

## Policy A4: Discipline (girls)

### Discipline (Sanctions, Rewards and Restraint)

This policy has been written in line with Standard 12 (Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships) of the National Minimum Standards (NMS) for Boarding Schools (April 2015) endorsed by the Independent School's Inspectorate (ISI). This policy covers:

- 4.1. Code of Conduct
- 4.2. Rewards
- 4.3. School Rules
- 4.4. Counter-Bullying & Cyber-Bullying
- 4.5. Substance Abuse
- 4.6. Physical Restraint
- 4.7. Sanctions
- 4.8. Records of Behaviour
- 4.9 Behaviour that is attributable to a disability
- 4.10 Complaints Procedure
- Appendix 1: A guide to reasonable sanctions
- Appendix 2: Permission to drink alcohol in school – consent form

---

### NMS Standard 12: Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships

12.1. The school has and consistently implements a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils. This policy includes:

- measures to combat bullying, including cyberbullying, and to promote positive behaviour
- school rules
- disciplinary sanctions
- when restraint, including reasonable force, is to be used and how this will be recorded and managed; and
- arrangements for searching pupils and their possessions

12.2 The policy complies with relevant legislation and has regard to guidance, and is understood by staff and pupils.

---

### 4.1. Code of Conduct

At Queen Margaret's we encourage girls to adopt the highest behavioural and moral standards and to respect the ethos and aims of the school. We aim to develop mutual trust, honesty and common courtesy. We believe that strong relationships, good manners and a secure learning environment play a crucial part in the development of free-thinking girls, who are motivated to become life-long learners. In addition, we develop qualities of team-work and leadership through our extensive programme of enrichment activities.

We expect girls to treat staff and each other with consideration and politeness, and to respond positively to the opportunities, demands and challenges of school life. We deliberately do not have a long list of rules and do not offer privileges based upon age or status. We ask that girls:

- take pride in their school and show compassion for one another
- seek to fulfil their own potential, as confident and courageous individuals

Everyone has a right to feel secure and to be treated with respect, particularly the vulnerable. Harassment and bullying will not be tolerated.

Queen Margaret's is strongly committed to promoting equal opportunity for all, regardless of age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability or learning difficulty.

We expect all girls to be ready to learn and to participate fully in the school curriculum and activities. They should arrive punctually, follow instructions and behave with courtesy at all times. They should care for buildings, equipment, furniture and the environment. We expect all girls to behave at all times in a manner that reflects the best interests of the whole community, whether they are in or outside school.

---

#### 4.2. Rewards

Girls at QM should be given opportunities to succeed and their success should be celebrated. Verbal praise and the display or publication of good work via noticeboards and/or the website are all ways of noting achievements and thus increasing girls' self-esteem. A simple thank you for good behaviour is always valued.

For excellent work in any subject or for other reasons e.g. contribution to boarding, extra-curricular activities etc., a Commendation may be awarded. This is worth ten House Points. Commendation cards are kept in the Staff Room. Fill one in and enter the details into the iSAMS database before handing it to the Head's PA. She then gives it to the Head, who signs it and announces the award in assembly. The card is sent to the Tutor to pass, with congratulations, to their tutee.

For good work of a more 'everyday' nature, one or two House points may be awarded via iSAMS. When 10 house points have been recorded (in a single term) the Tutor issues a Commendation.

Commendations and House points must be recorded on the girls' record via iSAMS. Prizes are awarded to girls in each year group who collect the most Commendations and House Points each term and the points all count towards House rankings.

---

#### 4.3. School Rules

Queen Margaret's school rules are designed to encourage girls to show positive behaviour, pride in their school, compassion for others, self-respect and good discipline. Our aim is to reward and encourage good behaviour whilst setting boundaries to manage challenging behaviour.

The Head and the Deputy Head undertake to apply any sanctions fairly and proportionately, following reasonable investigation. Sanctions may undergo reasonable change from time to time but shall never include any form of humiliation or sarcasm. QM prohibits the use of corporal punishment.

All parents, girls and staff should be aware of the more serious sanctions, including temporary or permanent exclusion from the school, which the Head may impose for serious breaches of the School Rules, including any criminal behaviour. Examples of serious breaches of the rules include:

- possession or abuse of drugs or tobacco
- abuse of alcohol
- theft
- bullying
- physical assault, threatening behaviour or fighting
- sexual harassment or misconduct
- making malicious accusations against staff
- misuse of digital technology or information
- damage to property
- persistent disruptive behaviour
- putting anyone's safety at risk
- discrimination with respect to age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability or learning difficulty
- bringing the school into disrepute

In applying sanctions, especially those with serious consequences, we undertake to take reasonable steps to avoid placing any girl with medical, learning or other difficulties at a disadvantage in any way.

---

#### **4.4. Counter-Bullying & Cyber-Bullying**

The School maintains a policy to counter bullying (Policy A8) which is to be read with and forms part of this policy. The policy also outlines the School's approach to on-line safety and Cyber-Bullying.

---

#### **4.5. Substance Abuse**

The Governors and Head intend Queen Margaret's to be and remain an environment free from illegal drugs and the 'culture' of drugs. Any breach of this policy is treated as a very serious breach of school discipline.

##### **Sanctions for Possession and use of Illegal Drugs**

Any girl found in possession of or using solvents or illegal drugs should expect to be permanently excluded from the school and the police informed.

##### **Legal Highs**

Legal highs are substances used like illegal drugs but which are not covered by current misuse of drugs laws. This means that in society at large they are legal to possess or use. This does not mean that they are safe or in any way approved. Such drugs are also referred to as club drugs or new psychoactive substances (NPS). They can carry serious health risks; the chemicals they contain have, in most cases never been used in drugs for human consumption before. Such drugs are not permitted on School premises and their possession will be treated as a serious breach of discipline and will result in a sanction at Level 5 or above depending on the seriousness (supplying legal highs for use by other girls will be treated as potentially reaching level 6).

##### **Searching a girl's belongings**

The school has the power to and will initiate searches of person, belongings, accommodation etc. if the Head is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting the possession of prohibited items as set out in the DfE guidance. The search will be conducted by a senior member of staff with another member of staff as a witness. At least one member of staff will be female. Whenever possible, the girl in question will be informed that the search is about to take place and be asked to be present. The Police will immediately be involved if illegal material is discovered. There may be occasions where drug testing may be applicable (please see Policy C17: Drugs & Drug Testing).

### **Smoking**

Smoking is not permitted within the school grounds or buildings by staff, girls, parents or visitors on any occasion, in or outside full term. It is an offence to be found in possession of matches, lighters, cigarettes or other related items. This includes E-Cigarettes and Shisha Pens. Girls may not smoke off the school premises when under the direct care of the school (this includes at all times in term time, on all school trips, visits, expeditions and special occasions). Girls should not associate themselves with other who smoke and can expect to be subject to sanctions if caught with girls who are smoking.

### **Alcohol**

Girls in Years I - V are not allowed to consume or possess alcohol. Sixth Form girls over the age of 16, whose parents or guardian have provided written consent, (see Appendix 2) are allowed to drink alcohol under staff supervision on special occasions approved by the Head. This will include special dinners and at 'Cellars' (the Sixth Form social club). On all such occasions, food and non-alcoholic drinks will be available. A senior member of staff will be in charge of each event and will monitor carefully any girl who is drinking, setting an appropriate limit and being responsible for the distribution of alcohol. Girls must not drink alcohol on any school trips where local law prohibits it; otherwise the policy is as for the consumption of alcohol in school. Please see Policy B18: Substance Abuse for further details.

### **Information and Education**

As part of the school's commitment to the welfare of pupils and in accordance with the duty of care owed to girls in a boarding environment the school believes it has a duty to inform and educate pupils on the consequences of drug use and abuse. Accordingly, the school's Academic Extension programme includes short courses provided by qualified Medical Staff on substance abuse in addition to other aspects of health education such as smoking, alcohol, eating disorders, sex and sexuality and STDs. Experts are invited into the school on a regular basis and are informed of the school's values and policy on these matters before they address the girls.

---

## **4.6. Physical Restraint**

There is a common misconception that since The Children Act 1989 any physical contact with a girl is unlawful. This is not true. Where necessary, reasonable force can be used to control or restrain girls. The law forbids a teacher to use any degree of physical contact which is deliberately intended to punish a girl or which is primarily intended to cause pain, injury or humiliation. It is very unlikely that physical restraint would need to be used at QM but members of staff need to be aware of the circumstances when it may be necessary to use some form of physical restraint and the advice on how it may be safely applied.

### **The Education Act 1996**

All members of staff, provided they have been authorised by the Head to have control or charge of pupils, may use reasonable force to control or restrain girls.

### **The School Standards and Framework Act 1998**

Under section 131 of the above act corporal punishment is prohibited. QM prohibits the use of corporal punishment.

### **Types of Incidents**

There are a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force may be appropriate or necessary to control or restrain a pupil. These fall into three broad categories:

- where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury
- where there is a developing risk of injury or significant damage to property
- where a girl is behaving in a way which is compromising good order and discipline, this may in exceptional circumstances be to facilitate the conduct of a search

Examples of the first two categories are:

- a girl attacks a member of staff or another girl
- girls are fighting
- a girl is engaged in or is on the verge of committing deliberate damage or vandalism to property
- a girl is causing or at risk of causing injury or damage by accident, by rough play or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects
- a girl is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which she might have or cause an accident likely to injure herself or others

Examples of situations which fall into the third category are:

- a girl is persistent in refusing to obey an order to leave a classroom
- a girl is behaving in a way which is seriously disrupting a lesson
- a girl is acting in a threatening way to psychologically harm another

### **Reasonable Force**

There is no definition of 'reasonable force': it will always depend on all the circumstances of the case. There are two relevant considerations:

- the use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if the circumstances of the particular incident warrant it, so physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour, or in a situation which could be resolved without force
- the degree of force employed must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent; any force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result

### **Practical Considerations**

Before any member of staff considers the use of physical restraint he or she should tell the girl who is misbehaving to stop and the consequences of her failure to do so. Throughout the incident the member of staff should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil and make it clear that the physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. A calm and measured approach is needed and pupils should never be given the impression that the member of staff has lost their temper, is acting out of anger or frustration or intending to punish the girl. Wherever possible a member of staff should try to clear all other girls from the area and summon help.

### **Application of Force**

Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve members of staff:

- physically interposing between girls
- blocking a girl's path
- holding
- pushing
- pulling
- leading a girl by the hand or arm
- shepherding a girl away by placing a hand in the centre of her back or (in extreme circumstances) using more restrictive holds

In exceptional circumstances, where there is an immediate risk of injury, a member of staff may need to take any necessary action that is consistent with the concept of 'reasonable force': for example to prevent a young pupil running off a pavement onto a busy road, or to prevent a pupil hitting someone, or throwing something. In other circumstances staff should not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- holding a girl around the neck, or by the collar, or in any way that might restrict her breathing
- slapping, punching or kicking a girl
- twisting or forcing limbs against a joint
- tripping up a girl
- holding or pulling a girl by the hair or ear
- holding a girl face down on the ground

A girl should never be restrained in a way which can be interpreted as indecent.

#### **Reporting Incidents**

It is important that there is a detailed written report of any occasion when force is used. This should be made as soon as possible after the incident. This report should include:

- the name of the girl involved and where the incident took place
- the names of any other members of staff or girls who witnessed the incident
- the reason force was necessary
- how the incident began and progressed, including details of the girl's behaviour, what was said by each of the parties, the steps taken to defuse or calm the situation, the degree of force used, how it was applied and for how long
- the girl's response and the outcome of the incident
- details of any injury suffered by another girl or member of staff and any damage to property

Any such report should be submitted to the Head and Deputy Head (Pastoral), who will also help with compiling the report. When a pupil has been restrained by a member of staff the Head or Deputy Head will contact the parents and give them a report of the incident and an opportunity for discussion.

---

#### **4.7. Sanctions**

High standards are expected of QM girls and they generally meet expectation. Most girls respond positively to a simple conversation which re-emphasises our expectations, which includes a girl admitting responsibility and apologising for any inappropriate behaviour. In disciplining girls it is important to avoid humiliation and sarcasm. It is equally important to express disapproval of behaviour not of an individual. The first and obvious reprimand is a Verbal Warning.

If this proves ineffective, further consequences will be necessary. It is essential that the consequences are consistent and proportional to the level of misdemeanour. Document 18 (Responses to alcohol, smoking and substance abuse) and Appendix 1 of this policy set out reasonable outcomes, but only as an aide memoire to members of staff. Each case should be investigated singularly and an appropriate response, taking into account the girl's response, made.

**Order Mark**

If a girl fails to meet a reasonable, agreed deadline or registration, disobeys instructions or similar, a member of staff may issue an Order Mark. The girl should be informed that she has been given an Order Mark, and then the Order Mark should be entered on to the girl's record via iSAMS. This will deduct 1 House Point.

**Return**

If girls have committed a more serious offence, such as insolence, endangering their own safety, failing to report on a trip or using electronic communications irresponsibly etc. they may be issued a Return. The girl should be informed and the Return entered on to the girl's record via iSAMS. Ten house points are deducted for a Return. Girls are set academic work to complete or they help with a general task of community service. (2 hours), gated (1 week) and, if applicable, have a short visit to the Centre for Health and Wellbeing for a talk by the Senior Sister. Parents will be informed by the Housemaster or Housemistress.

**Second Return**

More serious behaviour or repeated poor behaviour will result in a second Return, which will carry with it increased community service, gating and the deduction of **10** House Points. A letter will be sent home as a written warning about the girl's behaviour and a longer visit to the Centre for Health and Wellbeing may be applicable.

**Third Return**

This may be triggered by repeated rude behaviour, a drinking offence, minor theft, offensive behaviour or careless disregard for safety. **10** House Points will be deducted and increased gating and community service sanctions imposed. Parents will be contacted and an appointment arranged. Please see Appendix 1 for further clarification.

**Temporary Exclusion**

Parents or Guardians may be required to collect a girl and take her away from school for a defined period under certain circumstances. Please see Appendix 1 for further clarification.

**Permanent Exclusion**

Parents or Guardians may be required to collect a girl and take her away from school permanently under certain circumstances. Please see Appendix 1 for further clarification.

**The School Council**

The School Council may be called upon by the Head to provide advice on changes to the School Rules and to provide advice on disciplinary or other issues as to which see policy B21 Positions of Responsibility (Girls).

---

**4.8. Records of Behaviour**

The school database (iSAMS) is used to record all good and bad behavioural events. A weekly report of positive and negative behaviour is prepared by the Administrator (Pastoral) and issued to the Head, SLT,

Senior Tutors, Tutors and Heads of House. House Captains are given lists of positive records in order to celebrate successes in House Meetings on Friday evenings.

---

#### **4.9 Behaviour that is attributable to a disability**

The School will make reasonable adjustments for managing behaviour that is attributable in whole or in part to a girl's disability. Where sanctions are being considered the School will ensure that such issues are reflected upon and the girl is given appropriate support and guidance.

---

#### **4.10 Complaints Procedure**

If there is a need to complain about the operation of our Behaviour Policy, this can be done following Queen Margaret's Complaints Policy, which is available on the school website: [www.queenmargarets.com](http://www.queenmargarets.com).

---

**Jessica Miles**  
Head

Date Agreed by Pastoral Committee: November 2016  
Review Date: November 2017

**Appendix 1: A Guide to reasonable Sanctions**

**This is intended to be illustrative and not prescriptive.** Wherever possible, sanctions should be applied in a manner proportionate and appropriate to the level of misbehaviour and context of an individual event.

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Title</b>	<b>Order Mark</b>	<b>Return</b>	<b>Second Return</b>	<b>Third Return</b>	<b>Temporary Exclusion</b>	<b>Permanent Exclusion</b>
<b>House Points</b>	-1	-10	-10	-10	n/a	n/a
<b>Parental Contact</b>	Portal Note	Email or Telephone Conversation	Formal Letter or Telephone Conversation	Formal Meeting or Telephone Conversation	Telephone Call plus Parents collect girl	Telephone Call plus Parents collect girl
<b>Community Service</b>	-	2 hours	4 hours	6 hours	8 hours	-
<b>Gating</b>	-	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks	-
<b>Report Card</b>	-	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks	-
<b>Medical Advice</b>	-	Short visit	Long visit	External appointment	External course	-
<b>Administration</b>	Any member of staff	Head of Dept., Head of House, Housemaster, Housemistress	Director of Pastoral Care or Deputy Heads	Deputy Head	Head	Head & Chair of Governors
<b>Examples of Offences to trigger responses (this list is not exclusive or exhaustive)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
			Smoking (first offence)	Smoking (second offence)	Knowingly protecting other girls in possession of illegal substances	Possession or use of illegal substances
		Minor drinking offence		Major drinking offence	Seeking to provide alcohol to other girls	Giving or selling alcohol or other illicit material to a minor
	Disobeying instructions	Minor insolence	Rude or intimidating behaviour	Offensive behaviour or fighting	Discriminatory behaviour	Pre-meditated discriminatory behaviour
	Silly or boisterous behaviour	Endangering their own safety	Endangering the safety of others	Careless disregard for safety or health	Deliberately endangering safety or health	Deliberate attempt to harm others
	Missing registration	Failure to report on a trip		Absent without leave locally	Absent without permission from school	
	General excess messiness or personal untidiness	Causing a mess or untidiness which is thoughtless towards others	Causing others to have excessive work cleaning or tidying	Careless and thoughtless mischief or creation of excessive mess or waste	Deliberate damage to property	Major and costly damage to property

	Copying work without thought	Plagiarism	Borrowing without permission	Minor and first act of theft	Major or repeated act of theft	Supplying or "dealing" legal highs
		Irresponsible use of electronic communications		Offensive use of electronic communications	Discriminatory use of electronic communications	Highly offensive or deliberately discriminatory use of electronic communications
	Failure to meet deadline	Preventing others from submitting work		Bringing the school or school community into disrepute	Possessing legal highs for the girl's own use	Bringing the school or school community into serious disrepute
		Repeat of level 1 offence	Repeat of level 2 offence	Repeat of level 3 offence	Repeat of level 4 offence	Repeat of level 5 offence

**Appendix 2: Permission to drink alcohol in School – Consent Form**

This form should be sent to parents of all girls entering the Sixth Form. The form must be completed before a girl is permitted to drink alcohol whilst in the care of the School.

---

Queen Margaret's, York

**Permission to drink alcohol in School – Consent Form**

Name of Girl: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

I give my consent, as parent / guardian, to allow the girl named above, who is a member of the Sixth Form at Queen Margaret's, to drink alcohol following the guidelines set out in the School's policies.

---

"Girls in Years I - V are not allowed to consume or possess alcohol. We believe that girls in their final two years at the school should learn that the moderate consumption of alcohol has its place in our civilisation when accompanied by food and lively conversation, therefore Sixth Form girls over the age of 16 are allowed to drink alcohol under staff supervision on special occasions approved by the Head. This will include special dinners and at 'Cellars' (the Sixth Form social club). On all such occasions, food and non-alcoholic drinks will be available. A senior member of staff will be in charge of each event and will monitor carefully any girl who is drinking, setting an appropriate limit and being responsible for the distribution of alcohol. Girls must not drink alcohol on any school trips where local law prohibits it; otherwise the policy is as for the consumption of alcohol in school. We do not allow the girls to bring alcohol onto the premises, or to consume alcohol on the journey to or from school. Sixth Formers over the age of 16 are therefore permitted to drink alcohol under the following rules:

- Alcohol is provided by the member of staff responsible of a particular event (Event Organiser), under the oversight of the Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS).
- The event at which alcohol is served must have its own unique Risk Assessment which must be counter-signed by the DPS and Head.
- Alcohol shall only be served to Sixth Form girls with a valid parental consent form.
- Written permission for the controlled consumption of alcohol under these guidelines must be received from parents for any girls in the school.
- Permission will be accepted as applying for the whole of the girl's time in the Sixth Form.
- The alcohol shall be dispensed by the member(s) of staff named on the Risk Assessment.
- No girl shall be served any alcohol if there is any indication that she has already had any alcohol in the previous 24 hours or if she is unwell.
- The maximum quantity of alcohol supplied to any girl shall not exceed the equivalent of three units of alcohol, but it may be appropriate for a lower limit.
- It is the responsibility of the Event Organiser to ensure that girls consuming alcohol are also eating a reasonable amount of food."

**Policy B18 [September 2015]**

---

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship to named Girl:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_