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Whipton Barton Federation

Important news!

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

I met with all the children today and talked to them about behaviour across the federation. There is no doubt that our two schools have got a lot going for them but there are a few things we need to improve rapidly; the behaviour of some children is one of them. I stick to what I have previously said to you: the behaviour of most of the children for most of the time is excellent. They are polite to each other and adults, play and work well together and take their learning seriously. However, what I have seen in the term and a bit that I have been at Whipton, is that we have a minority of children whose behaviour is less than good, which causes some unhappiness in the playground and has the potential to interfere with the learning of their peers. This has to improve.

I have been working with Whipton staff on a new behaviour policy, which we are launching today. It contains seven main elements:

1. **Quality relationships:** making sure all staff know the children well
2. **Recognition not reward:** not rewarding children for what they should be doing anyway but recognising their efforts in a more personal way
3. **Teaching and learning:** making sure lessons are always interesting and challenging and matched to children's needs
4. **Behavioural expectations:** being very clear about how we expect children to behave and making sure that the children are also clear about this
5. **Special needs and disabilities:** making sure that children with additional needs are supported well
6. **Procedures:** being clear with children, parents and staff what the consequences of poor behaviour are
7. **Support for parents:** being clear about how we can support parents who struggle to understand and manage their children's behaviour

In this letter, I would like to focus on number six: procedures. What I have found is that for some children whose behaviour needs to improve, we have no consistent way to inform children and parents about behavioural concerns or map out consequences for children and parents if a child's behaviour does not improve. I will summarise how we plan to do this over the page.



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The first change is that we are introducing verbal warnings, recorded in a class behaviour log. Teachers and teaching assistants will give these as clear reminders to children that they need to change their behaviour. If a child receives three warnings in one lesson then they will automatically miss the next playtime. If they receive three warnings in an afternoon, they will miss the next available playtime the following day. At this point, we will not inform you about this.

As we are recording the warnings, we will soon know if a child is picking them up regularly. If a child is regularly missing playtimes, the teacher will contact parents to inform them of early concerns about their child's behaviour. Hopefully, with parental support and perhaps some appropriate consequences at home, we will see an improvement.

If there is no improvement, then Mr Norman, Mrs Wills or I will contact parents and ask them to attend a meeting to discuss the problem. It is very likely that following this meeting the child will be put on a behaviour report card, initially for a week. This will mean that at the end of each lesson, he/she will receive a score out of 5 from the teacher and will have to report to Mr Norman, Mrs Wills or me at the end of each day. At the end of the week, we will share the report card with parents for comment. If scores come in mostly around 4s and 5s and it is clear that the child is making an effort, then they will be taken off the report card. If not, they will remain on for another week.

Clearly, we hope that this close monitoring, praise for good scores in lessons and consistent parental support will do the trick. If not, things begin to get a bit more serious as we cannot let poor behaviour disrupt the learning of the majority of our pupils. At this stage, we will need to do two things: dig a little deeper into the causes of the poor behaviour and offer support to parents if they are struggling to manage behaviour at home. Both of these areas involve school and home working closely together.

If this is not successful, and a child's behaviour consistently disrupts the learning of other children, then we will consider fixed term exclusion. This is a formally recorded action and one which although I would hope to avoid, I will not rule out.

This may all sound very negative and I suppose this part of the behaviour policy is. However, we are committed to knowing your children well as individuals, praising and celebrating their efforts and providing them with stimulating learning opportunities – the things that really provide the foundations for good behaviour.

I hope you all feel you can support us in our efforts to make our two schools the best they can be.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Gary Read', written in a cursive style.

Gary Read