



The Aylesbury Vale Academy

Success Beyond Belief

A Church of England Academy

# **ATTITUDE TO LEARNING POLICY**

**SEPTEMBER 2011**

## **VISION:**

That every young person graduates from Aylesbury Vale Academy as citizens of an international community where they have the mobility borne from their outlook, qualifications, skills and experience to be successful.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:** WE ADOPT THE CHRISTIAN VALUES OF:

- Honesty
- Respect
- Compassion
- Love
- Forgiveness
- Self-discipline
- Creativity
- Hope

## **OBJECTIVES:**

1. To prevent students from damaging other students' opportunities for learning.
2. To enforce a clear, fair and consistent approach to dealing with behavioural issues.
3. To maintain an atmosphere conducive to teaching with courtesy and mutual respect for others.

## **MONITORING** (via Governors' Scrutiny Committee):

1. Throughout the academic year the committee will ask to see evidence that the Academy has a rewards and sanctions process in place.
2. The committee will gain evidence from the Head of College.
3. The chair of the committee will ask to see evidence that the rewards and sanctions process is implemented appropriately.
4. The committee will be provided with the findings.
5. Visit the Academy to follow lines of enquiry as a result of the committee meeting (adhering to the protocol for governor visits).

## **REVIEWING**

The Governing Body is responsible for reviewing its policies and the Principal is responsible for reporting on the implementation of the policy.

1. Has the policy been successfully implemented?
2. Has the policy had the intended impact in the Academy and on the young people?
3. Are the current objectives to remain the same and do they support other policies and development priorities?

## **NOMINATED MEMBER OF STAFF:**

HEAD OF COLLEGE

## **APPENDIX 1**

Operating Statement
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All teachers have the right to teach; and all students have the right to learn in a mutually respectful environment.

At The Aylesbury Vale Academy the most effective learning takes place when there is effective teaching in a well-managed environment. We know if the environment encourages learning if it is calm, happy and safe for all. The development and maintenance of positive attitudes to learning rests with the teacher and is a characteristic of effective professional standards at

## **APPENDIX 2**

The following is expected of every teacher or instructor:

Students must line up outside the classroom before a lesson. Staff should bring students into the class through positioning themselves close to the doorway. At the end of the lesson, students must be dismissed formally as the teacher places themselves close to the doorway to supervise students away from the learning area. For post-16 students, staff should use their professional discretion. At break time staff must ensure that students behave well.

Staff are expected to arrive promptly for duties, supervision of teaching and model the behaviours expected of students, including maintaining a calm approach, especially in the manner of speaking to students.

Our approach focuses on Positive Attitudes embedded in Christian values which support learning and promotes, celebrates and rewards achievement in acknowledgement of the gifts which we believe resides within each individual student.

We will promote positive attitudes and ethos through the following

- Approaches to teaching
- The curriculum
- Teaching styles
- Mentoring programme
- Assemblies and reflection time
- Reward system
- Setting expectations and rules with students - for classrooms, around school and in the community.
- Leading by example.
- Challenging anti-social behaviour consistently.
- Sharing expectations and rules displayed in the Academy.

Students are expected to

- Honour the vision of The Aylesbury Vale Academy
- Comply to rules
- Follow positive examples
- Cooperate with staff
- Cooperate with each other
- Support the positive environment of the Academy

Positive attitudes promote courtesy, co-operation and consideration amongst all members of the Academy and its wider communities. The attitude of being positive to learning is at the foundations of the heart of the Academy.

Many factors can influence student behaviour, some within the Academy and some from outside. They include:

- motivation
- problems with peers
- problems at home
- self-esteem
- medical problems
- feeling alienated
- anxiety and inappropriate stress
- reputation

Therefore, teachers and leaders should consider the cause as well as the effect of poor behaviour.

This policy applies to students whilst at the Academy, travelling to and from the Academy and when they are representing the Academy and promotes the concept that individuals have responsibilities to others within the community.

## **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

### Celebrations

As an Academy we are committed to promoting and celebrating achievement and recognise that our students possess a range of abilities, gifts and talents. As a reflection of this diversity we will recognise and celebrate effort and achievement; both on an individual level and as a group.

We will praise, celebrate and recognise in a number of ways, e.g. staff praise in planners and books, phone calls home, commendation and awards, certificates, assemblies with parent invitation, written communication, mentor group certificates, recognition of outstanding achievements, trips, visits and inclusion in press releases and the Academy newsletter.

### Credits

These will be given for particularly good individual work, or for putting in a lot of effort, maintaining a high standard of work, or for being especially helpful.

### Commendations

These may be obtained for outstanding work in any area including sport, music or drama, for particular helpfulness. One commendation is equivalent to three credits.

### Awards

21 credits, or 7 commendations, or a combination of the two, will result in an award, for which a certificate is presented by Vice Principals.

Parents are informed via the planner and Awards Certificates are awarded by Vice Principals.

### **STAGE ONE**

Class teacher

In the first instance, Credits will be issued, within the classroom, for a range of reasons including individual effort in work, progress in a lesson and success against the Academy Vision.

## **STAGE TWO**

### Faculty recognition

The Director of Faculty will oversee the issuing of a range of credits within the Faculty to ensure consistency and will ensure that contact is made with regularly with parents employing a range of strategies.

The Faculty will contribute to the published calendar of Academy celebrations, published at the beginning of the Academy year.

## **STAGE THREE**

### Year recognition

If a student's attitude is of particular note and results in two or more Stage 2 recognitions in a term then the Learning Mentor (under the management of the Vice Principal) will coordinate a year-based celebration.

Celebrations could include assembly presentation, activities and recognition on the celebration screen.

## **STAGE FOUR**

### Vice Principal recognition

Once a student receives two Stage 3 recognitions they are entitled to visits, special events and prizes coordinated through the Vice Principal and will involve parents and carers.

Events will be recorded in the student's file through certification.

## **STAGE FIVE**

### Academy Recognition

The Principal will organise interviews for every student receiving Stage 4 recognition to be considered as an Academy Ambassador.

Ambassadors will represent the Academy for formal visits, international visits and Sponsor/Governor liaison.

## **Strategies for support**

To support the Academy's Attitude to Learning, additional support for students may be provided.

### In Class Support/Individual Support

In-class support can be arranged for students in subjects where they experience particular difficulties. Support for students with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties may be offered by the dedicated Learning Managers. Strategies will be discussed with the class teacher.

Occasionally, students may be withdrawn from class to review their progress and set future targets for achievement. The Student Support team, in cooperation with

the Vice Principal's liaise with parents and staff as necessary, especially if there is a perceived need for additional support.

### Learning Mentors

Students experiencing difficulties will be supported by a Learning Mentor. It is the role of the Learning Mentor to explore with the student a range of methods to engage them back into effective learning. The Learning Mentor will meet regularly with the Student Support team on an individual or group basis and will closely monitor the student's progress, working in partnership with parents/carers, class teachers under the direction of a Vice Principal.

### Student Support Manager

Where a social, emotional or family issue is affecting a student's work, a referral may be made through the Student Support Manager using specialist staff. Support is offered through one-to-one sessions, using counselling methods which best suit limited intervention. The Student Support Team also targets students with significant attendance concerns.

### Academy Educational Psychologist

Students at the Academy have access to the services of a consultant Educational Psychologist on a regular basis. Services offered directly to students and their families include assessment and consultation, counselling and advice in the areas of learning and behaviour, and other developmental issues.

### Individual Plan (IP) – learning, behaviour and progress

A list of targets and strategies is drawn up for all students to enable the student to focus on key areas. An IP is generated by Mentor in consultation with others. This strategy may lead to a multi-party intervention to help individual students to better manage their attitudes to learning. This particular development of the IP programme will be agreed with parents, the Vice Principal and other parties as appropriate. The IP must be reviewed for students at risk of permanent exclusion when all prior strategies have not produced a desired outcome. It will be an important reference within case conferences.

### Links with outside agencies

The Academy works very closely with a range of external networks to further support students, including the police, youth services, Connexions, Local Authority Health Services (including mental health services), external counselling services, Education Business Partnership and Alcohol and Drugs awareness groups. The involvement of these agencies is through review between the Student Support Manager and the Vice Principals.

## **Sanctions**

When imposing sanctions there is the need to be sensitive in the way they are applied to curtail short, inappropriate behaviours. So that sanctions do not have a negative impact on poor behaviour, the following principles must be remembered:

- focus on the behaviour and not the student
- use private reprimands wherever possible and avoid public put downs
- be consistent when implementing the Attitude to Learning Policy.

Once a sanction has been imposed the student should be made aware that the incident is over and they can make a fresh start.

The initial responsibility for dealing with student behaviour will generally rest with the class teacher taking the lesson.

Teachers should make every effort to solve any discipline problems as they arise. The option of referral should not be taken too quickly, but, depending on circumstances, referral may be necessary and staff should not hesitate to ask for guidance and assistance from more experienced colleagues. Even the most experienced teachers can need assistance. It is not a failure for a teacher to face misbehaviour but it is mistake to assume all is well when it is not. In the first instance, issues of concern should be passed to the Director of Faculty.

Incidents and subsequent interventions must be rigorously recorded with the Vice Principals regularly reviewing the reporting mechanism. Students will be expected to reflect on the incident.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure good behaviour at all times. This includes staff intervening when they come across issues and refer as appropriate.

To support good behaviour staff will be expected to draw on key principles of best practice:

1. Establishing good habits early
2. Consistency in implementing school policies and when dealing with individual students
3. Early intervention with prompt action where there is poor attitude
4. Mutual respect through good relationships between students and staff
5. Understanding that students are individuals
6. Ensuring the curriculum is appropriate for each individual student including using a variety of teaching styles.

## Consequences and Sanctions

Any sanction should be appropriate and it is expected that behaviour will improve as a consequence. If generous approval is normally given then the withdrawal of the usual praise can be an effective sanction. Aggressive confrontation is not a sanction that will be supported.

The Academy's Range of Appropriate Sanctions includes:

- Planner sanction (given by members of staff for reasons such as not completing homework, equipment, poor behaviour or otherwise contravening the Academy Code of Conduct)
- Verbal warning
- Letter home
- Parents informed / called in
- Individual detention
- Faculty detention
- Year detention
- Vice Principal detention followed by review
- Academy report or subject specific report (Faculty / Mentor / Head of School (Year 7)/ Vice Principal)
- Contract - student, staff, parent
- Privileges removed
- Community service
- Student withdrawal
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

### **Use of detention**

During a detention, strategies that may be used to address a student's behaviour or achievement could include;

- Discussion with the student.
- Reinforcing expectations for behaviour and/or learning.
- Setting achievable, short term targets.

The content of a detention and the discussions between student and teacher will vary according to individual circumstances, but at all times the aim is to allow students to address areas of concern and to improve in these same areas.

Staff must ensure that details of any incident leading to a detention are recorded appropriately.

### **Detentions available**

1. 15 minutes (NB Prior notice must be given for detention that is intended to last longer than 15 minutes.)
2. Individual Staff Detention 15 - 45 minutes
3. Late detention 1 hour
4. Faculty Detention 45 minutes to 1 hour
5. Vice Principal Detention 1 hour

A Late Detention of 1 hour is issued for lateness for the Academy day when occurring more than twice in a term (on the basis of a six-term year).

The detention information should be recorded in the student's planner on the appropriate page making sure that the date and place are clearly recorded.

When the detention is completed the member of staff must remember to sign the detention off on the detention page.

Directors of Faculty should be notified for their information.

#### What to do if a student fails to attend a detention

##### **Illness or absence from school on the day of the detention**

The register will need to be checked to see if the student has a legitimate reason for absence from the detention.

The student must have the re-arranged date written into their planner.

##### **If the student has been in school but has failed to attend the detention**

The personal mentor should be notified and an alternative time set for the original detention. In addition, the Learning Mentor should be informed. Parents may be contacted and a further detention / sanction may be applied. Members of staff responsible for Vice Principal detentions will arrange for parents to be informed of students failing to attend these detentions and failure to attend a VP detention will lead to fixed term exclusion.

#### **Behaviour Structure**

##### **STAGE ONE**

###### **Class teacher**

###### Immediate intervention

In the first instance, student misbehaviour, within the classroom, should be dealt with by the classroom teacher, employing a range of strategies and sanctions. It is usual for teachers to deal initially with incidents such as:

Punctuality

Manners

Equipment and organisation of work

Care for the environment

Removal of outside clothing

Bad language

Possible strategies could be verbal warning, note in planner to parents or moving the student within the class.

Students will progress from this stage only after a range of strategies have been employed.

If problem continues then student moves to Stage Two.

##### **STAGE TWO**

###### Faculty intervention

The Director of Faculty will support teachers in dealing with incidents. The Director of Faculty will be informed of problem and will be expected to use a range of strategies.

If a teacher's actions are not effective then the Director of Faculty is expected to intervene.

Interventions include Faculty detention, keeping a report of student behaviour in Faculty lessons and communication with parents.

Students who have received a number of individual staff detentions in one particular subject area should be seen by the Director of Faculty and placed on Faculty report.

While the Director of Faculty is responsible for the intervention the mentor should be informed and clear records of all actions kept.

If problem persists then student moves to Stage Three

### **STAGE THREE**

#### Year Intervention

If a student's behaviour has reached stage two in more than one subject area or has not been resolved by the Faculty, the Learning Mentor (under the management of the Vice Principal) should intervene and deploy a range of further strategies and sanctions.

Interventions could include placing student on report for all lessons, use of year detention and interview with parents.

The Vice Principal must be informed and clear records of all actions kept.

If problem continues student moves to Stage Four.

### **STAGE FOUR**

#### Vice Principal Intervention

If behavioural problems persist, or for a serious breach of discipline, the Vice Principal should intervene. The Vice Principal has oversight for the progress of every student in their particular phase. They are the source of support for staff when resolution is not found.

Possible interventions should include a report to the Principal, removal from lessons, student contract and parental interview. A support programme should be drawn up to link to the student's Individual Plan.

Fixed term exclusion may be appropriate with the approval of at least one other Vice Principal.

The Principal should be informed of all actions taken and a clear record kept.

If problems persist student progresses to Stage Five.

## **STAGE FIVE**

### Final Intervention

The Principal should have direct information from the Vice Principal when all other stages have been exhausted and a concise and precise record maintained.

Intervention could come in the form of fixed term exclusion, internal exclusion. An update of the student's Individual Plan and a parental meeting will be automatic.

The Principal and governors will be informed.

Permanent exclusion is a final option once all other options have failed.

The student's Mentor is in a unique situation of having an overview of the progress and incidents that relate to a student on a daily basis. They will review progress using the recording process.

#### Note:

The Academy values constructive contact with home. The benefits are usually entirely positive, and generate the feeling that our approach to behaviour is one of collaboration.

However, to ensure consistency is maintained and that accurate records are kept, staff are asked to adapt the following guidelines.

#### By Telephone

Please make a brief note of the conversation and the outcome, pass to the office for filing / copying

#### By Letter

All written communication to parents should be prepared by the office (i.e. adapting drafts to headed paper, ensuring correct names and address are used and circulating copies as required). Please bear in mind that e-mails are a written form of communication and, particularly when writing to parents, their content must be carefully considered.

#### Through Meeting

A record should be kept of any meeting that takes place with parents, and passed to the office for filing / copying

## **Report Cards**

### Procedures and Guidance for Use of Report Cards

Aim of report: To support students in the management of their behaviour / learning and raise achievement.

Report cards should be viewed as supportive not punitive. They can be used:

- to identify areas of difficulty;
- to set achievable, short term targets;

- to provide individual, focused contact with an appropriate member of staff;
- to reinforce the Home-School partnership; and
- to facilitate and link to academic tutoring.

Report cards are all of a similar appearance:

Mentor report - Green card

Learning Mentor report - Orange Card

Vice Principal report - Red Card

Students should hand their report card to teachers at the start of every lesson. They are expected to take the report card home each evening and get it signed by their parent / carer. At the end of their time on report, students should complete the section at the back to help reflect on how they have made progress.

Staff are asked to refer to the targets on the front of each report card when they write in their comments at the end of a lesson.

A student should not stay on the same report for more than two weeks. Either they have done well enough to come off report or they have not responded to their targets and should move up to the next stage.

A student who is on Vice Principal report and failing to respond positively would be in danger of temporary exclusion or similar.

Report cards should be filed after use.

### **Exclusion**

If a student continues to show disregard for the Academy Code of Conduct and (in most cases) having tried alternative strategies, then it may be necessary to consider exclusion from lessons:

#### Internal Exclusion

This may take effect if a student is disruptive in lessons and makes it difficult for other students to learn. Work is set in the Academy supervised by a senior member of staff.

#### Fixed term Exclusion

This occurs when a student has to be removed from the Academy. Swearing at a member of staff or assault on another student will result in this sanction. This is a serious sanction and following an exclusion parents must attend the Academy review meeting with the student to discuss further strategies. At this meeting, any agreement for regarding the exclusion to be 'spent' will be decided.

#### Permanent Exclusion

This occurs in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Principal. There are certain examples of exceptional misbehaviour that can lead to permanent exclusion from the Academy without previously using earlier sanctions. Such behaviours include:

- the bringing in of illegal or not personally prescribed drugs for personal use

- or the passing on of these whether for financial gain or not;
- the bringing in of an offensive weapon (defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as any article made or adapted for use to causing injury to the person, or intended by the person having it with him for such use); and
- organised repeated theft from the Academy or person's connected to the Academy.

In addition, the Academy may apply permanent exclusion against students who have been engaged in persistent disruptive behaviour whilst in the Academy or during their time in the predecessor school. Assault against a member of staff will result in this most serious of sanctions.