

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

AIM

In co-operation with parents to create a friendly, relaxed and well ordered climate in which

- * learning can take place
- * pupils can develop into happy, useful members of a democratic society

OBJECTIVES

To encourage pupils to:

- * take increasing responsibility for their own learning
- * realise that they have responsibilities to those around them
- * understand the school responsibility for their own and others safety and welfare
- * appreciate the school accountability to parents and society.

To enable staff to:

- * offer pupils and their parents appropriate advice and support
- * communicate and record such matters in a structured manner
- * to act in a consistent manner with colleagues
- * to seek help when necessary.

FIRST PRINCIPLES

The requirements of the law apply inside and outside school.

Pupils should be provided with a firm fair and consistent policy from day to day and class to class.

Staff have a responsibility to one another collectively to support and enforce proper standards not only within their classrooms but around the school generally.

Prevention is better than cure. Good order is maintained by attention to such matters as:

- * building up good relationships with pupils and parents

- * taking a genuine interest in pupils' progress
- * good classwork preparation
- * supervising classes entering and leaving rooms

The strength of the system depends on a willingness to discuss problems with colleagues and on the mutual support which ensues.

Faculty Heads and PT Subject play a central role in monitoring behaviour within their curricular areas, in lending support and suggesting appropriate action.

The members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) acting by rota and named on the daily absentee sheet should, if necessary, be contacted immediately by telephone.

Immediacy of response to problems as soon as they arise and before they can escalate is a key to good order and discipline.

Parents often finding difficulties themselves must be encouraged to regard schools as a source of support.

To foster this co-operative attitude the tone of any communications must be carefully examined.

Pupils should regard it as normal for us to enlist parental support.

Pupils in S5 and S6 should be treated in a manner similar to those in Further or Higher Education.

ACTION

General

The emphasis must always be on correction and the clear understanding that discipline is not equivalent to punishment. If the climate is right most pupils will respond to a simple caution.

The more difficult pupils are not brought in line by piling exercise on exercise but by making sure that they know what is expected of them and insisting that these standards are met.

Classroom teachers should be clear as to whether the problem is that pupils are not completing their own work or are preventing others from doing theirs.

In the latter case pupils must be made answerable, before their non-cooperation or disruption grows or gets out of hand, by referral to Subject Heads, Faculty Heads or the SMT.

In the former case it may be appropriate to give work to be done in their own time to allow pupils to catch up. This work must be suited to the age and ability of the pupil, not excessive and never in the form of 'lines'.

Essays should never be described as 'a punishment'. While it may be appropriate to ask a pupil to express some thoughts in writing this must be seen as a constructive and supportive stage in developing a better understanding of a particular situation.

The term 'punishment exercise' likewise should never be used. We want our pupils to enjoy the exercise of their educational skills. Punishment is a penalty designed to deter by means of a negative stimulus. The two words are therefore incongruous in relation to the aims of the school if used together.

Any proposal to call pupils in at lunchtime or after school must be seen by parents as being, like homework, supportive. It must never be done without due notice and parental consent obtained perhaps by an entry in Pupils' Diaries or by telephone call.

Heads of Faculty, PT Subject and the Senior Management Team will do everything within their power to promote and sustain the ability of the classroom teachers to conduct the work of their classes without disturbance. Persistent problems must be recorded and communicated (see below).

For this reason classroom teachers must be confident that a telephone call will, if necessary, bring an immediate response. In such circumstances most pupils, most of the time, will 'back off' from a confrontation. It is then important that the incident is recorded and communicated (see below).

Pupils **must not** be placed outside classrooms unsupervised as this leads to other problems. If such an action is even contemplated teachers must call for help at once.

Communication

Subject minutes play a vital role in communicating information on pupil behaviour. This can be used to communicate both positive and negative information regarding pupil behaviour. The information provided through minutes will help the SMT focus their efforts in supporting staff in the delivery of learning and teaching.

All pupils are also required to carry homework diaries and should note down assignments. It is possible for class teachers to draw attention to failure to complete work by writing a brief note in the diary and asking for a parental signature.

Incidents of serious or persistent indiscipline should be recorded on the discipline referral slips. These should be brief, factual and to the point.

Certain pupils are also placed 'on report' and carry discipline slips which are signed period by period by class teachers, taken home and then returned to school after signature by parents.

A computer record of pupil referrals is kept on a data base by the SMT and is very useful for communication and discussions with parents. It is categorised under the same headings as the referral slips.

Exclusions

Exclusion from classrooms within departments or from school altogether should never be undertaken lightly. It is, however, an important and effective measure where properly applied.

If excluded from a class by a Head of Subject/Faculty, pupils should be placed in a supervised area with work set. This should be regarded as a short term measure to be discussed with the SMT.

Exclusions from school are governed by Highland Council Guidelines.