Earlscliffe (Earlscliffe Ltd.)

Policy: Behaviour Policy
Member of SLT Responsible: Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding)
Date of Review: November 2024
Date of Next Review: June 2025

Introduction

Earlscliffe encourages students to uphold the highest standards of behaviour, moral integrity, and mutual respect, recognising the diversity of our international school community. We are an inclusive community, welcoming students from a wide variety of backgrounds, ethnicities, and faiths. Each student is treated as an individual, with the aim of developing young adults who are prepared to make meaningful contributions to society and the wider world.

We believe that fostering a safe, respectful, and supportive environment is a shared responsibility among students, staff, and parents. This policy outlines our approach to promoting positive behaviour, addressing issues constructively, and ensuring fairness and consistency.

This policy uses both statutory and non-statutory guidance and has been prepared with reference to the following:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, DfE, September 2024)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education (DfE, September 2021)
- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (DfE, September 2022)
- Searching, Screening, and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (DfE, September 2022)
- Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for Headteachers, Staff, and Governing Bodies (DfE, July 2013).

The terms "must" and "should" are used throughout this guidance. Where the text uses the word "must," the person in question is legally required to do something. Where the text uses the word "parent," it should be read as inclusive of guardians and any other person with parental responsibility.

This policy aligns with national standards and reflects Earlscliffe's commitment to nurturing a community that celebrates diversity, fosters mutual respect, and supports students in reaching their full potential.

Ethos

At Earlscliffe, our ethos is underpinned by our five core values: Aspiration, Community, Curiosity, Personal Development, and Respect. These values guide our expectations for behaviour and interactions within the school and the wider community, fostering a culture of mutual respect and excellence.

We adhere to an established routine and code of conduct that encourages the highest standards of behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom, as well as beyond the school grounds. These standards reflect our commitment to preparing students to contribute positively to society and to lead by example.

We expect all students to treat staff and each other with respect, considering and appreciating the diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, and faiths represented in our school community. Harassment and bullying of any kind are not tolerated and will be addressed promptly and effectively.

Earlscliffe is committed to promoting equal opportunities for all, ensuring a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, or learning disability. By living our values, we aim to develop young adults who are confident, compassionate, and prepared to make a meaningful difference in the world.

Responsibilities

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for behaviour management, ensuring that the policy aligns with the school's ethos, statutory requirements, and core values of Aspiration, Community, Curiosity, Personal Development, and Respect.

The Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding) oversees day-to-day behaviour management across all areas of school life, ensuring issues are addressed constructively and that standards are consistently upheld.

The Deputy Head (Academic) contributes to behaviour management within the academic environment, fostering a respectful and productive learning atmosphere. This role includes supporting staff in addressing classroom behaviour concerns and helping students meet academic expectations.

Behaviour management is a shared responsibility, involving all members of the Earlscliffe community. Roles include:

1. **Senior Tutors**: Serve as the primary point of contact for students, monitoring overall behaviour and pastoral progress. They address escalated issues and provide structured support in line with the school's values.
2. **House Masters/Mistresses**: Manage behaviour within boarding, addressing incidents that occur outside of academic hours and fostering a safe, respectful environment for personal development.
3. **Group Tutors**: Handle minor day-to-day concerns, supporting students to reflect and improve their behaviour in line with school expectations.
4. **Teachers**: Ensure a positive learning environment by addressing behaviour in the classroom, modelling the school's values, and supporting the school-wide approach to behaviour management.
5. **Student Leaders**: Set an example for peers and contribute to the promotion of positive behaviour through leadership, peer support, and collaboration with staff.

This escalation structure ensures that behaviour is managed appropriately at every level, with more complex issues addressed by Senior Tutors and the Deputy Heads, while fostering a collaborative culture of mutual respect and accountability across the school community.

Promoting Good Behaviour

At Earlscliffe, we believe in celebrating and reinforcing positive behaviour as a cornerstone of our school ethos. Good behaviour is recognised and celebrated through a variety of initiatives designed to encourage students to exemplify our core values of Aspiration, Community, Curiosity, Personal Development, and Respect.

Key ways we promote good behaviour include:

1. **Group Tutor Time:** A regular opportunity for students to reflect on their behaviour, discuss challenges, and receive encouragement to uphold the school's values.

2. **School Forums**: These provide a platform to recognise and celebrate student achievements, highlight exemplary behaviour, and reinforce the importance of positive contributions to the school community.
3. **House Masters/Mistresses**: In boarding, positive behaviour is promoted through active engagement with students, tailored support, and the implementation of the rewards system (described below).
4. **Values Awards**: Staff use the iSAMS system to issue Values Awards, recognising students who demonstrate behaviours aligned with the school's values. These awards culminate in initiatives such as the Boarding House Spirit Award and Values Champions, celebrated during Termly Values Celebration events.

Students are expected to know and understand the Code of Conduct and consistently comply with reasonable instructions from those in authority. By fostering a supportive and collaborative environment, Earlscliffe ensures that positive behaviour is both encouraged and celebrated across all aspects of school life.

Code of Conduct

At Earlscliffe, our Code of Conduct reflects our core values of Aspiration, Community, Curiosity, Personal Development, and Respect. By adhering to these expectations, students actively contribute to a respectful, inclusive, and supportive environment that promotes success and well-being for everyone.

I agree to abide by the following Code of Conduct:

Respect

- I will treat all members of the school community with kindness, understanding, and respect, celebrating our diversity and individuality.
- I will use positive and considerate language to ensure my interactions build and maintain a supportive and inclusive community.
- I will encourage and model behaviour that creates a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

Community

- I will be punctual for lessons, registration, and school events, and I will communicate in advance if I am delayed.

- I will help to maintain communal spaces (e.g., kitchen, common room, and shared areas) by keeping them clean, tidy, and welcoming for all.
- I will ensure my use of shared resources, such as fridges, respects others' needs and promotes a harmonious environment.
- I will attend and engage in meals and other community gatherings to foster connection and inclusivity.
- I will actively contribute to the well-being of the school community by supporting my peers and participating in activities.

Aspiration

- I will complete my academic work on time and to the best of my ability, striving for personal excellence in all that I do.
- I will take responsibility for my learning, seeking help and guidance when needed to overcome challenges.
- I will consistently aim to set and achieve goals that reflect high standards of effort and commitment.

Curiosity

- I will engage fully in lessons, activities, and discussions, demonstrating a genuine interest in learning and personal growth.
- I will use English in public areas, including the dining room, to foster inclusivity and ensure effective communication, making everyone feel welcome and included.

Personal Development

- I will adhere to the School Dress Code, understanding that my appearance reflects both my personal pride and the school's identity.
- I will keep my personal spaces, including my bedroom, clean and organised, respecting the work of cleaning staff and contributing to a pleasant boarding environment.
- I will prioritise my health and well-being by making choices that support a safe and balanced lifestyle.
- I will limit my use of mobile devices in shared spaces, such as the dining hall, to encourage meaningful social interactions and respect the communal environment.

This Code of Conduct embodies Earlscliffe's core values:

- **Aspiration:** Encouraging every student to set ambitious personal goals and strive for excellence.

- **Community:** Building a supportive, inclusive, and harmonious environment where everyone feels valued.
- **Curiosity:** Promoting an eagerness to learn, grow, and engage positively with the world.
- **Personal Development:** Supporting choices and behaviours that lead to individual growth and well-being.
- **Respect:** Ensuring mutual care, understanding, and dignity in all interactions.

By living up to this Code of Conduct, students demonstrate their commitment to these values and to fostering a positive, thriving community at Earlscliffe.

Recognition System

At Earlscliffe, we are transitioning from a traditional rewards system to a values-driven **Recognition System**, reflecting our commitment to fostering intrinsic motivation and aligning with our core values: **Aspiration, Community, Curiosity, Personal Development, and Respect**. This shift emphasises recognising behaviours and contributions that embody these values rather than focusing solely on external rewards.

Purpose of Recognition

The recognition system is designed to:

- Strengthen positive relationships between staff and students.
- Promote a calm, disciplined, and values-focused learning environment.
- Encourage students to internalise the importance of positive behaviour and personal responsibility.

Ways We Recognise Students

1. **Verbal and Written Recognition**:
   - Staff provide positive feedback during lessons, boarding time, or activities to celebrate students' efforts and achievements.
   - Written comments on work or reports highlight contributions that align with our values.
2. **Values Awards**:
   - Using the iSAMS system, staff issue **Values Awards** to recognise behaviours that demonstrate our values.
   - Examples include:

- **Aspiration**: Completing a challenging project with dedication.
- **Community**: Welcoming and supporting a new student.
- **Curiosity**: Engaging actively in lessons or pursuing independent learning.
- **Personal Development**: Taking responsibility for personal growth or overcoming a challenge.
- **Respect**: Consistently treating others with kindness and understanding.

3. **Communication with Parents and Guardians**:
   - Constructive feedback is shared with families to acknowledge students' positive contributions and align support at home with the school's values.

4. **Values Celebrations**:
   - Termly **Values Celebration Events** highlight students who have consistently demonstrated the school's ethos, including recognition of **Values Champions** and the **Boarding House Spirit Award**.

5. **Commendations for Academic Excellence**:
   - Exceptional academic achievements, such as outstanding performance in tests or significant progress, are celebrated as part of recognising **Aspiration**.

6. **Boarding Recognition**:
   - Positive behaviours in boarding, such as leadership in communal spaces or acts of kindness, are recognised by House Masters/Mistresses through the values framework.

Why the Move to Recognition?

This transition encourages students to develop intrinsic motivation, focusing on the satisfaction and pride that come from embodying the school's values. By fostering this mindset, Earlscliffe supports the development of confident, self-aware, and community-minded individuals who are ready to contribute positively to the wider world.

This approach strengthens the alignment between behaviour and the school's ethos, ensuring that every recognition contributes meaningfully to personal and community growth.

Sanctions

At Earlscliffe, sanctions are designed to address behaviour constructively, ensuring that students take responsibility for their actions and learn from their mistakes. Sanctions are always applied fairly and proportionately, in line with the school's ethos and values of **Aspiration, Community, Curiosity, Personal Development, and Respect**.

The **Head Teacher**, **Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding)**, and **Deputy Head (Academic)** oversee the application of sanctions, ensuring they follow due process and are consistent with the principles of fairness and restorative justice. **Senior Tutors**, **House Masters/Mistresses**, and **Teachers** also have a key role in addressing behaviour, applying appropriate sanctions, and supporting students in their personal development.

Sanctions are subject to reasonable changes over time but will never involve corporal punishment or any form of unlawful or degrading activity.

Guiding Principles for Sanctions

1. **Conversations First**:
   - Before any formal sanction is applied, staff are encouraged to address minor behavioural concerns through constructive conversations.
   - This approach allows students to reflect on their actions, understand their impact, and take immediate corrective action.
2. **Restorative Approach**:
   - Sanctions are designed not just to correct behaviour but to educate and help students learn from their mistakes.
   - Restorative practices, such as apologies, mediation, or community contributions, are integrated into sanctions wherever possible.
3. **Alignment with Values**:
   - Sanctions are linked to Earlscliffe's core values, helping students understand how their behaviour aligns or misaligns with these principles.

Sanction Levels

Stage 1: Conversations then Strikes

Strikes are issued for small, relatively minor challenges to the school's values or when a routine or expectation has not been met. They serve as a way to record and communicate behaviour that needs improvement, encouraging students to learn and grow:

- **Process**:
  - Strikes are issued after initial conversations and teacher-led actions if the behaviour persists or is repeated.
  - Strikes are recorded on iSAMS but are not communicated to parents, emphasising their role as part of the student's developmental process.

- **Differentiation**:
  - Strikes are classified as **School Strikes** (academic hours) or **Boarding Strikes** (boarding hours).
- **Examples**:
  - Lateness to lessons or registration. (**Aspiration**)
  - Untidy personal or communal spaces. (**Community**, **Personal Development**)
  - Low-level disruption in lessons. (**Aspiration**, **Community**)
  - Using a language other than English in public areas which is excluding others. (**Curiosity**, **Community**)

If a student receives three strikes, this escalates to a **Stage 2 sanction** (detention).

Stage 2: Detentions

Detentions are applied for repeated infractions or more significant breaches of the school's values and expectations. They provide a structured opportunity for reflection and improvement.

- **Process**:
  - Three strikes automatically escalate to a detention and this is monitored by the **Group Tutor/Senior Tutor/Boarding Staff**.
  - Detentions will be logged using the **Discipline Manager** section of iSAMS, which will automatically notify parents/guardians. Members of staff should also consider whether the incident warrants being logged onto **CPOMS** for further safeguarding or pastoral follow-up.
- **Types**:
  - **School Detentions**: Address behaviour during the academic day, overseen by academic staff.
  - **Boarding Detentions**: Address behaviour during boarding hours, managed by House Masters/Mistresses or boarding staff.
- **Reflective Focus**:
  - Students in detention should be given some work which invites them to start exploring the impact of their behaviour and aligning future actions with the school's values.
- **Examples**:
  - Persistent lateness or incomplete work after interventions. (**Aspiration**)
  - Repeated untidiness in boarding areas. (**Community**, **Personal Development**)
  - Dishonesty when questioned about behaviour. (**Respect**)
  - Refusal to follow reasonable instructions. (**Respect**, **Community**)

If a student receives three detentions within a term, this student should be discussed at the next Student of Concern meeting.

Stage 3: Deputy Head Reflection

The **Deputy Head Reflection** is a two-hour Saturday morning session designed as an intervention before more serious sanctions, such as suspension. It focuses on helping students reflect on their choices and make meaningful changes. Students investigated regarding the most serious breaches of school's values and policies (Stage 4) could be dealt with at Stage 3 if appropriate levels of contrition and significant honesty are displayed.

- **Process**:
  - Reserved for significant or repeated Stage 2 infractions.
  - Students meet with the Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding) or a designated staff member to discuss their behaviour and set goals for improvement.
- **Examples**:
  - Repeated detentions without evidence of behavioural change.
  - Disruptive behaviour that affects the learning or boarding environment.
  - Misuse of technology in a way that disrupts the community.

Stage 4: Suspensions and Expulsion

Suspensions and expulsions are reserved for the most serious breaches of the school's values and policies.

- **Internal Suspension**:
  - Students are removed from regular lessons or boarding activities and required to work separately under staff supervision.
- **External Suspension**:
  - Students are sent home for a fixed period to reflect on their behaviour. A reintegration plan is developed upon their return.
- **Expulsion**:
  - Used in cases of extreme or repeated breaches where the student poses a significant risk to the community or the school's reputation.

Examples of Serious Breaches

The following behaviours are considered serious breaches of the school's policy:

- Substance abuse, including alcohol, tobacco, vaping, or illegal drugs. (**Personal Development**)
- Theft or possession of stolen property. (**Respect**, **Community**)
- Physical assault or threatening behaviour. (**Respect**, **Community**)
- Harassment or discrimination based on religion, race, gender, or sexual identity. (**Respect**, **Community**)
- Sexual misconduct, including inappropriate use of technology. (**Respect**, **Aspiration**)
- Deliberate damage to property. (**Community**, **Personal Development**)

Linking Sanctions to Values

Sanctions are not merely punitive but serve as tools for personal growth. Each level of sanction is designed to help students reflect on how their actions align with or challenge Earlscliffe's values:

- **Aspiration**: Supporting students in striving for excellence and meeting expectations.
- **Community**: Encouraging respect and contribution to shared spaces and relationships.
- **Curiosity**: Promoting open-mindedness and inclusion in actions and communication.
- **Personal Development**: Helping students make positive, independent choices that support their growth.
- **Respect**: Reinforcing integrity, kindness, and consideration for others.

This structured approach ensures that all sanctions are applied fairly and constructively, enabling students to learn from their experiences while maintaining the harmony and integrity of the school community.

Malicious Accusations

At Earlscliffe, we recognise the importance of maintaining trust and respect between students and staff. While all concerns and allegations are taken seriously and thoroughly investigated, disciplinary action will be taken against students who, following an investigation, are found to have made a malicious accusation against a member of school staff.

Definition and Process

- **Malicious Accusations**: Defined as knowingly making a false claim with the intent to harm, discredit, or unfairly implicate a staff member.

- **Investigation**: All accusations are investigated carefully and fairly, ensuring that the rights of both the student and staff member are respected throughout the process.

Consequences

- Malicious accusations will be dealt with as at **Stage 3** or **Stage 4**, depending on the severity of the situation and the harm caused.
  - **Stage 3 (Deputy Head Reflection)**: For less severe cases, where the accusation, while malicious, caused limited impact or was quickly addressed. This includes a structured session to help the student reflect on their actions and understand the consequences of dishonesty.
  - **Stage 4 (Suspension or Expulsion)**: For more severe cases, such as those involving significant harm to the staff member's reputation or well-being, or repeated offences.
- Additional restorative actions may be required, such as issuing a formal apology or participating in mediation to rebuild trust and repair relationships.

Safeguarding Considerations

- The school will give careful consideration to whether the behaviour under review gives cause to suspect that the student may require additional attention under the **Safeguarding Policy**.
- If underlying issues are identified, the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** will assess whether external support or intervention is needed to address the root cause of the behaviour.

This policy ensures that malicious accusations are addressed firmly and fairly, while also supporting students to learn from their actions and make positive changes. It reflects the school's commitment to the values of **Respect**, **Community**, and **Personal Development**, safeguarding the integrity of the Earlscliffe community.

Physical Intervention and Restraint

At Earlscliffe, physical interaction, including comforting gestures such as hugs, is managed thoughtfully and professionally to ensure it is appropriate, respectful, and aligned with safeguarding principles. All physical contact must comply with professional boundaries and statutory guidance, ensuring it is proportionate and accountable.

Guidelines for Physical Contact

For Teaching Staff:

- **No Routine Physical Contact**: Teaching staff should avoid physical contact with students unless it is necessary as part of a lesson. For example:
  - Demonstrating or correcting physical techniques in PE or drama.
  - Guiding a practical skill in subjects such as art, music, or science.
  - Assisting with a task where verbal instruction is insufficient, such as adjusting a student's position for a practical activity.
- **Hugs in Distress**: Teaching staff may offer a brief, appropriate hug to a student in distress if deemed necessary, appropriate in the context of the student's emotional needs, and requested by the student. This should be done with care, ensuring the gesture is focused on supporting the student, not the adult, and should always occur in a visible, open setting.

For Boarding Staff:

- **Pastoral Role**: Boarding staff, who often develop closer pastoral relationships with students due to the residential setting, may have more frequent instances where physical contact (e.g., a hug) is requested by students in need of comfort. These interactions should remain professional, brief, and appropriate, always prioritising the student's emotional well-being.
- **Boundary Awareness**: Boarding staff must remain vigilant about maintaining professional boundaries and ensuring physical gestures do not blur the distinction between their role and a familial or peer relationship.

General Principles for All Staff:

- **Be Mindful of Perception**: Even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the student, an observer, or any person to whom the action is described.
- **Maintain Boundaries**: All physical contact must be age-appropriate, culturally sensitive, and occur in an open, visible setting. Avoid prolonged or repeated physical gestures.
- **Encourage Independence**: Support students to self-regulate and care for their emotional needs whenever possible, with staff offering verbal guidance or encouragement.
- **Report and Record Where Necessary**: Any physical interaction that might be misinterpreted or raises a concern must be documented and reported to the Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding) or another senior leader.

Use of Reasonable Force

Earlscliffe reserves the right for staff to use reasonable force to control or restrain a student in specific circumstances, adhering to [DfE guidance on reasonable force](). Reasonable force is always a last resort, used to ensure safety or prevent harm.

Examples of When Reasonable Force May Be Used:

1. **Preventing Harm to the Student or Others**:
   - A student is attempting to harm themselves, such as hitting their head against a hard surface or consuming excessive alcohol in a boarding house. (**Personal Development**)
   - A student is physically attacking another student in a classroom or boarding setting, and verbal intervention is insufficient. (**Respect**, **Community**)
2. **Preventing Danger in a Risky Environment**:
   - A student is running towards a busy road during a trip or event, and immediate intervention is needed to avoid an accident. (**Aspiration**, **Personal Development**)
   - A student in a laboratory is about to handle hazardous materials or equipment in a dangerous way. (**Curiosity**, **Personal Development**)
3. **Preventing Significant Property Damage**:
   - A student is attempting to deliberately damage school property, such as breaking a window or destroying valuable equipment. (**Community**, **Personal Development**)
4. **Maintaining Order During a Serious Disruption**:
   - A student is causing significant disruption during an exam, preventing others from completing their work, and has not responded to verbal requests to stop. (**Aspiration**, **Community**)
   - A student is refusing to leave a restricted or off-limits area, creating a safety hazard. (**Respect**, **Personal Development**)

Staff Training

- All staff are trained to prioritise verbal de-escalation and restorative techniques before considering physical intervention.
- Staff complete the **Educare 'Use of Reasonable Force' module**, which equips them with the skills to manage challenging behaviour appropriately and responsibly.
- Training also provides specific guidance on managing physical contact appropriately, differentiating between teaching and boarding staff roles.

Search Policy

For detailed information on our procedures and guidelines regarding the searching and confiscation of items, please refer to the separate document titled **'Earlscliffe Search and Confiscation Policy'**. This policy outlines the circumstances under which searches may be conducted, the items considered prohibited, and the protocols for confiscation, all in alignment with the [Department for Education's guidance on searching, screening, and confiscation](#).

Register of Sanctions and Monitoring

At Earlscliffe, the consistent and fair application of sanctions is supported by robust monitoring, record-keeping, and regular communication among staff. This ensures transparency, accountability, and proactive support for students who may need guidance or intervention.

Recording Sanctions

- All sanctions are recorded in the **iSAMS information management system**.
- **Senior Tutors**, **House Masters/Mistresses**, the **Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding)**, and the **Deputy Head (Academic)** review these records regularly to identify patterns, address underlying issues, and ensure timely and appropriate actions are taken.

Students of Concern Meetings

- Students of Concern meetings are held fortnightly to review behaviour records and discuss students who may require additional support.
- These meetings allow staff to collaboratively identify trends, explore underlying causes of behaviour, and agree on strategies to support individual students.
- Decisions and actions from these meetings are informed by data from iSAMS, CPOMS and feedback from teachers, tutors, and boarding staff.

Monitoring and Intervention

Regular reviews and Students of Concern meetings ensure that patterns of behaviour are identified early and that interventions are tailored to each student's needs. Actions may include:

1. **Increased Mentoring or Support**:
   - Assigning a Senior Tutor or trusted staff member to work closely with the student, providing guidance and consistent check-ins to address challenges.

2. **Restorative Discussions**:
    ○ Facilitating conversations to help students understand the impact of their behaviour, repair relationships, and align their actions with the school's values.
3. **Parental Involvement**:
    ○ Involving parents or guardians to align support strategies at home and school, ensuring a unified approach to the student's development.

Serious Incident Records

- A separate log is maintained for serious incidents by the **Deputy Head (Pastoral and Boarding)**.
- This log is reviewed periodically to inform policy updates, staff training, or further pastoral interventions.

Behaviour Trends and Escalation

- If a specific form of negative behaviour is observed to be increasing in frequency across the student body, the school may escalate its categorisation (e.g., from Stage 1 to Stage 2).
- Such escalations are communicated transparently to students during School Forums, Boarding House Meetings or Whole-School Letters, with clear explanations and time-limited expectations for improvement.