



Positive Behaviour - *Policy* 2026-28

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The College is dedicated to promoting equality, diversity and creating a safe, respectful and fair environment for all learners, staff and stakeholders. We expect learners to behave appropriately at all times and those who do not comply may be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in this policy.

2. Aim of the Policy

- 2.1 This policy aims to provide clear expectations and procedures regarding learner conduct, attendance and academic progress. It outlines supportive measures for learners and guides staff in effectively addressing issues related to learner conduct.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all learners, including those in further education, apprenticeships, school links and part-time study, across all College sites and activities. It also applies to off-site activities that bring the College's name into disrepute or negatively impact the education or welfare of others.

4. Promoting Positive Behaviour

- 4.1 The College is fully committed to promoting and celebrating equality, diversity and inclusion and building together an environment where everyone feels safe. We will endeavour to ensure the Positive Behaviour Policy reflects this commitment in its design, implementation and effectiveness.

College staff have an essential role in helping learners meet College expectations. Learners should expect staff to consistently:

- Plan and deliver teaching, learning and assessment that engages and motivates learners to achieve.
- Celebrate the successes of learners as they occur through praise and recognition.
- Develop positive working relationships with learners in their classes.
- Use a range of behaviour management strategies and apply the College Positive Behaviour Policy consistently while reminding learners of College expectations.

In addition, the College will provide:

- A safe environment where everyone feels secure.
- A commitment to fairness, equality of opportunity and respect for all members of the College community.
- Clear processes for listening to learner views, handling complaints and addressing any problems in delivering these commitments.

Celebrating Success College staff should celebrate the success of all learners whenever and wherever it occurs in a variety of ways. Focusing on success and positive outcomes is essential in developing a positive culture and ethos across the College.

Communication The foundation of this structure is the attitude of the staff in all their dealings with learners. This should be based on respect and consideration at all times. All staff should give positive feedback to learners whenever and wherever possible. This builds self-esteem and helps to build and support the ethos we are aiming for.

- Staff should be particularly careful to avoid sarcasm, personal criticism and comments which could be seen to foster low expectations or confuse learners.
- Staff should be mindful that their comments in the digital learner journey can be seen by other staff members, learners, the parents/carers of young people and employers in the case of apprentices.
- Where challenge is required, it should be focused on specific actions and behaviours, or on work, rather than on learners as individuals. Interventions should indicate how to do better and reviews should show praise for positive steps taken.
- Staff may use a range of methods to celebrate success. Examples include praise postcards, certificates and letters of commendation.

Recording Positive Behaviour in ProMonitor To record examples where learners have displayed positive behaviour, select 'Learner Comments' in the ILP and choose 'Praise' from the dropdown.

Marking and Feedback to Learners The core of our rewards system is positive dialogue which supports improvement in learning.

- Formal, written feedback and informal commentary should both stress positive achievement. Promptly returned and fully marked work shows that staff have valued the work of learners.
- Guidance for future improvement, rather than negative criticism of submitted work, should be the normal approach.

5. Trauma Informed Approach

5.1 The College aims to support learners in developing the understanding, skills and behaviours to lead fulfilling, worthwhile and happy lives. We place the wellbeing of learners as a top priority, believing good wellbeing underpins successful learning and supports progress. Adopting a trauma-informed approach, we seek to understand behaviour and educate learners on why choices made may have been the wrong ones to take.

- Behaviour is communication and each person's journey to where they are now is a result of what they have or are experiencing.
- We seek to look past behaviour to see what a learner needs from us as professionals to help them connect, repair and build resilience to manage their emotions.
- The aim for staff is to take a step back and not react in the moment but listen and respond in a more nurturing, trauma-informed way.
- When positive behaviour is not displayed, think about what is happening for that person. This work is about changing our everyday interactions with learners, challenging how we respond in difficult situations and changing our own behaviours, emotional responses and attitudes about someone in crisis.

CONNECT BEFORE YOU CORRECT

Taking a trauma-informed approach to presenting behaviour means ensuring that every effort is made to understand what is happening for the learner and seek to intervene in a supportive manner where possible, thus avoiding the need for formal procedures. This might mean setting specific interventions to help educate learners on why choices made were not positive, further exploratory discussion and where required, referral to the safeguarding, counselling, or wellbeing teams.

Prior to moving into formal stages of the Positive Behaviour Policy, we expect that staff will use trauma-informed practice to explore "what has happened which has led to this behaviour" and we encourage staff

to ask this question of learners to help them and staff better understand how the College can help them achieve the required standard of behaviour.

Ensuring restorative practice principles are followed is key to ensuring understanding has taken place by the learner, that they are accountable for their actions and that harm is repaired.

6 Reporting Misconduct

6.1 Any alleged misconduct must be reported to the learner's Head of Division, Learner Wellbeing Officer, or the Director of Learner Wellbeing and logged on Promonitor within one week of the incident.

7 Misconduct and Gross Misconduct

7.1 Examples of misconduct include disrespectful behaviour, breach of classroom standards, misuse of the computer network, smoking outside permitted areas and failure to comply with reasonable instructions from staff. Examples of gross misconduct include verbal or physical threats, aggression, possession of illegal substances or weapons, bullying, willful damage, theft, discrimination and bringing the College into disrepute.

These examples are not an exhaustive list.

The College operates a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, consumption or possession of alcohol, drugs, or prohibited items such as weapons. Any learner found with such items will face immediate suspension.

8 Staff Safety

8.1 Staff must prioritise their safety at all times and seek assistance when necessary. For more advice, staff should consult the Vice Principal People and Culture, Estates Managers, or the Health and Safety Officer.

9 Misconduct Procedure

9.1 When alleged misconduct breaches the Positive Behaviour Policy, the Investigating Officer will request a written report from the reporting staff member which must also be logged on Pro monitor. This must be submitted within one week. The Investigating Officer will then interview the learner and, if evidence supports the allegation, decide whether to issue a verbal or written warning. For more serious offences, a Gross Misconduct Hearing may be called.

Stages for Conduct:

- **Stage 1 – Verbal Warning:** A meeting is held by the Learner Services Team to address the misconduct and set expectations for future behaviour. The details of this meeting are recorded in the learner's Individual Learning Plan (ILP).
- **Stage 2 – Written Warning:** If misconduct continues, a meeting is held by the Learner Services Team to issue a written warning. The meeting and the warning are documented in the learner's ILP.
- **Stage 3 – Final Written Warning:** Persistent misconduct results in a final written warning issued during a meeting held by the Learner Services Team. The warning and the details of the meeting are recorded in the learner's ILP.

- **Suspension-** If misconduct persists after the final written warning, a suspension hearing is conducted by the Deputy Principal, an Assistant Principal or a Director. The decision and details are recorded in the learner's ILP.

Note :

- Learners cannot appeal against Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3 warnings or suspensions.
- Depending on the severity of the misconduct, the level of warning may not be sequential.
- If required the Deputy Principal can delegate authority to another member of the college management team to chair the suspension hearing.

10 Academic Performance

11.1 For concerns about poor academic performance and/or attendance concerns, a formal meeting will be called if supportive interventions have not resulted in improvement. Targets will be set and progress monitored. Persistent poor performance may lead to suspension or further disciplinary actions.

Stages for Academic Performance:

- **Stage 0 – Supportive Interventions:** Early, ongoing informal support strategies are implemented by teaching and support staff to address low-level concerns, reinforce positive behaviours, and prevent escalation, with actions monitored as appropriate.
- **Stage 1 – Verbal Warning:** The meeting is held by the Progress Tutor or Course Leader and recorded in the learner's ILP.
- **Stage 2 – Written Warning:** The meeting is held by the Head of Division and recorded in the learner's ILP.
- **Stage 3 – Final Written Warning:** The meeting is held by an Assistant Principal and recorded in the learner's ILP.
- **Withdrawal:** Where a learner is not meeting the expectations set by the college, a meeting will be arranged with the Deputy Principal or an Assistant Principal to inform the learner of their withdrawal from their programme of study.

Note:

- Learners cannot appeal against Stage 1, Stage 2, Stage 3 warnings.
- Depending on the severity of the poor academic performance, the level of warning may not be sequential.
- Where a learner under 18 withdraws from college through this process, communication will be made with the relevant parent/carers to confirm decision.

11 Gross or Persistent Misconduct Procedure (Conduct and Academic)

10.1 Suspension can be initiated by Senior Leadership, Directors, or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. The decision to suspend a learner will be communicated and standard suspension procedures will be followed. The Investigating Officer will gather reports and evidence, interview the involved parties and inform relevant staff.

The Gross or Persistent Misconduct Hearing, chaired by a Director or Senior Leader, will assess the evidence and decide on appropriate actions, which may include exclusion.

12 Special Considerations

12.1 Special considerations may be made for learners with Learning Difficulties, disabilities, or those from vulnerable groups. The setting and presentation of information can be adapted to meet the learner's needs. For learners under 16, additional special considerations may be applied.

12.2 Learners who have reasonable adjustments in place may require corresponding adjustments to meetings, documentation, and support arrangements at each stage of academic or conduct processes.

13 Suspension

13.1 If a learner is suspended, they will be invited to attend a Suspension Hearing. The outcome of the hearing may result in:

- The learner returning to college with no further action.
- The learner receiving a level of warning (if not already on a final written warning).
- The learner being excluded.

After the suspension, if the learner is allowed to return to college and is issued with or already has a final written warning, further misconduct (either conduct or academic) may result in exclusion without a further suspension. If excluded, the learner will have the right to appeal.

Learners returning from suspension will be supported by using restorative practices to help them reflect on their actions, understand the impact on others, and rebuild trust within the College community. This includes guided restorative conversations, setting clear expectations, and offering targeted support to address any underlying issues. By focusing on repairing relationships and promoting accountability, we enable learners to reintegrate positively and feel supported in making better choices moving forward.

14 Appeals after Exclusion

13.1 Learners have the right to appeal decisions related to their exclusion. Appeals must be lodged in writing within five term-time days of receiving the exclusion notice. An appeal meeting will be held within ten term-time days, considering any new evidence, the appropriateness of the exclusion and procedural compliance.

15 Returning from Exclusion

14.1 Learners excluded from the College are not eligible to apply for return for at least one full academic year. If a learner wishes to return within four years of exclusion, they must meet with the Safeguarding team to discuss their circumstances. The final decision will be made by the Principal or Deputy Principal.

16 Final Written Warning - Further Incident

15.1 If a learner with a live final written warning (within 24 months of issuance) is involved in further misconduct, they may be excluded. Appeals will follow the standard procedure.

17 Confidentiality

16.1 All information gathered during an investigation will be treated confidentially and shared only with relevant staff. Information will be managed in accordance with the United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act (2018).

18 Other relevant documents

The following documents and procedures are available from the Information & Reception Desk or on the College website and for staff on the Intranet.

- Safeguarding Policy & Procedure
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Drugs, Alcohol & Substance Misuse Policy & Procedures
- Online Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- Managing Allegations Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Respect For All statement
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy
- Staff Action in Self Defence or Emergency Situations
- Personal Safety (Staff)
- Fitness to Study and Practice Policy and Procedures
- Dealing with Abusive Telephone Calls
- Bullying and Harassment Policy (staff)

For clarification on any of the above points please contact safeguarding@southport.ac.uk