



Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery

Behaviour Policy

Name/Title of responsible committee/individual:	Curriculum Committee
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Review frequency:	Annually
Target audience:	All stakeholders

The Governing Body shall conduct the School with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement.

Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery is committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. These factors were considered in the formation and review of this policy and will be adhered to in its implementation and application across the whole school community.

The School will promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect of those with different faiths and beliefs and will actively challenge pupils, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including 'extremist' views.

Version	Date	Notes
2.0	September 2023	Adaptations to stages in behaviour. Lunchtime provision for September 2023

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1 Governors' Statement of General Principles with Regard to Behaviour of Pupils

This statement has been drawn up in accordance with the Education and Inspection Act 2006 and the Department for Education (DfE) Guidance for Governors on Behaviour and Discipline in Schools, September 2015.

The purpose of the statement is to provide guidance to the Headteacher in drafting the school's Behaviour Policy so that it reflects the values of the school and the shared aspirations of governors, parents/carers of pupils, staff and pupils at the school. It also highlights appropriate legislation and guidance which need to be reflected in the policy.

The Full Governing Body of Merry Hill Infant and Nursery School firmly believes that Outstanding behaviour contributes to Outstanding learning.

2 Rationale and purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish and maintain a whole school approach to positive behaviour, which will encourage mutual respect between members of the school community. Merry Hill follow a therapeutic approach to behaviour management which puts emphasis on the understanding of all behaviour as a method of communication and that the wellbeing of all children is at the forefront of everything we do. We aim to create a culture that ensures that children can learn in a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment and protect them from disruption.

2.1 General Philosophy

This policy is intended to create a happy, caring, secure and stimulating learning environment where everyone will be encouraged and inspired to do their very best.

We believe that high-quality teaching promotes effective learning and outstanding behaviour. We endeavour to work together with parents and staff for the mutual well-being of all who are connected with the school. In working together as a community, we seek the best for the children in our care and see the behaviour policy as a part of this goal.

Our emphasis will be on recognising and celebrating effort and success, so that all pupils feel valued. We will teach pupils to take responsibility for their own actions, to understand the consequences of their choices and to become responsible citizens for the future and realise the importance of respecting others.

We instil in our parents and children that bullying and racism of any kind is unacceptable at Merry Hill, as well as all other forms of discrimination by adults or pupils, and any such incidents will be dealt with promptly and firmly.

There are two basic principles upon which our behaviour policy is based:

- We believe it is our duty to promote and encourage positive and pro-social behaviour, not just react to that which is unacceptable.
- We believe that when a child demonstrates unacceptable and anti-social behaviour, it is the behaviour which is unacceptable not the child

Everyone at Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery has a part to play in the promotion of high standards of pro social behaviour. It is important that our clear code of conduct is reinforced by a balanced combination of rewards and consequences within a secure and positive environment. We display our Golden Rules around the school and these are discussed with the children.

3 Golden Rules

The following Golden Rules have been agreed by staff and children as those being most suitable for our community.

1. Do be gentle
2. Do be kind and helpful
3. Do work hard
4. Do look after property
5. Do listen to people
6. Do be honest

4 Hertfordshire STEPs Training

Hertfordshire Steps is the local authority's preferred approach to supporting positive behaviour management in schools and settings. The Steps approach forms part of the authority's behaviour strategy. It has been agreed through the SEND Executive and forms part of Hertfordshire's Local Offer.

The STEPs approach is based on the following principles:

- A shared focus on inclusion of all children and young people within their educational settings
- A shared set of values and beliefs
- Open and shared communication
- A shared commitment to diversion and de-escalation
- Shared risk management

At Merry Hill Infant and Nursery School we have two trained 'Step on' tutors: Mr Reid and Mrs Summers.

In March 2023 all Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery staff attended 'Step On' training in de-escalation, run by our Steps tutors. All staff receive annual refresher STEPs training and all new staff receive full 'Step On' training'.

The training emphasises the importance of consistency and teaching internal, rather than imposing external, discipline. It focuses on care and control, not punishment. It uses techniques to de-escalate a situation before a crisis occurs and, where a crisis does occur, it adopts techniques to reduce the risk of harm. Our behaviour policy supports these principles.

5 Definitions

The term **child** or **children** refers to all children under the age of 18.

The term **difficult** used throughout this document refers to behaviour that a child displays that does not cause harm or injury. Staff may find these behaviours challenging.

The term **dangerous** used throughout this document refers to behaviours that cause evidenced injury to self or others, damage to property, or committing a criminal offence.

The term **parent** used throughout this policy refers to all those with parental responsibility, including parents and those who care for the child (as defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996). Where there is a Care Order in force (within the meaning of section 31 of the Children Act

1989), the local authority has the power to restrict the exercise by the child's parents of their parental responsibility, if the welfare of the child so requires.

The term **Stakeholders** used throughout this document refers to anyone who is invested in the welfare and success of a school, a child or family. These include professionals from Health, social care and Education but also represent parents and the wider support networks within their home or community.

The term **emotional wellbeing** used throughout this document is defined as "A state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community." WHO 2004.

The term **Mental Health** in reference to children and young people within this document is defined as "The capacity to live a full, productive life as well as the flexibility to deal with its ups and downs. In children and young people, it is especially about the capacity to learn, enjoy friendships, to meet challenges, to develop talents and capabilities." (Young Minds)

The term **behaviours that challenge** can be explained as follows:

Poor emotional wellbeing is often labelled or described as behavioural difficulties or behaviours that challenge. Poor emotional wellbeing may also reflect the challenges of communication, or the frustrations faced by children and young people with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum conditions or other conditions that have a direct impact on their emotional, psychological or physiological abilities including children with mental health difficulties -who may feel they have little choice and control over their lives. Children and young people's poor emotional wellbeing needs to be regarded as vulnerable rather than troublesome and schools have a duty to explore this vulnerability and provide appropriate support.

Behaviours that challenge can result from the impact of a child or young person being exposed to overwhelming environments, which they do not understand, where positive social interactions are lacking, and / or personal choices are limited. Children and young people exhibiting behaviours that challenge need support and differentiation of teaching and learning to have their needs met and support to develop alternative ways of expressing themselves that achieve the same purpose but are more appropriate. A further glossary of terms and acronyms can be found in Appendix 6

6 Role of School Leaders

School leaders consistently model pro-social behaviour and praise children who mirror this around school at any given point. Leaders regularly engage with children, parents and staff on setting and maintaining the behaviour culture.

Leaders will also ensure that updates to this policy will be shared with school staff regularly. This also includes a thorough induction with new staff (inc. ECTs following the ECF programme) where STEPS tutors will deliver the STEPS training updates.

School leaders will also ensure that staff have adequate training on matters such as how certain special educational needs, disabilities and mental health problems may at times affect a child's behaviour.

6.1 Role of Teachers and staff

Staff establish very clear boundaries with the children in the school at the very beginning of September. These boundaries are regularly reinforced when required to develop a calm, positive

and safe environment for children. Staff model behaviour expectations amongst themselves so that children have good quality role models, which set the expectations for all around the school. Staff's own behaviour is reflected highly alongside the rules and expectations of the school.

6.2 Role of children

All children are fully aware of the schools behaviour expectations in all areas of the school. Every child is supported in understanding these expectations so that they are able to model them effectively around school. This maintains a calm and safe learning culture at Merry Hill. Children are confident in talking about behaviour expectations, as they are able to talk confidently about good behaviour and what it looks like. Special provision and alterations will be made for new children or for those who find it difficult to follow expectations. Further provision will be in place with characteristics and circumstances inc. Children Looked After (CLA) and pupils with SEND. Children are reminded of their behaviour expectations and designated time is given to embed this further through the teaching of PSHE (Jigsaw).

6.3 Role of parents

Parents have access to our behaviour policy on our school website. We regularly share any behaviour provision/learning that we are sharing with the children in our blogs and weekly newsletters. We maintain and build positive relationships with parents by making them aware if their child is demonstrating the desired pro-social behaviours via verbal feedback. We also ensure that parents are aware of any child who is missing behavioural expectations via meetings. Feedback will be provided in relation to subsequent changes related to behaviour where necessary.

7 COVID 19

Changes to government guidance (July 2021) no longer advises schools to implement social distancing measures, therefore children and staff are not required to follow social distancing rules. However, we will continue to implement good hygiene rules at Merry Hill and encourage children and staff to wash their hands thoroughly throughout the school day. We will also continue to implement the one way system for drop off and pick up to avoid congestion and reduce transmission risk. Government guidance will continue to be monitored and checked regularly by a member of SLT. We will also continue to keep these measures in our policy in case of a sudden requirement to do so. Please also refer to our Covid Risk Assessment for further information.

Some of these measures include:

- Following instructions on hygiene such as handwashing
- Following instructions on who children can socialise with whilst at school
- Moving safely around the school grounds (for example following the one way system, lining up on the marked lines and not entering closed areas of the school)
- Following 'Catch it, kill it, bin it' rules about sneezing, coughing and hygienic disposal of tissues
- Not sharing equipment across bubbles
- Staying in their allocated learning and playing areas
- Telling an adult if they feel unwell

If a child does not follow these guidelines, they will be reminded by the staff member working with them and where necessary, given visual reminders to support them. If the child continues to not follow the school rules, the parents will be phoned to collect their child.

8 Behaviour at Merry Hill

At Merry Hill School, we believe children flourish best when their personal, social, and emotional needs are met, and where there are clear and developmentally appropriate expectations for their behaviour. At Merry Hill School, we take our responsibility seriously as part of a community. We give special attention to establishing constructive relationships with children, with other practitioners, between practitioners and children, with parents and with workers from other agencies and take account of differences and different needs and expectations. We plan activities that promote emotional, moral, spiritual, and social development alongside intellectual development providing support and a structured approach to achieve the successful social and emotional development of children.

Children learn to consider the views and feelings, needs and rights, of others and the impact that their behaviour has on people, places, and objects. This is a developmental task that requires support, encouragement, teaching and setting the correct example. At Merry Hill School, we have an inclusive setting that supports all children as they take increasing responsibility for themselves and their actions and consider the welfare and wellbeing of others. We establish clear expectations and boundaries for behaviour, appropriate to the children's level of understanding. Therefore, we have different expectations in the nursery years and Reception classes to the children in Key Stage 1.

During both phases, we primarily promote positive behaviour. We aim to encourage self-discipline, consideration for each other, our surroundings and property. We focus on activities and routines that encourage sharing, negotiation, and co-operation. We encourage responsibility in caring for others, animals, and the environment (helping with tidying, watering plants, setting out activities, handing out drinks, snacks, and equipment). By praising children and acknowledging their positive actions and attitudes, we hope to ensure that children see that we value and respect them.

All staff are expected to model behaviour that they would expect from the children and be consistent in their approach to the management of behaviour. We organise the learning environment so that it has a positive impact on behaviour in terms of space, access, and choice of activities.

We provide opportunities for them to learn how to interpret feelings, by listening to them and offering the necessary support that will enable them to verbalise their own frustrations and disappointments. The discipline focus at Merry Hill is on safety and care, with respect for each other. Our approach will always be one that helps children to see the consequences of their actions.

Children are consulted about the 'rules and boundaries' in connection with behaviour and soon become aware of the routines and procedures and what is expected of them in both EYFS and KS1. They are encouraged to recognise that fighting, hurting and hurtful comments are not acceptable behaviour. They are encouraged to think about the effects of their behaviour on others. We demonstrate that the child is still valued even if their behaviour is unacceptable; we discuss with children acceptable behaviour in all areas of learning and experiences. Staff encourage the children to express openly their feelings/likes and dislikes and to help the children to understand the consequences and effects of their behaviour on others.

Children are constantly rewarded with praise and encouragement, both verbal and nonverbal. By positively promoting good behaviour, valuing co-operations and a caring attitude we hope to ensure that children will develop as responsible members of society.

9 Different types of behaviour

Hurtful Behaviour: We take hurtful behaviour very seriously. Most children under the age of five will at some stage hurt or say something hurtful to another child, especially if their emotions are high at the time, but it is not helpful to label this behaviour as 'bullying'. For some children, most of the hurtful behaviour is momentary, spontaneous, and often without cognisance of the feelings of the person whom they have hurt. We recognise that young children behave in hurtful ways towards

others because they have not yet developed the means to manage intense feelings that sometimes overwhelm them. Therefore, we help this process by offering support, to both children. We recognise that young children require help in understanding the range of feelings they experience. We help children recognise their feelings by naming them and helping children to express them, making a connection verbally between the event and the feeling. We help young children learn to empathise with others, understanding that they have feelings too and that their actions have an impact on others' feelings. We encourage the children to understand the meaning of their actions. We also help young children to develop pro-social behaviour, such as resolving conflict over who has the toy. We are aware that the same problem may happen repeatedly before skills such as sharing and turn taking develop. For both biological maturation and cognitive development to take place, children will need repeated experiences with problem solving, supported by patient adults and clear boundaries.

Rough and Tumble Play and Fantasy Aggression: Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear pre-occupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying. We recognise that rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive. We develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt. We recognise that fantasy play also contains many dramatic strategies such as blowing up, shooting etc for example and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong. We are able to tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

Biting: Biting is a natural development stage that many children go through, it is usually a temporary. Many toddlers and pre-school children go through biting other toddlers for many different reasons, they might be over tired, frustrated, they may be experimenting or trying to seek the attention of peers or carers. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs:

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm verbal response to the child – the wording and severity will depend on the age of the child. A stop/no hand sign may accompany the verbal command;
- The bitten child will be responded to appropriately by staff; and
- The child who bit will be expected to stay by the side of the child who was bitten and help to administer relief with the staff; for example, helping to hold a cold compress on the bite. This is to encourage empathy for the child who was bitten and so a consequence can be seen – 'Thinking Time'.

10 Strategy for Dealing with Ongoing Behaviour

Strategies include the following:

- Discussing the incident with the child – gather information;
- Ask what they could have done instead;
- Look for triggers that set off unwanted behaviour;
- Keep a log of events to find out what trigger's behaviour using CPOMS;
- Try to intervene when patterns of poor behaviour are going to occur;
- Talk to parents and work with them;
- Consequences, such as exclusion from an activity; and

- Drawing upon STEPS advice and procedures which is created by STEPS tutors and shared with parents. All strategies that are put in place by staff must be consistently followed, by ALL members of staff so that children are clear about behavioural expectations and understand the consequences of their actions. As a last resort, if all other strategies have failed, it may be necessary to discuss whether a child should be withdrawn. No decision will be taken without consultation with the Head teacher, Ms Adams.

11 Rewarding Positive Behaviour

We understand the importance of acknowledging pro-social behaviour and that it encourages repetition and communicates high community expectations and values to all children. All adults in school will praise positive, pro-social behaviours seen around the school, which link to our school values and Golden Rules. This type of behaviour will be oxygenised, usually with verbal, personalised praise, explaining how that behaviour had a positive impact on something or someone else. E.g. "Thank you for picking up that coat in the cloakroom, that made me feel really proud of you." Adults may also celebrate outstanding behaviour by notifying their teacher, sending the child to another staff member for praise or being given special roles and responsibilities around the school. We believe that praise is most effective when it is given immediately when a child shows the desired behaviour.

In addition to day to day recognition of positive behaviour, there is a Jigsaw poster in each class where children are encouraged to nominate other children who have been following the values focused on in PSHCE. The child's name will be written on the poster and this will be shared with the class at the end of every week. Every week, the class teacher will nominate a child or multiple children to receive the Jigsaw certificate. This will be celebrated in class and then sent home with the children to share with their families. All children who are awarded the certificates each week will have their names added to our 'Weekly Celebrations' Blog on the school website.

Each week a child who has been noticed for showing particular effort will be chosen to take home the class bear. They will have an opportunity to share a diary of their weekend together with their class.

There is a half termly 'Manners Table' where children who have been seen using exceptional manners are chosen to eat their lunch with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Golden time is time that is earned throughout the week. Children earn the time through demonstrating and carrying out the Golden Rules.

9 Managing Unacceptable Behaviour

Despite focusing on rewarding positive behaviour, we recognise that at times children may need extra support to follow our school rules. We will always ensure that we seek to try to understand the underlying causes of behaviour and whether additional support is needed.

All staff members will discretely manage unsettled behaviour by making subtle adaptations to practice, for example, by moving children's table spaces or by giving children sensory breaks. To begin with, staff will oxygenise the pro-social behaviour that they expect to see in others in the class in an attempt to encourage the child to show more pro-social behaviours. If the behaviours continue, the child will receive a verbal warning with explanation; the adult working with the child will continue to adapt their practice to support the child in improving their behaviour and work towards pro-social behaviours.

We understand the importance of the appropriate timing when talking to children about their anti social behaviour. It will occur at a suitable time so that it does not affect the teacher teaching and the children learning. The conversation will discuss the desired behaviour expectations, the child's

behaviour shown and how it has impacted them, their learning and the learning environment. This will encourage the child to reflect on their unacceptable behaviour and learn strategies to implement next time to ensure their behaviour improves. This will always take place at a suitable time for that child. This may be immediately or a little later on in the day once the child is able to calmly reflect on their actions. If the child continues to show unacceptable behaviour over a period of time, the teacher will meet with parents to implement a personalised behaviour plan. This will be recorded on CPOMS.

Consequences will be used in a balanced way and will focus on the act and not the child. Children should be helped to understand why their behaviour is not acceptable. A distinction has to be made between developmental behaviour and persistently unacceptable, challenging and inappropriate behaviour. All staff have a responsibility to value the process of learning how to behave appropriately and support children to become a positive member of our school community.

Therefore, all children will be given a warning before being required to complete a behaviour reflection sheet to encourage the child to improve their behaviour. If the child is required to complete a behaviour reflection sheet, the suitable adult will ensure they talk through the event when the child is settled and calm to learn what actions would have been better in that scenario so there isn't a repeat of that behaviour in the future.

All staff understand that consequences need to be used with discretion, reflecting on the child and the situation.

10 Types and signs of abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them in real life or by others (e.g. via the internet). Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Abuse can be:

- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- sexual abuse; and/or
- neglect.

Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School. All staff, and especially the DSL (or deputy), considers the context within which such incidents and/or behaviours occur.

11 Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children (Child on child)

At Merry Hill, we do not accept any acts or behaviours of sexual violence and sexual harassment. Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex. We are aware that it can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can occur online and face-to-face (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable.

Merry Hill recognises that children of any age or sex are capable of sexual violence or sexual harassment towards other children. It can also occur online.

- Sexual Violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children, or a group of children and both sexes may be affected.
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap.
- Girls, children with SEND and LGBTQ+ children are more likely to be vulnerable.

- Sexual violence refers to rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault or causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent. These are sexual offences.
- Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature and includes such things as sexual comments, sexual jokes, physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone, or displaying photos of a sexual nature; and online activity including sharing of images or video (sexting/youth produced sexual imagery), upskirting, sexualised online bullying, sexual exploitation or making inappropriate sexual comments (this list is not exhaustive)

Investigating Allegations of Sexual Harassment or Sexual Violence

Merry Hill School plays a crucial role in preventative education, creating a culture of non-acceptance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia and sexual violence/harassment. Children are encouraged to report anything that makes them feel uncomfortable, no matter how 'small' they feel it may be. Upon receiving a report, staff are trained to provide appropriate reassurance to pupils, assuring them that they have done the right thing in coming forward, and ensuring that they do not feel that their report is an inconvenience to the School.

The School's response will be:

- proportionate;
- considered;
- supportive; and
- decided on a case-by-case basis.

Sanctions for sexual harassment and violence may include:

- internal exclusion;
- external suspension; and/or
- expulsion.

The School has procedures in place to respond to any allegations or concerns relating to a child's safety or wellbeing. These include clear processes for:

- responding to a report;
- listening to all those who are involved;
- carrying out risk assessments and/or safety plans, to help determine: internal management of the incident, referral to Early Help, referral to Children's Social Care, reporting to the Police.

To ascertain our response to any Sexual Harassment or Sexual Violence incidents, we will refer to the [Brooks Traffic Light Tool](#) to determine next steps required.

12 Behaviour Stages of Consequences – In class

It is essential that all immediate consequences are directly related and appropriate to the incident that has occurred and will provide a reflective learning experience to support the child.

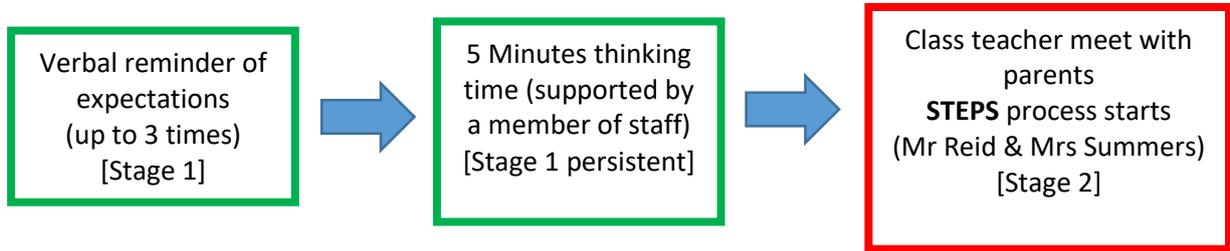
For example if the incident took place at playtime on the playground where a child has used unkind hands towards someone, the child may need to take some time out and will need to show a kind act towards the child they have been unkind to e.g. help them collect their belongings at home time. If they say something unkind they will need to say kind words to them before the end of the day. Time is made to verbally reflect and discuss their choices and what they would do next time.

Merry Hill believes that all children should be supported in all aspects of their development and that all experiences should be ones that they can learn from. Whenever using a consequence it is important to reflect and/or model the positive behaviour required of the child and ensure that they understand that it is the unacceptable behaviour that is rejected and not the child.

See Merry Hill's Stages of Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviour Table below.

Stages of behaviour at Merry Hill Infant School & Nursery

Classroom



This chart shows the pathway that teachers will take to help support you with your behaviour



Stages of behaviour at Merry Hill Infant & Nursery School		
Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class teacher to inform parents via phone at any point during stage 1 • Calling out • Distracting others from learning • Not listening to instructions • Saying unkind words to others • Use of offensive words (one off) 	All incidents and stages recorded on CPOMS 
Stage 2	Persistent Stage 1 behaviours– verbal reminder and oxygenising prosocial behaviours has not worked <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provoking and goading other children • Children <u>not being able to identify dangers</u> in their behaviour • Behaviour requires adult intervention 	
Stage 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violent behaviour towards others – seeking them out and being physically aggressive • Bullying behaviours towards others • Attempting to leave the school grounds 	
Stage 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent Stage 3 behaviours 	

Examples of sanctions may include:

- a verbal reprimand and reminder of the expectations of behaviour;
- offering a kind act towards someone E.g. collect their book bag at the end of the day, say something kind.
- loss of privileges – for instance, the loss of a prized responsibility;
- school based community service, such as tidying a classroom;
- regular reporting including early morning reporting; scheduled uniform checks;
- suspension;
- in the most serious of circumstances, permanent exclusion.

NB: All adults will use their professional judgement and will investigate to determine if the behaviour is age appropriate. The emotional wellbeing of the children will always be at the forefront of decision making.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery. The definition of bullying describes a bully as '*a person who habitually seeks to harm or intimidate those whom they perceive as vulnerable*'. We believe that children have a right to feel that they are safe from verbal, physical and emotional harassment when they come to school and understand and recognise that bullying in any form can have a potentially damaging and long-lasting impact on the mental health and emotional well-being of children and young people who experience it. Please see the school's Anti-Bullying Policy for more information. Children who engage in inappropriate behaviour towards other children will be managed as described in the school's policy on bullying including, if necessary, the severest consequences. Racial abuse will not be tolerated (see separate Race Equality Policy). Incidents of bullying or racism are to be recorded on CPOMS and are reported in summary form to the governing body.

12 Behaviour on the Playground

At Merry Hill, we understand that our children are very young and still learning how to conduct themselves in a range of new situations, particularly during their independent time on the playground. In order to support our children during these parts of the day we actively promote positive behaviours and wellbeing through:

- Preparing the children for their time on the playground. We spend a significant amount of time teaching our younger children how to play games, how to talk to our friends, how to share to ensure that they are ready to experience time on the playground with a higher volume of children. This experience can be daunting and over stimulating for some children and we ensure that we have daily practice, reminders and discussions around being safe on the playground through circle times or through assemblies. We also provide the children with strategies to help them in some social situations (not sharing, disagreements with friends etc). At the beginning of the school year, this could mean that we control the amount of time that the children have on the playground carefully until we feel like the children are ready to do so without anxiety and if we feel like the children are ready to experience the playground safely during free play.
- Class teachers setting out clear expectations of behaviour before leaving the classroom. This includes both walking to/from the classroom or playground. The children are shown how to walk sensibly and safely in a line when going to playtime and returning back to class.
- Reminding the children of The Golden Rules and modelling them carefully so children understand the context in which they are used and the positive behaviour that we encourage. These rules are displayed on the Playground. All Staff will encourage positive behaviour on the playground by using verbal praise or telling their class teacher about the good behaviour witnessed.

- Having a clear end to playtime and lunchtime through the following process:
 1. Member of staff to blow a whistle. This signifies the end of playtime or lunchtime.
 2. All children stop in their places in silence and listen to instructions from their adult.
 3. A second whistle is blown and children walk safely and calmly to their designated area on the playground.
 4. Children line up sensibly and wait for further instructions from their class teacher.
 5. Class teachers will ensure that they are ready and positioned on the playground to receive the children and monitor their lining up after the second whistle has been blown.
- Consolidation of the Zones of Regulation when playing outside. Children will be able to reflect on their feelings and emotions by being able to refer to the Zones of Regulation and identify the zone they are in and use tools to remain or return to green zone. They are able to go to a quiet space to de-escalate if needed. The Zones of regulation are displayed on the playground shed.
- Use of play leaders to support peers by manning a Friendship Bench and playing games with each other. This helps to encourage friendships and good communication skills.
- A carousel of activities are offered by staff during the week, which incorporate child-led ideas towards games and activities wherever possible. Children will take ownership of activities and give them more responsibility opportunities on the playground.

All children at Merry Hill are taught the 'The 3 steps procedure' as a way for children to help tackle unwanted behaviour from other children including their friends whilst on the playground. Our aim is to empower children to be able to resolve difficulties themselves. Staff will be there to support this

The 3 steps are:

Step 1: Say to the person doing the unwanted behaviour **“PLEASE STOP. I DON'T LIKE IT”**

Step 2: If the behaviour continues, child says **“PLEASE STOP OR I WILL TELL THE TEACHER / ADULT”**

Step 3: If the behaviour still continues then the child **TELLS AN ADULT.**

Adults will ask if they have followed the 3 steps procedure first and then will deal with incidents and make a decision based on the above guidance. The class teacher and, in some cases, the Headteacher, must be kept informed of incidents.

At lunch times, LSAs report unacceptable behaviour to the Lead LSA (Mrs Kemp) and to class teachers. All LSAs receive training and policies to support their role.

13 Extreme Behaviour

The staff and governors will not tolerate any extreme breaches of the school's expectations. Extreme breaches of the school's expectations, including persistent Stage 4 behaviours, may require more drastic measures and must involve the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher so that a record can be made of the observed behaviour or incident.

In the case of bullying and racist remarks, the school adopts the Hertfordshire County Council policies.

Individual strategies will sometimes need to be implemented to support particular children. This may include the use of clear targets with specific rewards, alternative rewards or consequences and the use of outside agencies (see Multi-agency assessment).

Parents/carers will be continually involved in supporting the school in managing their child's behaviour. It may also be appropriate to complete a Behaviour Support Plan where deemed

necessary, as set out by Hertfordshire STEPs process. There are some pupils for whom the behaviour policy must be adapted. A separate individual support plan will be put in its place.

14 Behaviour expectations and pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Staff at Merry Hill recognise that we must manage children's behaviour effectively, whether or not a child has underlying needs. We have a duty to support these children to ensure their safety is not compromised. With this in mind, we make reasonable adjustments to policy (inc. sanctions) to ensure that their needs are met and that triggers towards anti-social behaviours are monitored and support is in place to prevent this from happening.

15 Exclusions

If a child's behaviour poses a serious threat to the wellbeing of staff/ children, or is having a sustained and considerable impact on the learning of their classmates, then it may be necessary for the school to exclude a child. This must always be carried out in strict accordance with the County Guidelines. In such instances, the child's parent/carer will be informed in writing of the reasons for the exclusion, length of exclusion, steps taken to avoid exclusion and how to appeal the decision. Work arrangements will be made so that the child does not fall behind their classmates and a full re-induction plan will be put in place and explained to the child at the first possible opportunity on their return to school. Our school is very successful in avoiding the need to exclude, using this as a consequence of last resort. Bullying is often misunderstood by children and parents, but the school is adamant that it is never tolerated and always acted upon.

For further information please refer to our Exclusions Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy. This policy will be considered in conjunction with the following policies:

- Anti-bullying
- Online Safety

16 Multi Agency Assessment for Pupils who display Continuous Disruptive Behaviour

Where the school has concerns about a pupil's behaviour, it will attempt to identify whether there are any causal factors and intervene early in order to reduce the need for a subsequent exclusion. In these circumstances the use of a multi-agency assessment for pupils who demonstrate persistent disruptive behaviour will also be considered. The Early Help Module (EHM) is a tool for the identification and assessment of children and young people considered to be in need of additional support. Other agencies may include Education Welfare, Social Services, Health Services, Educational Services, Advisory Teachers, Chessbrook Education Support Centre, Colnbrook Outreach Service and the police.

17 Restrictive Physical Intervention (See separate Policy)

"Restrictive Physical Intervention" (RPI) is the term used to describe interventions where the use of force to control a person's behaviour is employed using bodily contact. It refers to any instance in which a teacher or other adult authorised by the Headteacher has to use "reasonable force" to control or restrain pupils in circumstances that meet the following legally defined criteria.

- To prevent a child from committing a criminal offence (this applies even if the child is below the age of criminal responsibility)
- To prevent a child from injuring self or others
- To prevent or stop a child from causing serious damage to property (including the child's own property)

There is no legal definition of “reasonable force”. However, there are two relevant considerations:

- The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of an incident warrant it;
- The degree of force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or consequences it is intended to prevent.

Restrictive Physical Interventions will be used when all other strategies have failed, and therefore only as a last resort. All staff should focus on de-escalation and preventative strategies rather than focusing solely on reactive strategies. However there are other situations when physical handling may be necessary, for example in a situation of clear danger or extreme urgency. Certain pupils may become distressed, agitated, and out of control, and need calming with a brief Restrictive Physical Intervention that is un-resisted after a few seconds. The safety and well-being of all staff and pupils are important considerations. Under certain conditions this duty must be an over-riding factor. Please refer to the Restrictive Physical Interventions Policy for more information.

18 Pupils’ Conduct Outside the School Gates - Teachers’ Powers

Teachers have a statutory power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers a specific statutory power to regulate pupils’ behaviour in these circumstances “to such extent as is reasonable.”

The school will respond to all non-criminal undesirable behaviour and bullying which occurs anywhere off the school premises and which is witnessed by a staff member or reported to the school, including the punishments that will be imposed on pupils.

Teachers may discipline a pupil for:

Any misbehaviour when the child is

- taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity or
- travelling to or from school or
- wearing school uniform or
- in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school.

or misbehaviour at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, that:

- could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school or
- poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public or
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

In the first instance, the incident will be reported to the Head teacher who will make a decision as to whether or not further action should be taken. The incident will be investigated in the same manner as other serious incidents of misbehaviour such as racist incidents and bullying. Consequences used by the school for discipline are set out in the Consequences section above. It may also be necessary to meet with parents/carers and involve outside agencies if appropriate.

19 Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Although teachers at Merry Hill recognise the young age of the pupils and do not intend to search them, it is important to recognise that members of staff do have the power to search without consent for 'prohibited items,' including stolen items and weapons of any kind.

School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item, however found, which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

20 Pastoral Care for Staff Accused of Misconduct

As employers schools and local authorities have a duty of care towards their employees. It is important that schools provide appropriate pastoral care to all members of staff. Any staff member that has a malicious accusation made against them shall be given support and counselling where necessary. Staff shall be interviewed to determine the circumstances and parents of the pupil shall be kept informed throughout. Often pupils have made the accusation as a result of an unmet need and don't realise the serious consequences of their actions. Where necessary outside agencies will be consulted.

21 Review

These procedures should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure consistency of approach.