Mersey Park Primary

SEMH and Behaviour Policy

Updated **May 2021**

Date for Review **September 2022**

Rights Respecting School: Article 28
Every child has the right to an education and discipline in schools must respect children's dignity

BE NICE, WORK HARD, NEVER GIVE UP

At Mersey Park we endeavour to provide the most effective and efficient education that we can in a warm, respectful and caring atmosphere. It is our aim to develop in all our children the desire to learn and the ability to apply their knowledge. At the same time, we want to help each child to attain the social awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making and relationship skills necessary for a full and happy life.

Through active learning experiences and subsequent understanding we wish to cultivate in all our children not only an appreciation of the need to learn, but also a pride in their work, respect for their surroundings and good relationships with others at home, school and the wider community.

Aims

1. Through the use of positive reinforcement, create an ethos of good behaviour and trusting relationships in school that fully embraces our core values of 'Be Nice, Work Hard, Never Give Up'. This will ensure that children are happy, secure, safe and achieving to their full potential.

2. To encourage a positive learning environment where effort, hard work and good behaviour are recognised and rewarded (Mersey Park Mindset and 20th Kid mentality).

3. To build a school community which values kindness, care, good humour, good temper and empathy for others.

4. To help children lead disciplined lives and to understand that good citizenship is based upon good behaviour.

5. To minimise misbehaviour and reduce the possibility of confrontation by creating a consistent, positive structure where all are treated fairly and shown respect.

6. To ensure that pupils, teachers and parents have a clear understanding of the rewards for positive behaviour and the consequences of misbehaviour.

7. To create an ethos where bullying is not tolerated or accepted by any members of the school community.

Equal Opportunities

The policy is implemented equally to all members of the school pupil population, regardless of gender, nationality or disability. It is important that all pastoral issues relating to individual pupils are taken into consideration (Refer to section 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health Support').

Arrangements and Procedures

Whole School

Our core values for staff and pupils alike are 'Be Nice, Work Hard, Never Give Up'. These shape the very basis of all that we do in school and are prominently displayed in the halls, in classrooms and in other shared areas. We ensure that these values are woven throughout our curriculum. Children participate in regular planned activities, for example Jigsaw (PSHE) and Philosophy for Children (P4C), that allow them to develop a strong, value-based ethos.

School recognises the importance of staff education and awareness. As a result, all staff have participated in comprehensive training on Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and its co-morbidity. The school Behaviour Mentor has also completed Emotional Literacy Support Assistant training. This included exploring social skills, emotions, bereavement, social stories and therapeutic stories, anger management, self-esteem, counselling skills such as solution focused and friendship. Rest Easy is used across school and spaces are clearly identified in classes and around school.

We endeavour to meet the basic physiological and emotional needs (Maslow's Hierarchy) of all children through:

- Consistently demonstrating that we care and can be trusted, as positive relationships are vital for brain development and therefore learning;
- Understanding our relationships with children involve an unequal distribution of power and responsibility. Therefore, the adult is responsible for relating, repairing and restoration of the relationship;
- Understanding adult communication with children is key to raising self-esteem. Adults must be aware of body language, facial expression and tone of voice when talking to children, especially if the child is distressed;
- Modelling emotionally literate ways of behaviour at all times as raised voices, angry faces and body language create fear and stress;
- Regardless of causal factors, the adult's responsibility is to create an optimal learning environment for each and every child;
- Recognising that if children have no other option, they will quickly move into flight/flight/freeze or flop mode, and this is the only option available to them in this moment;
- Teaching explicitly prosocial behaviour and emotional regulation across school - Rest Easy;
- Understanding strategies and skills to manage behaviour take time and effort to learn – small successes need to be celebrated;
- Acknowledging that taking responsibility for our actions can only be done when we are in a calm state;
- Supporting children who may not be able to read social cues or deal with strong emotions.

Classroom

We adhere to the principle that 'prevention is better than cure.' Well-organised classrooms with appropriately differentiated and stimulating activities promote appropriate standards of behaviour.

Each classroom clearly displays the core values and age appropriate examples of associated behaviours. Ground rules for each classroom are established with children at the beginning of the new school year. These are reinforced and evaluated regularly and link with the whole school values. The number of class rules and precise wording depends on the age of the children and the outcomes of discussion with them. Where possible, rules are phrased in a positive way.

Recognition Boards are clearly displayed in all classrooms. The teaching team will identify a behaviour focus for the class, for example listening carefully to all instructions. As children display this behaviour, their name or photograph is moved onto the Recognition Board. The behaviour focus can be changed every lesson, daily or weekly, depending on the needs of the individual class.

Classroom routines are established annually and are reinforced and evaluated regularly with the children. These include routines for instances of wet playtime or wet lunchtime when the children are required to stay within the classroom and are under the supervision of a teacher, teaching assistant or mid-day supervisor.

Each teacher has the flexibility to employ an individual system of rewards and outcomes, within the broader framework of the whole school organisation, and to use as wide a range of rewards as possible to motivate children in order to manage behaviour within the classroom. It is essential that all adults within the class team adhere to the system and are consistent and fair.

During the handling of disputes, time is taken to listen to all parties involved in order to gain an accurate picture of what has happened and to ensure each child feels listened to. Wherever possible, staff will use restorative practice techniques to deal with issues. Any incidents are dealt with as soon as possible.

All classrooms have their own 'Rest Easy' boxes. Children participate in 'Rest Easy' lessons and are given regular opportunities to engage in mindfulness activities, which include how to use calming down techniques.

The classroom boxes contain a variety of resources, including:

- Emotion fans
- Mindfulness activities
- Emotion Wave boards
- Timers
- Lavender and/or scented candles

Meet and Greet

At the start of every school day, each child is personally greeted at the classroom door by their class teacher. A range of greetings, for example personalised handshake, hug or dance, are displayed on the wall and each child chooses their greeting for that day.

This is considered an important part of our school day. It encourages positive relationships between staff and pupils, helps develop a family-like atmosphere and ensures every child has a positive start to their day in school.

Rewards

At all times we aim to use positive reinforcement and praise as an effective means of: -

- teaching and reinforcing appropriate patterns of behaviour;
- nurturing harmonious classroom relationships;
- boosting self-confidence and as a consequence promoting effective learning.

Wherever possible specific praise is used for example, 'I am pleased that you are sitting quietly waiting your turn,' rather than 'Good boy / girl'. Staff also follow a system of RiP and PiP (Reprimanding in Private, Praising in Public).

Other stickers, stamps, certificates, classroom teddy bears etc. are used to reward the achievements of individual pupils. Many of these instances are for behaviour related achievement.

Children who have displayed behaviour considered 'Over and Above' are rewarded with a ticket that is displayed in their classroom. This ticket also allows access to 'Milkshake Monday', when all children who have demonstrated 'Over and Before' behaviours meet with members of the Senior Leadership Team to celebrate their success.

Awards Assembly

Every Friday afternoon we hold a special Awards Assembly where we come together as a school community to celebrate the successes of our children.

During assembly, class teachers present one star to a child in their class. The star represents the Mersey Park values. They are then displayed in the hall, with the child's name written clearly on the front.

Each week midday supervisors recognise one child from each year group who has displayed kind and caring behaviour during lunchtimes. This behaviour is celebrated in the Awards Assembly and the children presented with a certificate to share with their parents/carers.

All children who have consistently applied our Mersey Park values throughout the week are provided with a raffle ticket which is entered into a floor raffle. The winning child from each floor can choose a prize from a Mersey Park teddy bear, key ring or pencil case.

Good attendance is encouraged by the presentation of 'Daley' our attendance bear in assembly each week. The class with the best attendance that week looks after Daley for the following week and presents a short explanation of all the things he did while in their care. In addition, children who have been in school all week have the opportunity to win 'Five for Five' in the weekly raffle.

Managing Behaviour in the Foundation Stage

As soon as children enter our Foundation Stage the values of 'Be Nice, Work Hard, Never Give Up' are modelled and encouraged. Children demonstrating these values are rewarded in a variety of ways. The rewards for behaving well in school include the following:

- Praise;
- Stickers;
- Star of the Week.

In Foundation 2, Mersey Bear Certificates at the end of the week for good behaviour. After five certificates a prize is issued. In addition, the children receive stamps and prizes on a daily basis.

Outcomes

All classrooms clearly display our Mersey Park values. On the rare occasions these behaviour expectations are not adhered to, children will be dealt with fairly, consistently and with understanding.

Children will always be warned if their behaviour is becoming unacceptable so that they can alter their behaviour. The warning could take the form of:

- a look;
- a verbal warning;
- praise for someone modelling correct behaviour.

Behaviour not improving will result in the teacher recording the behaviour on the class clipboard, which is stored privately and away from public view.

Low level unacceptable behaviour could include repeated:

- Calling out;
- Tapping or fidgeting;
- swinging on chairs;
- leaving seat during working time.

The more serious behaviours could include:

- refusing to complete work set;
- aggressive or violent behaviour of any sort;

- damaging furniture or property;
- arguing with an adult or answering back.

The less common unacceptable behaviours could include:

- leaving school without permission;
- use of unacceptable language aimed towards staff or pupils;
- continued refusal to carry out instructions;
- discussing school or members of staff in a derogatory manner.

Ensuring that our school is a pleasant and safe place for all is extremely important. As such, bullying is something that is not tolerated with our school. Refer to the Behaviour Policy if further information is required.

At Mersey Park, we feel strongly that outcomes should be decided on a case by case basis, taking into consideration the severity of the incident, the impact of the behaviour and the social, emotional and mental health needs of all involved.

Outcomes are therefore decided by the teacher involved and, if necessary, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team.

These could include:

- Phone call home;
- Missing ten minutes of lunchtime;
- Missing all of lunchtime (Reflection Room);
- Being removed from class and working in another room for a set period of time.

When missing all of lunchtime, teachers will ensure children have a reasonable amount of time to eat, drink and use the toilet. A letter will be sent home to parents/carers if a child is to miss all of their lunchtime. A senior member of staff is always involved with high level negative behaviour.

In general, the class teacher will deal with negative behaviour, but if the child persists then he/she may be sent to another class for a period of time.

More serious incidents of unacceptable behaviour will result in an internal exclusion, usually lasting for one day. Parents are informed by telephone and letter. All instances of negative behaviour are recorded on SIMS.

Behaviour outcomes usually last for no longer than two days. On very rare occasions it may be decided to extend the duration of a sanction.

Teachers also have a specific legal power to impose detention outside school hours.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Support

Shift from 'What is wrong with you?'
to 'What has happened to you?'

The majority of our pupils are able to maintain appropriate behaviours and emotional regulation. However, in some circumstances, a small number of our children will need a more individualised approach to enable them to overcome behaviour barriers, develop emotional regulation and be able to cope in every day social interactions and challenging situations. Dealing with these children inappropriately will lead to further trauma and reinforce dysfunctional behaviour patterns. Therefore, some children will require an individualised approach based on their needs and circumstances. This will include boundaries and personalised consequences that may not reflect the behaviour expectations and outcomes for others.

Examples of conditions and experiences that could lead to behaviour barriers and emotional dysregulation:

1. Children with neurological developmental conditions –

    - Attention Deficit (Hyperactive) Disorder
    - Autism
    - Learning Disabilities

2. Children who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) –

    - Child abuse (emotional, physical, sexual)
    - Child neglect (emotional, physical)
    - Parent or household mental illness
    - Parent or household substance misuse/alcoholism
    - Witnessing domestic violence
    - Parent or family member in jail
    - Parent separation or divorce
    - Death of parent or sibling

Staff need to be aware of all children under their care who have experienced ACEs as trauma may not show straight away, for example a delayed reaction to abuse or neglect.

When it becomes apparent that a child is experiencing difficulties adhering to the Mersey Park behaviour expectations, parents/carers will be informed immediately and a dialogue between home and school established. If behaviour does not improve, support will move to a more formalised stage.

Staff Responsibilities

We understand that:

- Being fair is not about everyone getting the same (equality) but about everyone getting what they need (equity);
- Behaviour is a form of communication and not all behaviours are a matter of choice or within a child's control;
- Children with behavioural difficulties need to be regarded as vulnerable rather than troublesome;
- Behaviour should always be dealt with privately and not in a way that leads to shaming or humiliation;
- Strong adult-led relationships between staff, children and parents/carers are key;
- Focusing on feelings and emotions through an empathetic and non-judgmental attitude towards the behaviour that the child is displaying is imperative;
- Parent/carer engagement and involvement is crucial when addressing and planning support for a child's SEMH needs.

As a staff we:

I. empathise, validate and label emotions through a narrative or translation of the emotional experience (creating cognitive links to re-wire thinking).

I can see that you get angry when this..... happens.

I would feel angry if that happened to me.

It is normal to feel like that.

- recognise that emotions are natural and normal and not always a matter of choice.
- recognise behaviour as a form of communication.

II. develop positive relationships and an understanding of the child's emotional needs and triggers that can be avoided.

- Instil acceptable behaviour boundaries

You can scream and shout but you cannot throw the chair.

- Problem solve or repair relationships with the child
- Explore the feelings, behaviour and incident
- Scaffold alternative ideas and actions that would have been more appropriate to the situation

Scaffolding is to prepare, plan and empower children to take responsibility

for their own self-regulation in difficult situations

Individual Behaviour Plans and Panels

If a child's behaviour is continuing to be a cause for concern, an Individual Behaviour Plan will be completed in conjunction with the child, class teacher, the school's Behaviour Mentor and members of the Senior Leadership Team.

This plan clearly identifies:

- strategies to support the child;
- behaviour targets;
- potential triggers;
- rewards and how to achieve them;
- outcomes that could be used if necessary;
- the role of any outside agencies.

Following the completion of an Individual Behaviour Plan, parents/carers and their child will be invited to attend a Support Panel meeting. The contents of the Individual Behaviour Plan will be discussed, including the support strategies to be put in place, and suggestions given for how this can be followed up at home.

Support strategies could include:

- a behaviour chart with targets, rewards and outcomes specific to the individual;
- a place being allocated on interventions such as 'Peacemakers', 'Happy to be me' or 'ELSA';
- regular weekly meetings with a member of SLT or chosen staff member (Staff Buddy);
- referral to Behaviour Team using the behaviour referral processes in place (See Procedures for On-going Unacceptable Behaviour flowchart);
- access to the school Behaviour Mentor and calm rooms.

Any outcomes identified will be individualised according to the social, emotional and mental health needs of the pupil.

The Individual Behaviour Plan is then signed by the Special Needs Co-ordinator, class teacher, parent and child. This is regularly reviewed with the child and parents/carers. If needed, additional support from outside agencies will be requested, for example Gilbrook Outreach Support or the ADHD Foundation.

Exclusion from School

The decision to exclude a pupil for a fixed period or permanently from school is a decision that is not taken lightly and is carefully considered, taking into account all evidence and factors that may have contributed to the pupil's behaviour. The head teacher is the only person who is able to make the decision to exclude, unless she is absent. In this case, the deputy head teacher may make the decision.

A fixed term or permanent exclusion may be deemed necessary for a variety of reasons, including:

- Repeatedly violating the Behaviour Policy
- Serious breaches of the Behaviour Policy
- Serious assault on another child or children
- Assault of a staff member
- Repeatedly preventing other children in their class from learning
- Bringing the school into disrepute whilst not in school (i.e. after school or the weekend)
- Making an allegation against a staff member which, when investigated, proves unfounded
- Other incidents considered serious by the head teacher (or the deputy head teacher in the absence of the head teacher)
- Exclusions from lunchtimes will also be considered if children repeatedly violate the Behaviour Policy during this time.

The length of the exclusion and reasons are clearly recorded in a formal letter to parents/carers. However, initial fixed term exclusions may be extended if, after further investigation, additional evidence arises. The letter also explains to parents where they can seek advice and support as well as additional information about the exclusion.

Parents will be called to collect their child from school as no child will be allowed to leave unaccompanied. Exclusions are recorded in school and the local authority and governors are informed if the exclusion exceeds 5 days. School provides work for the child who is excluded and from the sixth day, suitable full time alternative provision is made.

Following an exclusion, parents have the right to make representations about this decision to the Governing Body. Representations are made via the Chair of Governors. Whilst the Governing Body has no power to overturn the Head teacher's decision, they must consider any representations made and may place a copy of their findings on the child's school record.

Following an exclusion there is a reinstatement meeting at school with the child and parents where a plan is drawn up to support the child in school if appropriate.

For more detail on the types of behaviour that may lead to exclusion refer to Appendix 1.

The Department for Education Exclusions from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England Guidance September 2017 is currently used by the school unless superseded before the school policy is reviewed.

Behaviour on School Trips and Visits

When participating in a school trip or visit, the same high standard of behaviour is expected from all pupils. Where there is a concern regarding the behaviour of an individual pupil, school may request a responsible adult, for example parent or carer, accompanies the child to enable the child to participate.

On the rare occasions the child's behaviour is believed to constitute a risk to the health and safety of themselves and/or others, it may be decided the pupil is unable to participate. These behaviours could include:

- Violent outbursts towards staff and pupils;
- Sudden and uncontrollable outbursts of anger without a known trigger;
- Continued refusal to cooperate or follow instructions with all adults, including family members.

The child will remain in school and join another class for the duration of the trip.

Behaviour outside of school

Mersey Park Primary School expects all our staff and pupils to act in a way that positively promotes the school in our community. On the rare occasion that a pupil's behaviour does not do so and brings the school reputation into disrepute they could be subject to outcomes from school or exclusion. This power is given under Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which gives Head teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff.

Additional Information

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, February 2014, states that the law allows maintained schools:

1. to have the 'Power to search without consent' for prohibited items;
2. the general power to discipline enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a punishment, so long as it is reasonable in the circumstances. The law protects them from liability for damage to, or loss of, any confiscated items;
3. 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.

For more detailed information, refer to the following related policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Equality Scheme
- Staff Conduct Policy

Legislation and Statutory Requirements

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- Behaviour and discipline in schools
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school
- The Equality Act 2010
- Use of reasonable force in schools
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school

It is also based on the special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice.

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its pupils
- Sections 88-94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which require schools to regulate pupils' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate pupils' property
- DfE guidance explaining that maintained schools should publish their behaviour policy online

Appendix One

Why a child may lose part of their lunchtime:

- Unkind behaviour such as: hurting other people verbally or physically; not looking after other people's belongings, name-calling, telling hurtful lies;
- Disruptive behaviour such as: talking when they should be listening; interrupting; not settling to work; distracting others; tapping, fidgeting, swinging on chair
- Unsafe behaviour such as: not walking around school sensibly; using equipment in the wrong way; play fighting.

Why a child may lose all of their lunchtime:

- More serious unkind behaviour such as: deliberately hurting other people verbally or physically; bullying; stealing; destroying other people's belongings;
- More serious disruptive behaviour such as: continually preventing others to be able to get on with their work during lessons or their games during playtime; refusing to follow and instruction given by an adult;
- More serious unsafe behaviour such as: fighting; refusing to do what a member of staff has asked; leaving the classroom or playground without permission.

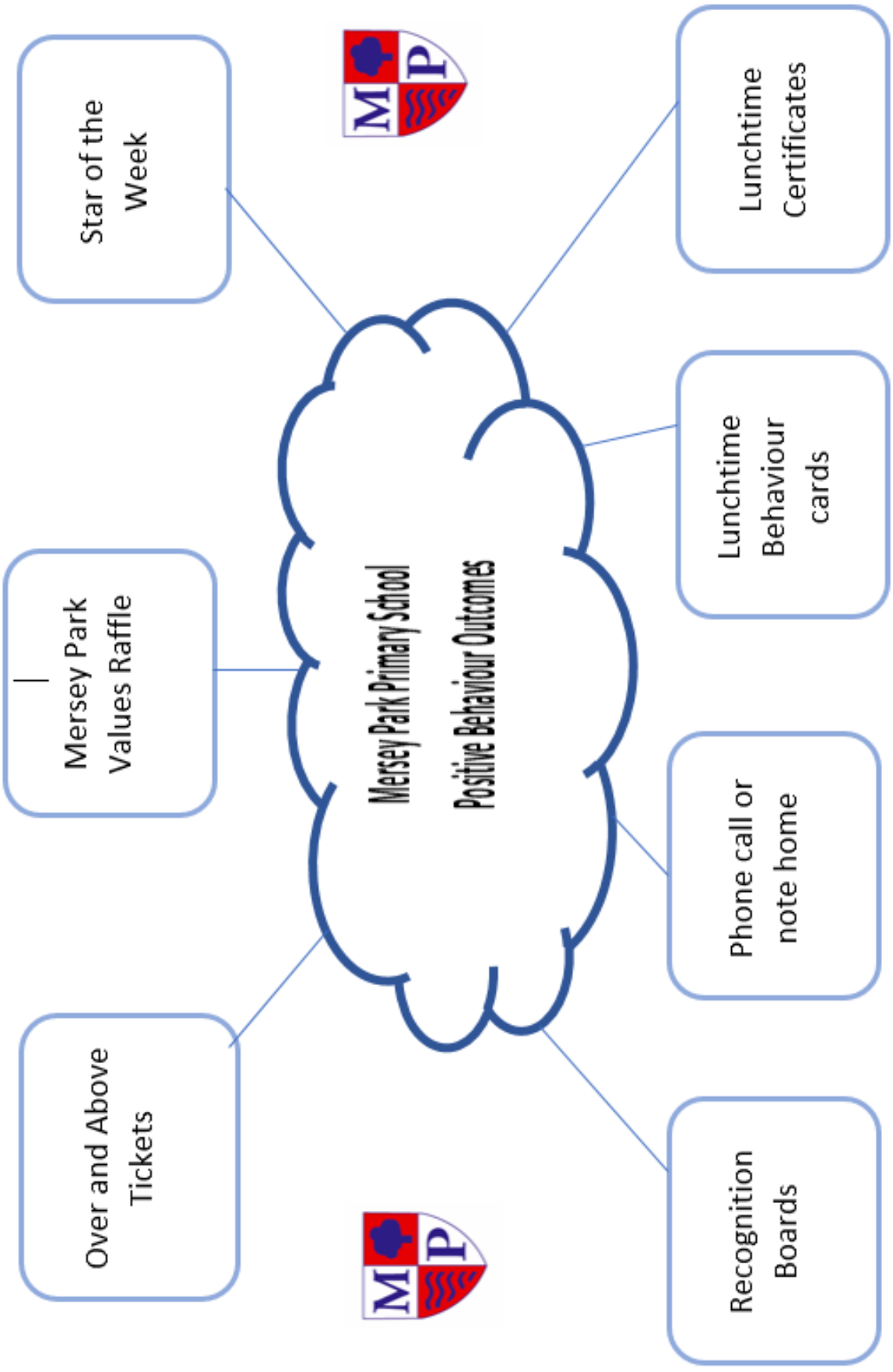
Why a child may be removed from their class:

- Severe unkind behaviour such as: physical assault; verbal abuse; on-going bullying;
- Severe disruptive behaviour such as: total refusal to do what a member of staff has asked;
- Severe unsafe behaviour such as: leaving the school without permission; a need to remove pupil or other pupils from a specific area in school in order to maintain the safety of all.

Why a child may receive an exclusion (fixed term or permanent):

- A serious breach or persistent breaches of Behaviour Policy;
- Serious harm to education and welfare of pupils or others;
- Serious or threatened violence against another pupil or member of staff;
- Possession of or supplying an illegal drug;
- Carrying an offensive weapon;
- Use or threatened use of an offensive weapon;
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.
- Behaviour outside of school that brings the school's reputation into disrepute.

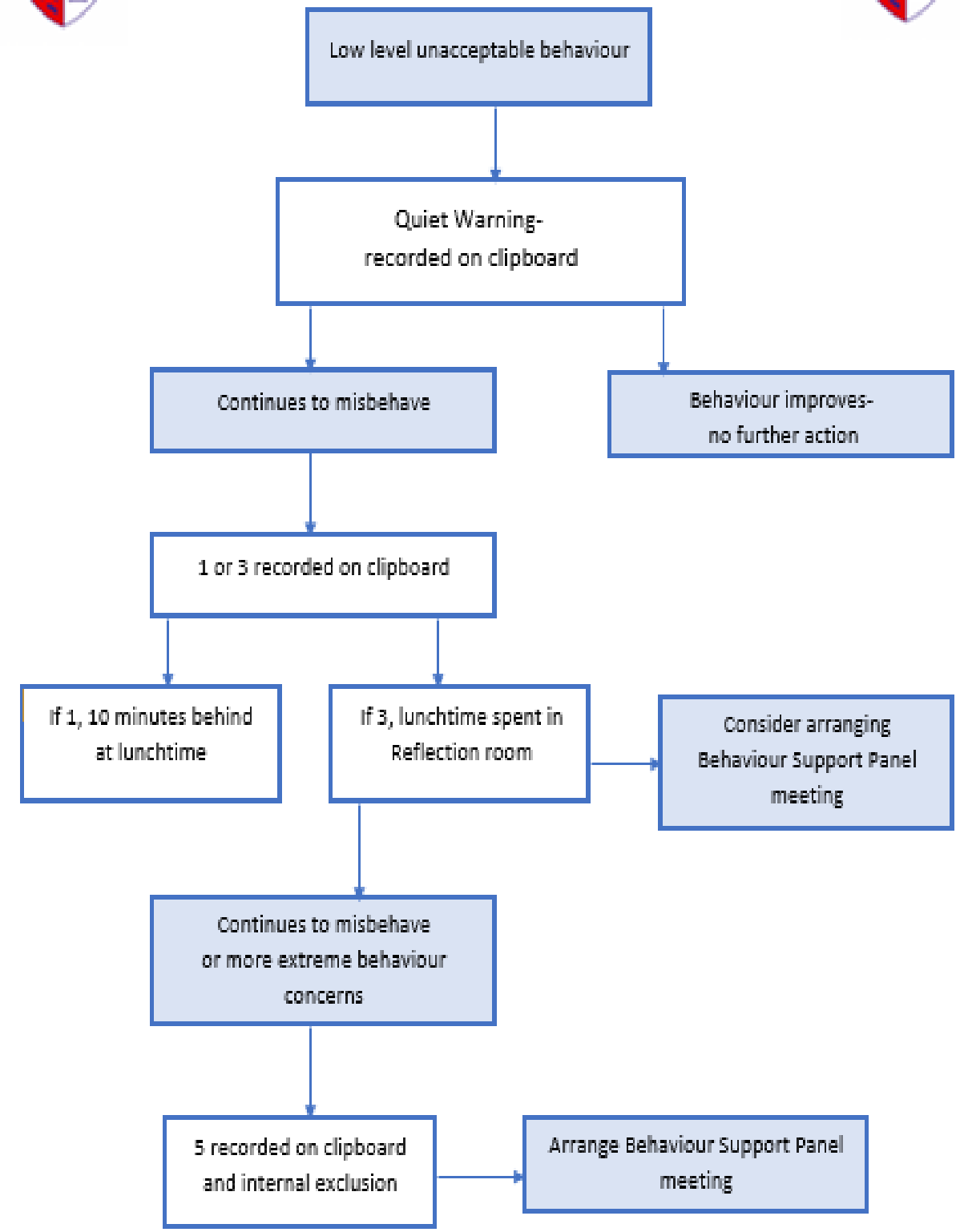
Appendix Two



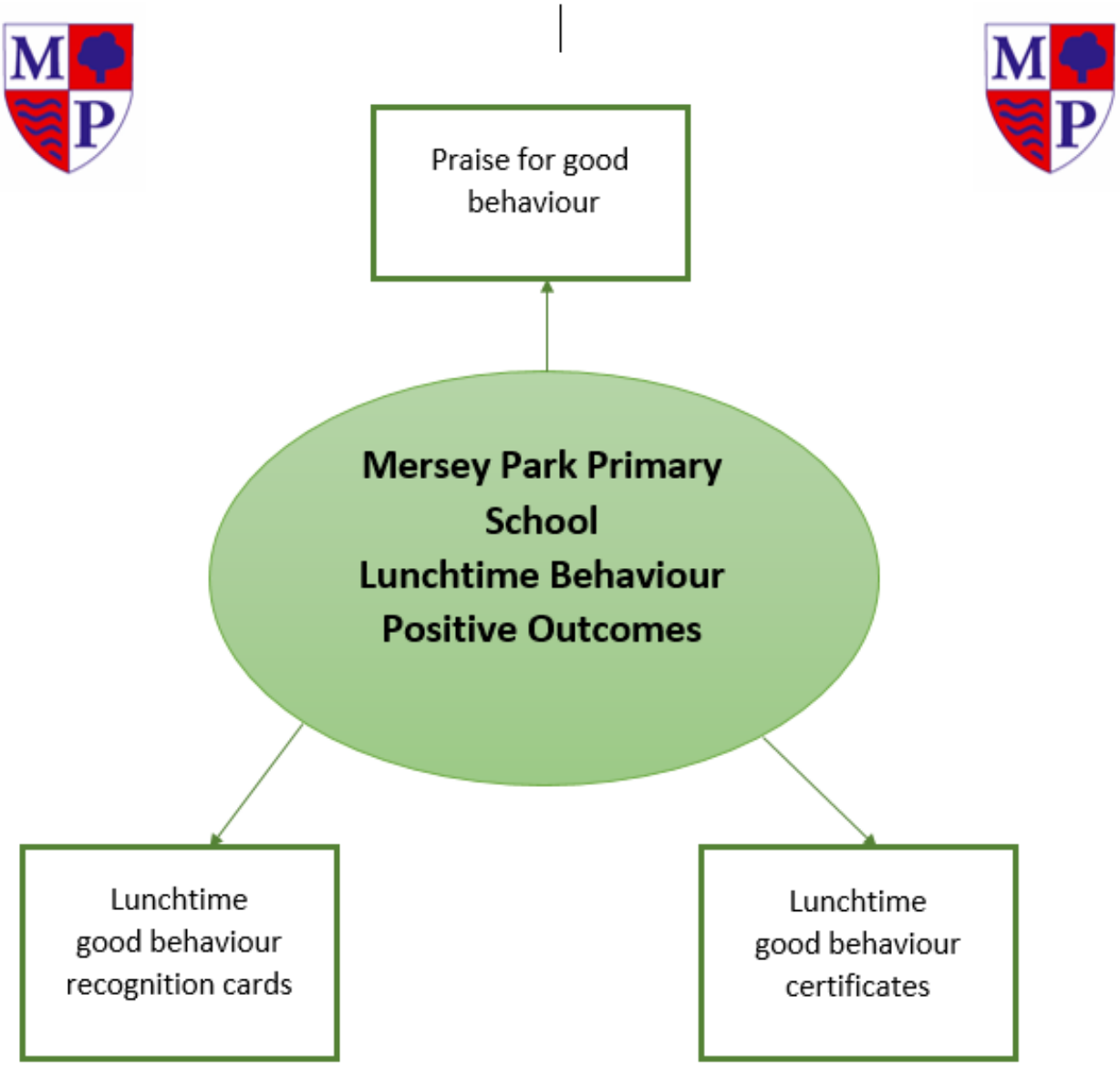
Appendix Three

Mersey Park Primary School

Behaviour Outcomes

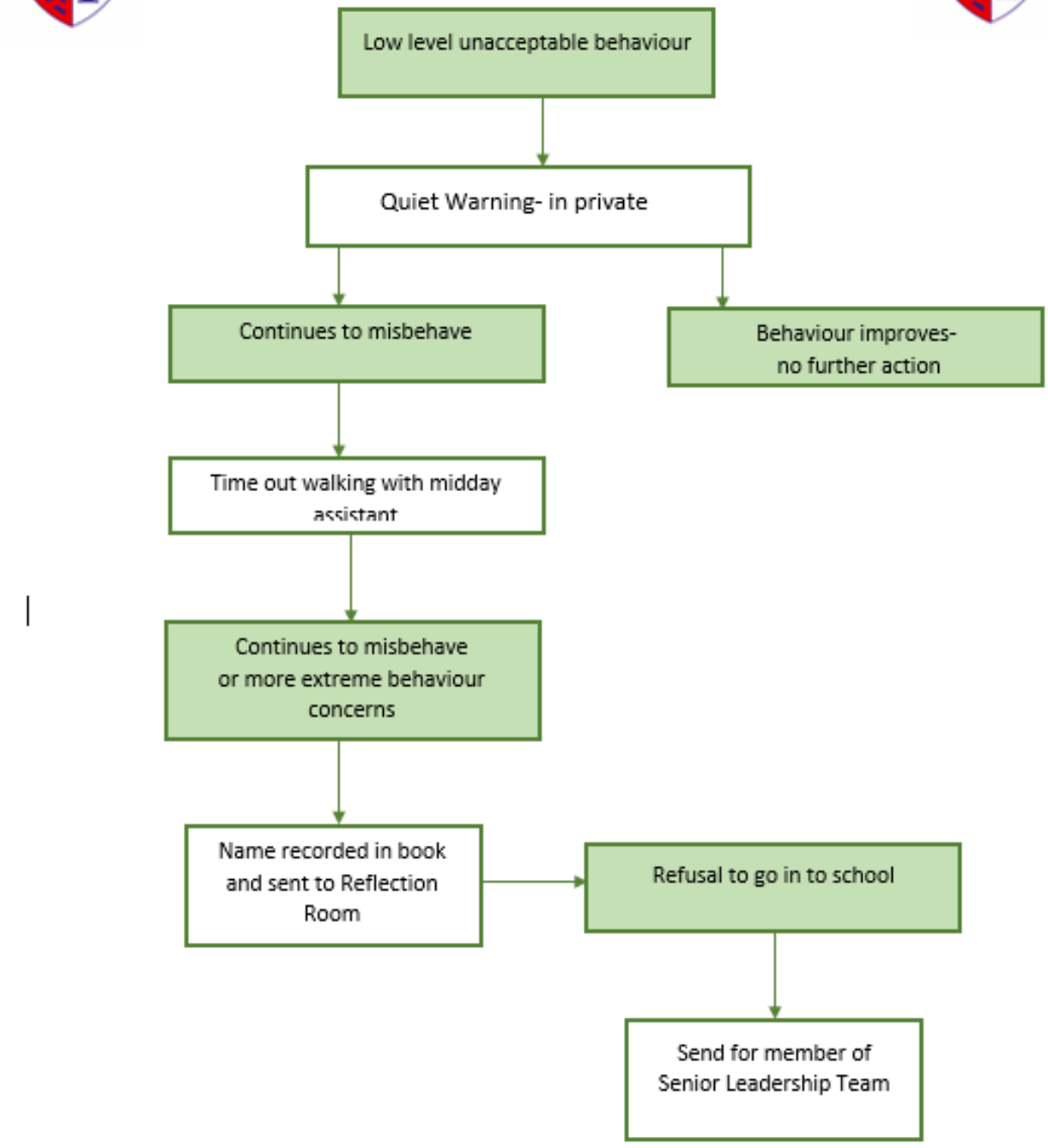


Appendix Four



Appendix Five

MERSEY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL
LUNCHTIME BEHAVIOUR OUTCOMES



Appendix Six

Date ……

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Not following Mersey Park Values

Sadly, …….. has not followed our school values today.

Why your child will be kept in at lunch time: -

……

……

……

……

Please speak to your child about their behaviour and reinforce the school values of 'Be Nice, Work Hard, Never Give Up'.

Yours sincerely,

Floor Leader

✂……

Please sign and return this slip to class teacher: -

I have read the above and spoken to my child about his/her behaviour.

Name of Child…… Class……

Signed…….. (Parent/Carer)

Appendix Seven

Date ……

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Not following Mersey Park Values

Sadly, …… has demonstrated unacceptable behaviour today in school.

Why your child has been removed from their classroom: -

……

……

……

……

As a result of this behaviour, they have been removed from class and spent some time with another year group.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Thomas

Headteacher

✂……

Please sign and return this slip to class teacher: -

I have read the above and spoken to my child about his/her behaviour.

Name of Child…… Class……

Signed…….. (Parent/Carer)