the law says:
The person conducting the search may not require the student to remove any clothing other than outer clothing. Outer clothing means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear but outer clothing includes hats; shoes; boots; gloves and scarves. Possessions means any goods over which the student has or appears to have control – this includes desks, lockers and bags. A student's possessions can only be searched in the presence of the student and another member of staff, except where there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff. Also note: The power to search without consent enables a personal search, involving removal of outer clothing and searching of pockets; but not an intimate search going further than that, which only a person with more extensive powers (e.g. a police officer) can do.

Lockers
Under common law powers, schools are able to search lockers for any item provided the student agrees. Schools can also make it a condition of having a locker that the student consents to have these searched for any item whether or not the student is present. If a student does not consent to a search (or withdraws consent having signed a consent form) then it is possible to conduct a search without consent but only for the "prohibited items" listed above.

Use of force
Members of staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm. Such force cannot be used to search for items banned under the school rules. Separate advice is available on teachers' power to use force.

Confiscation
What the law allows:
Schools' general power to discipline, as set out in Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a student's property as a disciplinary penalty, where reasonable to do so. The member of staff may use their discretion to confiscate, retain and/or destroy any item found as a result of a 'with consent' search so long as it is reasonable in the circumstances. Where any article is thought to be a weapon it must be passed to the police. Staff have a defence to any complaint or other action brought against them. The law protects members of staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss of, or damage to, any item they have confiscated, provided they acted lawfully.

Items found as a result of a 'without consent' search
What the law says:
A person carrying out a search can seize anything they have reasonable grounds for suspecting is a prohibited item or is evidence in relation to an offence. Where a person conducting a search finds alcohol, they may retain or dispose of it. This means that schools can dispose of alcohol as they think appropriate but this should not include returning it to

the student. Where they find controlled drugs, these must be delivered to the police as soon as possible but may be disposed of if the person thinks there is a good reason to do so. Where they find other substances which are not believed to be controlled drugs these can be confiscated where a teacher believes them to be harmful or detrimental to good order and discipline. This would include, for example, so called 'legal highs'. Where staff suspect a substance may be controlled they should treat them as controlled drugs as outlined above. Where they find stolen items, these must be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable – but may be returned to the owner (or may be retained or disposed of if returning them to their owner is not practicable) if the person thinks that there is a good reason to do so. Where a member of staff finds tobacco or cigarette papers they may retain or dispose of them. As with alcohol, this means that schools can dispose of tobacco or cigarette papers as they think appropriate but this should not include returning them to the student.

Fireworks found as a result of a search may be retained or disposed of but should not be returned to the student. If a member of staff finds a pornographic image, they may dispose of the image unless its possession constitutes a specified offence (i.e. it is extreme or child pornography) in which case it must be delivered to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. Images found on a mobile phone or other electronic device can be deleted unless it is necessary to pass them to the police. Where an article that has been (or could be) used to commit an offence or to cause personal injury or damage to property is found it may be delivered to the police or returned to the owner. It may also be retained or disposed of. Where a member of staff finds an item which is banned under the school rules they should take into account all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgement to decide whether to return it to its owner, retain it or dispose of it. Any weapons or items which are evidence of an offence must be passed to the police as soon as possible.

Statutory guidance on the disposal of controlled drugs and stolen items
It is up to teachers to decide whether there is a good reason not to deliver stolen items or controlled drugs to the police. In determining what is a "good reason" for not delivering controlled drugs or stolen items to the police the member of staff must have regard to the following guidance issued by the Secretary of State11: In determining what is a 'good reason' for not delivering controlled drugs or stolen items to the police, the member of staff should take into account all relevant circumstances and use their professional judgement to determine whether they can safely dispose of a seized article. Where staff are unsure as to the legal status of a substance and have reason to believe it may be a controlled drug they should treat it as such. With regard to stolen items, it would not be reasonable or desirable to involve the police in dealing with low value items such as pencil cases. However, school staff may judge it appropriate to contact the police if the items are valuable (iPods/laptops) or illegal (alcohol/fireworks).

Statutory guidance for dealing with electronic devices
Where the person conducting the search finds an electronic device they may examine any data or files on the device if they think there is a good reason to do so. Following an examination, if the person has decided to return the device to the owner, or to retain or dispose of it, they may erase any data or files, if they think there is a good reason to do so. The member of staff must have regard to the following guidance issued by the Secretary of State when determining what is a "good reason" for examining or erasing the contents of an electronic device: In determining a 'good reason' to examine or erase the data or files the

staff member must reasonably suspect that the data or file on the device in question has been, or could be, used to cause harm, to disrupt teaching or break the school rules. If inappropriate material is found on the device it is up to the teacher to decide whether they should delete that material, retain it as evidence (of a criminal offence or a breach of school discipline) or whether the material is of such seriousness that it requires the involvement of the police.

Informing Parents, dealing with complaints
There is no legal requirement to make or keep a record of a search. Schools should inform the individual student's parents or carers where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found although there is no legal requirement to do so. Complaints about screening or searching should be dealt with through the normal school complaints procedure.

I'm a teacher - can I refuse to search a student without their consent?
Yes. A head teacher cannot require a member of staff to conduct a search. In order to conduct a search without consent a member of staff must be authorised to do so. Staff can choose whether they want to be authorised, or not.

Is there a risk that I could face legal challenge if I search a student without consent?
Head teachers and authorised school staff have a specific statutory power to search students without consent for specific items – knives/weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items. As long as the member of staff acts within the limits of this specific power they will have a robust defence against a legal challenge.

Power to use reasonable force
Members of staff have the power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom

Section 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 550ZA (3) of the Education Act 1996
Principal / proprietor and authorised school staff may also use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search without consent for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause harm. Schools can also identify additional items in their school rules which may be searched for without consent. Force cannot be used to search for these items. Separate advice is available in 'Use of Reasonable Force – advice for school leaders and staff. **See Legislative links** section below for a link to this document.

What is reasonable force?
The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils

Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. 'Reasonable in the

circumstances' means using no more force than is needed. As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention. School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

Who can use reasonable force?

• All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.

• This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the head teacher has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

When can reasonable force be used?

• Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

• In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.

• The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

• The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used. Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006

Schools can use reasonable force to:

• remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;

• prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;

• prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;

• prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil

• restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

Schools cannot:

Use force as a punishment – it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

6. Anti Bullying

Children who are bullied can suffer great psychological stress that has even resulted in suicide. There are a number of well-known symptoms, especially if they are the victim of persistent bulling. Behaviour to be aware of is:

- Regularly feeling sick or unwell in the mornings;
- Reluctance to make the journey to and from school;
- Money or possessions going missing;
- Clothes or school bag torn;
- Wanting extra pocket money for no particular reason;
- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Taking different routes to school;
- Becoming withdrawn, suffering from loss of self-esteem and negative self-image;

- Nightmares, depression and impaired concentration;
- Self-harm;
- Not wanting to leave the house or disinclination to attend school; and
- Reluctance to take openly about school friends.
- School absence

THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL
How the school will work to promote the anti-bullying message

What staff will do:

- All staff will praise and encourage cooperative, caring behaviour;
- All staff will promote positive relationships by demonstrating, through their own behaviour, that it is better for everyone to respect and care for each other;
- Staff will provide an environment where children feel accepted and valued and are able to speak freely;
- All staff need to be aware of areas of the school where bullying might take place and to be sensitive to the times and situations where it is more likely to happen (for example, in changing rooms, at break time, and in lunchtime queues). Bullying can take place discreetly in classroom situations; teachers should be observant and act firmly and swiftly if they suspect or find evidence of bullying;
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying such as religion, disability, sexuality;
- Staff will treat all allegations of bullying seriously and will investigate each incident. Pupils may see failure to respond to incidents or allegations as evidence that bullying is tolerated. Bullying Incident Report Forms will be completed and forwarded to the Senior Management Team.
- Staff will watch for signs of distress in pupils. This might present as deterioration of work, late arrival for lessons, hanging back when the lesson is over, regular illnesses, isolation, and wanting to be with adults rather than peers;
- Staff will challenge any prejudice-based language from pupils;
- Staff will refer bullying incidents to the DSL if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm (see the MEPA Academy Safeguarding Policy); and
- Staff will be alert to pupils who may be vulnerable and at risk of bullying, e.g. SEN and LGBT+ pupils.

What the Senior Management Team will do:

- School assemblies will be used to promote this Anti-Bullying Policy;
- We will promote anti-bullying strategies and build resilience within our pupils as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Education (PSHEE) programme.
- The topics of inter-personal relationships and the effect of attitudes and behavior on one other are covered extensively. In addition, bullying is discussed in form groups, in English and Drama lessons and in whole-school assemblies.
- he PSHE Coordinator will ensure that (Schemes of Work) SOW reflect the school's anti-bullying approach;
- The Senior Management Team will notify the Principal of any serious cases or of any ongoing situations;
- The Senior Management Team will keep an annual log of all bullying incidents including a separate racism log.

- The Senior Management Team will conduct an annual review of the bullying log to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's procedures and to enable patterns to be identified. Any suitable actions then taken to reduce the incidence of bullying will be recorded.

What the school will do:

- Each subject, where appropriate, will incorporate the anti-bullying message into their teaching;
- The anti-bullying message will be reinforced at the beginning of each year and during anti-bullying week and safer internet week.
- This Anti-Bullying Policy will be issued to all relevant parties in order to ensure that it is fully understood. It will be discussed amongst staff and pupils, there will be opportunities to ask questions, scenarios will be given, and appropriate courses of action will be discussed;
- This policy will be made available to all parents of pupils at MEPA Academy. We will urge parents of Year 7 pupils to discuss the anti-bullying message
- Children identified as victims of bullying will be counselled by an appropriately trained member of staff. If necessary, they will be offered training in assertiveness and how to deal with bullies;
- Every effort will be made to ensure that any sanctions imposed are fair and appropriate and that they are applied in a non-humiliating, non-bullying way;
- Educational elements like drama and dance will be used as platforms to address differences between people and support the school's anti-bullying message; and
- Staff will be given opportunities for training in ways to deal with pupils who bully and those being bullied.The knowledge gained will be disseminated to all staff.

ADVICE FOR STAFF, PARENTS AND PUPILS AS TO THE BEST WAYS TO WORK WITH BULLIES AND VICTIMS.

FOR STAFF

Working with victims

It must be recognised that the first priority is to support and protect the victim of bullying. Staff should also offer support to counter feelings of inferiority and guilt. Ongoing support is crucial. A bullying Incident Report Form (**Appendix**) must be filled out and put in the relevant pupil's files, following an investigation.

It is also important to offer support to witnesses and pupils who join in on the sidelines, because they may fear that they will be the next target.

Working with bullies

Bullying is abnormal human behaviour, often caused by insecurities within the bully, such as a need to gain power over another human. They may be bigger and older, have poor school records and be aggressive to teachers and siblings. They may even have been victims of bullying themselves.
Staff need to consider:

The antecedent conditions making the bully behave as he or she is;
The behaviour itself; and
What the consequences of the behaviour are and whether this might be perpetuating the bullying.

FOR PUPILS

What you should do if bullying is taking place

If you are being bullied or you know of someone else being bullied - **TELL SOMEONE.**
Don't blame yourself for what has happened.

- Tell your parents and, in school, tell your Form Tutor or any other chosen adult whom you trust;
- If it is urgent TELL the nearest adult. If they do not listen, tell someone else. Don't give up; you don't tell things could get worse. If the person you want to tell is very busy, ask them when they can see you and spend some time with you; and
- Walk away from any dangerous situation and GET HELP.

As well as telling, you can help to stop bullying by:

- Being friendly towards people you know are being bullied, including them in your discussions, games, break time and lunchtimes;
- Not laughing when someone is being bullied.
- Stating out loud that you don't like what is going on;
- Not joining in;
- Writing your concerns down on a piece of paper and giving it to a teacher.
- Not being a bystander.

What will happen if you are found to be bullying someone
In every case, the incident will be taken seriously, and the responses can include some or all of the following;

- You will have to explain your behaviour to a member of staff;
- An account of what you have done will be written down
- Your parents will be informed of the incident
- The relevant Senior Management Team member will keep a record of the incident in your file for a specified period of time;
- You will have to apologise to the person you bullied;
- You will have to replace or repair any possessions you damaged; and
- You will have to do something to improve things for the person you bullied.

Depending on the severity of the bullying incident you have been involved in, one or more of the following sanctions will apply:

- You will be interviewed by Senior Management Team and discuss the consequences of your actions
- Any privileges e.g. out at lunch will be removed
- You may be excluded from school for a fixed term or permanently in cases of persistent bullying;
- You may be required to explain your actions to police if you assault another pupil.

FOR PARENTS
What you should do if you think your child is being bullied

- Talk calmly with your child about their experience;
- Make a note of what your child says, particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened, and what has happened. Staff should also collect any evidence, e.g. print outs of emails, texts etc;
- Reassure your child that they have done the right thing in telling you about the bullying and that there is nothing wrong with him/her;
- Encourage your child to report any incidents of bullying to a teacher immediately;
- Make an appointment to see your child's Form Tutor or Senior Management Team, even if your child is reluctant that you do so;
- We can only do something if we know there is a problem;
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing;
- Do not encourage your child to hit back. It will only make matters worse;
- More positively, encourage your child to recruit friends
- Teach your child assertive behaviour and identify ways in which your child should respond to the bully - showing assertive but not aggressive behaviour

What to do if your child is bullying other children

Many children may be involved in bullying others at some time or another. Parents are often not aware that their child is involved in bullying and may find it difficult to accept that their child could be involved. Should such a situation arise, we would ask parents to:

- Talk with your child. Explain that what they are doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy;
- Show your child how they can join in with other children without bullying; Make an appointment to see your child's Form Tutor or the Senior Management Team. Explain

to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing. Discuss with the teacher how you and the school can stop him/her bullying others;
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school; and
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are cooperative or kind to other people.

Bullying outside school premises

Where bullying occurs outside of the school, the school will investigate and act upon the incident accordingly and in line with the school's anti-bullying procedures. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, the teacher can only discipline the pupil on the school premises (*Behaviour and Discipline in Schools,* February 2014).

Bullying of/by staff

Occasionally, a staff member may become the victim of bullying by a pupil, parent or other member of staff. It is important that that staff member reports any incident to an appropriate member of staff and the incident is dealt with in accordance with the above-mentioned procedures. MEPA Academy is a community where every person has the right to feel safe and secure, free from humiliation, intimidation, oppression and abuse.

A complaint by a pupil against a member of staff will be investigated in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy - Dealing with allegations of abuse against a staff member. A complaint by one member of staff or MEPA employee against another will be investigated in accordance with the **Staff Handbook.**

In order to carry out a formal investigation, the person making the allegations must provide written details of the incident(s) which have let to the complaint.

Review of Behaviour, Rewards, Sanctions and Anti-Bullying Policy

Circulated to the Principal and teaching staff. This policy will be made available to parents/carers and pupils on the website and on request

Bullying Incident Report Form

(SMT to record on Behaviour Log- Google Sheets)

Reported by:	Role:

Date(s) of incident(s):.....

Time(s) of incident(s):.....

Location(s) of incident(s):.....

Details of people involved

Please include names, ages and each child's role: aggressor, victim, bystander, witness

.....

.....

.....

.....

Bullying incident related to: tick all that apply

Race	☐	Appearance or health condition	☐
SEN or disabilities	☐	Sexual orientation	☐
Gender	☐	Religion or culture	☐
Age	☐	Cyber	☐

Forms of bullying used (tick all that apply)

Physical aggression	☐	Damaging or taking personal possessions	☐
Deliberately excluding	☐	Verbal threats	☐
Name calling and teasing	☐	Spreading rumours	☐
Cyber-bullying	☐	Extortion	☐
Other (define)	☐		

Frequency and duration of bullying behavior:

Once or twice	☐	Persisting over two months	☐
Several times a week	☐	Persisting for more than a year	☐

Checklist (tick where appropriate)

Have parents/carers been notified? ☐ Has action been agreed with victim? ☐

Had individual discussions with all? ☐ Are notes and comments attached? ☐

Has action been agreed with perpetrator? ☐ Has a follow-up date been set? ☐

Details of the actions agreed with everyone involved, including parents and carers where appropriate?

Follow-up review dates and interventions:

Completed by: .....

Role..... Date: .....

Checked by: .....

Role ..... Date: .....

Outcome of follow-up and further actions taken:

Has the bullying stopped? Yes ☐ No ☐

Describe any other outcomes: _____

_____

_____

Fixed-term exclusion of 5 days or fewer
https://www.kelsi.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/62165/Kent-LA-exclusion-guidance-for-schools-and-governors.pdf -use checklist and alternative model letter

Dear [Parent's Name]
I am writing to inform you of my decision to exclude **[Pupil's name]** for a fixed period of **[specify period]**. This means that he/she will not be allowed in school for this period. The exclusion begins on **[date]** and ends on **[date]**.

I realise that this exclusion may well be upsetting for you and your family, but the decision to exclude **[Pupil's name]** has not been taken lightly. **[Pupil's name]** has been excluded for this fixed period because **[reason for exclusion]**.

You have a duty to ensure that your child is not present in a public place in school hours during this exclusion, without reasonable justification.

We will set work for **[Pupil's name]** to be completed on the school days specified in the previous paragraph when you must ensure that he/she is not present in a public place without reasonable justification. **[Detail the arrangements for setting work]**. Please ensure that work set by the school is completed and returned to us promptly for marking.

You should also be aware that if you think the exclusion relates to a disability your child has, and you think disability discrimination has occurred, you have the right to appeal, and/or make a claim, to the First Tier Tribunal (http://www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/courts-and-tribunals/tribunals/send/index.htm).

[The following paragraph may be used if the head teacher chooses to hold a reintegration interview]
You and **[Pupil's name]** are requested to attend a reintegration interview with me **[alternatively, specify the name of another staff member]** at **[place]** on **[date]** at **[time]**. If that is not convenient, please contact the school **[within the next xxx days]** to arrange a suitable alternative date and time. The purpose of the reintegration interview is to discuss how best your child's return to school can be managed.

You have the right to see and have a copy of **[Pupil's name]**'s school record. Due to confidentiality restrictions, you will need to notify me in writing if you wish to be supplied with a copy and there may be a charge for photocopying.

[Pupil's name]'s exclusion expires on **[date]** and we expect **[Pupil's name]** to be back in school on **[date]** at **[time]**.

Yours sincerely

[Name]
Head teacher
CC: Principal Officer, Exclusions