Discipline In American and English Schools

An Honors Thesis (Honors 499)

by

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Introduction

The scene in the cartoon *For Better or Worse* unfortunately is not too far from reality in American and British schools. Students are often off task and engaging in behavior that is inappropriate for the classroom. According to Frederic H. Jones, an American psychologist, “teachers in typical classrooms lose approximately fifty percent of their instructional time because students are off task or otherwise disturbing the teacher or other class members” (Charles 89). The persona in the cartoon accurately expresses a sentiment of teachers and authorities of education: teachers could teach more if we didn’t have to discipline.

Discipline is a concern in American and British schools. This paper addresses how discipline systems in these two countries are alike and unalike in the areas of definitions, philosophies and practices. An appendix of an American and English school discipline policy is also included.

This paper is traditional in the sense that a lot of research in textbooks and other literature was put into the final product. Of equal importance, however, is the use of student and teacher perceptions and insight and my personal observations and experiences. Because of my elementary educational background, this paper focuses on the elementary or “primary” level, as the British would say.

* The different spellings such as “behaviour” are British spellings.
In a group student teacher meeting, John Williams, Assistant Superintendent of Lake Central Schools, made a comment that my experience in the classroom has affirmed several times, "You cannot teach anyone anything unless you have control of the classroom." British authorities have the same view. A 1987 report entitled Education Observed Five: Good Behaviour and Discipline in Schools emphasizes that "good behaviour is a necessary condition for effective teaching and learning to take place, and an important outcome of education which society rightly expects" (Charlton and David 2).

The two statements above mention two key terms in relation to discipline: control and behavior. Americans and British sources define discipline in similar ways:

British-- "a general notion concerned with the learning and observance of rules" (Docking 1987 45)

American-- "steps taken to cause students to behave acceptably in school" (Charles 3)

In his explanation of discipline, Charles elaborates by saying "Discipline is tied directly to misbehavior--where there is no misbehavior, no discipline is required. Discipline is intended to suppress, control and redirect misbehavior--behavior that is aggressive, immoral or disruptive to learning" (Charles 3).

Discipline is a concern for both American and British educators. Let me cite as proof a 1984 survey of 119 teachers in England. Sixty-two percent of the teachers that responded said "yes" to the question "Do you feel that you are spending more time dealing with problems of behaviour than you ought?" (Docking 1987 6). In addition, Phi Delta Kappa has sponsored a Gallup Poll since 1969 which asks the question "What do you think are the biggest problems with which the public schools in this community must contend?" (Charles 3). According to Charles, discipline has been listed as the number one problem for the majority of the years since the poll began.
And finally, The National Education Association's 1981 Nationwide Teacher Opinion Poll showed that "nine teachers in ten said that student misbehavior interfered with their teaching, and twenty-five percent of them said it interfered greatly" (Charles 4).

Educators in both America and England have discipline problems. But surprisingly, the more serious problems are not the major concerns of teachers. Teachers in America and England are disturbed by recurring small incidents. Dockings states that "although serious incidents, such as physical assaults on teachers, are probably rare events in schools, general class control problems such as boisterousness, inattentiveness, noise, cheekiness, sullenness, disobedience and bad language are clearly matters that do bother large numbers of teachers." Another British source (J. Lawrence et al 1984) "provides a reminder that disruptive behaviour, for example: is frustrating, irritating and stressful, in extreme cases it may lead to complete breakdown of the classroom order and, more seriously, of the teacher's health" (Charlton and David 2). Lee Canter, an American authority on Assertive Discipline, justifies sending a student to the office for repeatedly talking without permission by saying that "it was precisely such behaviors, which no one considers that bad that drive teachers crazy because they so strongly interfere with teaching and learning" (Charles 3).

Although the small problems seem to get the best of teachers, the following charts highlight discipline concerns for both American and British educators. Despite the fact that the English chart reports problems encountered daily in schools and the American charts present overall problems in schools, the tables clearly show that American and English educators contend with some of the same problems. Both surveys report that students vandalize the schools and abuse teachers and students both verbally and physically.
### American Charts

**What Teachers See As Problems in Their Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>A problem (% of all teachers)</th>
<th>Not a problem (% of all teachers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruptive classroom behavior</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student absenteeism</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student turnover</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student apathy</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of parental support</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence against students</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence against teachers</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial discord</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs other than alcohol</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1987 (Johansen et al. 13)

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**Percentage of Elementary Teachers Indicating That Certain Problems in Their School Were Serious or Moderate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student tardiness</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student absenteeism/class cutting</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical conflicts among students</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery of theft of items over $10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism of school property</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student alcohol use</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student drug use</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of drugs on school grounds</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student tobacco use</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student possession of weapons</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trespassing</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal abuse of teachers</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse of teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial tensions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

English Chart

Percentages of Primary Teachers Reporting Different Types of Pupil Behaviours They Encountered During the Course of Their Duties Round the School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of pupil behaviour</th>
<th>At least once during week</th>
<th>At least daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of concern for others</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running in the corridors</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unruliness while waiting (eg to enter classrooms, for lunch)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical aggression towards other pupils (eg by pushing, punching, striking)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General rowdiness, horseplay or mucking about</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal abuse towards other pupils (eg offensive, or insulting remarks)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistently infringing school rules (eg on dress, pupil behaviour)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loitering in 'prohibited' areas</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheeky or impertinent remarks or responses</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical destructiveness (eg breaking objects, damaging furniture and fabric)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal abuse towards you (eg offensive, insulting, insolent or threatening remarks)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving school premises without permission</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical aggression towards you (the teacher)</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The British sources that I have read devote at least one chapter of the discipline guide to explaining the causes of discipline problems noting biological (i.e. heredity, epilepsy and asthma) and environmental (i.e. the family, the school and the media) factors. Gender and learning disabilities were also discussed as causes. Both English and American sources, however, discuss in great length models of discipline
and methods of making them effective. Charles highlights three aspects of discipline that must be understood to be able to successfully discipline a classroom. They are:

* Preventive Discipline--referring to what you can do to prevent misbehavior from occurring in the first place.
* Supportive Discipline--referring to what you can do to assist students when they show first signs of incipient misbehavior.
* Corrective Discipline--referring to what you can do to suppress and positively redirect misbehavior once it does occur. (Charles 5)

Of the three aspects of discipline, preventive discipline is said to be the most effective by American and British authorities. Jacob Kounin, an American professor of educational psychology, advocates preventive discipline. His work is recognized by both American and British authors in their discipline guides and emphasizes the idea that a good learning environment prevents misbehavior. His ideas include the ripple effect (correcting misbehavior in one student which may influence other students), teacher withitness (knowing what is going on at all times), overlapping (attending to two issues at one time when necessary), movement management (making smooth transitions between lessons) and avoidance of satiation (preventing boredom in students) (Charles 28-35). Charles suggests the following strategies for preventive discipline.

1. Make your curriculum as worthwhile and enjoyable as possible. Select worthwhile learnings and provide enjoyable activities. Keep in mind students' basic needs for fun, belonging, freedom, and power.
2. Take charge in your classroom. Every authority on discipline agrees that teachers must take charge firmly in their classes. They should be pleasant, but at the same time forceful. They ask for student input, but they make the final decisions.
3. Make good rules for class conduct. Rules should be short and clear. Five or six are enough. Discuss them carefully with students, then post them in the room and review them from time to time.
4. Stress good manners and living by the golden rule. Make it plain from the outset that you care enough about your students to expect the highest standards of behavior from them. Expect them to use good manners. Prohibit sarcasm and cruelty. Be the best model you can
by showing concern, manners, courtesy, and helpfulness. Discuss this point frequently and call attention to improvements. (Charles 172)

Discipline problems, despite preventive techniques, will occur inevitably. Teachers must then determine how to handle the problem. According to Charles, "misbehavior seldom starts with bad intentions" (Charles 172). But if the problem is not properly attended, a small problem can develop into a huge disaster. Supportive discipline "nips the behavior in the bud." The following list presents strategies for supportive discipline.

1. Use signals directed to a student needing support. Learn to catch students' eyes and use head shakes, frowns, and hand signals to direct them back to work.
2. Use physical proximity when signals are ineffective. This is simply moving near the student, which is usually more than enough to revive interest in the work at hand.
3. Show interest in student work. Move alongside students who show signs of restlessness, look at their work, ask cheerful questions or make favorable comments about it, and sometimes give a light challenge: "You have done a great deal of this already. I bet you can't get five more before we stop."
4. Restructure difficult work or help with it. Quickly spot students who seem to be having difficulties. Give a hint, clue, or direct suggestion that solves their problem. You may need at times to restructure an activity--change it in midstream, add excitement, or reduce the level or difficulty.
5. Interject humor into lessons that have become tiring. Students place high value on humor in their teachers. Humor provides a lift, a respite from tension. A momentary break is all that is needed. You must be careful, though, that the humor does not provoke joking and horseplay that can effectively put an end to a lesson before the work is completed.
6. Remove seductive objects. A great variety of nonschool objects regularly appears in the classroom--toys, comics, rubber bands, animals, notes, and numerous other unmentionables. They intrigue students and draw them away from the lesson. Ask students to put such objects away. If they do not, take possession of them yourself without fuss, then return them to the owners (accompanied by a few pointed comments) at the end of the period or day.
7. Reinforce good behavior, in appropriate ways at appropriate times. This should be done informally, with nods, smiles, and words such as "Thanks," "Good," "Keep it up." Compliment students when they show
good effort, but be careful not to single out individual students for praise in front of their peers. Reinforce as a group as much as possible.

8. Request good behavior. Use suggestions, hints, and I-messages as students begin to drift toward misbehavior. Show that you recognize the trying situation: “You have worked so hard, and we are all getting tired. Please give me five more minutes of your best attention and we will be able to finish.” (Charles 172)

Corrective discipline is the most controversial of the three facets. This aspect of discipline is generally perceived as negative. Charles states that corrective discipline is envisioned in the following way, “students act awful and the teacher reacts with scowls, blazing tongue, and willow rod” (Charles 174). Contrary to popular belief, however, corrective discipline, when used properly, “[stops] misbehavior and [redirects] it positively” (Charles 174). Charles lists the following strategies for an effective corrective discipline system.

1. Assertively insist on these rights in the classroom--your right to teach without disruptions and the students’ right to learn. Explain what these ideas mean and give hypothetical examples of violations. When students begin to misbehave, reassert the rights.

2. Stop the misbehavior. It is best to put an immediate end to the misbehavior rather than ignore it and hope it will go away. If the behavior is a gross violation of rules or decorum--fighting or loud swearing, for example--it must be squelched immediately: “Johnny, there is no swearing in this class!” Or “Boys, come with me at once to the office!” Milder misbehavior can be stopped by putting names and checks on the board.

3. Invoke the consequences tied to the misbehavior. If you have explained your rules and the consequences for breaking them, your students come to understand that they are choosing how to behave and that they are also choosing the consequences that automatically accompany their behavior. No need to get upset; just say, “Susan, you have chosen not to complete your work, so you must stay after school until you complete it.”

4. Follow through consistently. Make sure you invoke consequences the same way day after day. Being stern one day and lax the next only leaves students confused and encourages them to test your rules. Don’t let students talk you out of the consequences they have chosen; if you do, it encourages them to test you again.

5. Redirect misbehavior in positive directions. This is a strategy on which all
authorities agree. Ask students who have misbehaved to state what they should do instead. Provide choices if they have difficulty expressing themselves. A major purpose of classroom discipline is to teach students how to behave better and encourage them to do so. (Charles 174)

Although the ideal corrective discipline system incorporates many or all of the strategies above, corrective discipline in America and England is not ideal. Many teachers are guilty of verbally abusing students and insisting on what not to do without informing students of what they should do instead. Corporal punishment and reduction of scholastic grades for conduct are also concerns for Americans. Because corporal punishment is prohibited in England and students do not receive grades, these two methods of discipline are areas in which American and English practices clearly differ. The city of London banned corporal punishment in February 1981 (Docking 1980 229), and the country as a whole abolished this act sometime after. My classroom instructor and host mother, also an educator, in England claim that corporal punishment in England was put to an end in 1982, but none of my sources have given a specific date.

David Orentlicher is a medical doctor who researched corporal punishment. He strongly opposes corporal punishment saying "children are the only citizens who are regularly subjected to physical punishment" (Orentlicher 3205). Orentlicher brings to light that despite opposition to corporal punishment in schools by such professional organizations as the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychiatric Association and the American Public Health Association, corporal punishment remains legal in twenty-nine states. The charts below lists the states that have banned corporal punishment. The article also notes that most major cities have forbidden the use of corporal punishment in states that retain the right of corporal punishment. For example, although the state of Indiana has...
not banned corporal punishment, the Gary Community School Corporation, the system in which I was educated, has put an end to this form of punishment. In addition, the School City of Hammond, the system in which my student teaching was completed, has restricted the use of corporal punishment to a few authorized employees.

**States in America That Have Banned Corporal Punishment**

- Alaska
- Arizona
- California
- Connecticut
- Hawaii
- Iowa
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- Minnesota
- Montana
- Nebraska
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New York
- Oregon
- North Dakota
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Wisconsin
- South Dakota
- Rhode Island
  (and the District of Columbia)


Those who oppose corporal punishment use the following data to support their beliefs: "the right of children to be free from physical assault, the lack of evidence showing a need for corporal punishment, the risk of serious harm to students, and the possibility that use of physical force on students will teach them that physical force is an appropriate method of resolving conflicts (Orentlicher 3205). Orentlicher adds that corporal punishment is not only less effective than alternative approaches, but the danger children face, both physical and emotional, includes broken bones, bruises, possible death, low self-esteem, anxiety and depression.

Thomas Diamantes, an associate professor and chair of the Education Department at Pikeville College in Pikeville, Kentucky, also opposes corporal punishment. He presented the results of a 1983 study done by K. Q. Kinnard and J. O.
Rust. They found that teachers who tend to use corporal punishment have the following character traits:

- tend to be comparatively close-minded
- were more likely to have been punished themselves while in school
- tend to be those with fewer years of experience
- display less of a variety of disciplinary techniques
- tend to be anxious, emotional, and impulsive

He suggests the following alternatives to corporal punishment.

1. home contact
2. written statement (student writing out his/her view of incident)
3. time-out
4. daily progress sheet (teacher writes feedback of student behavior)
5. isolation
6. work detail (assisting custodian after school)
7. detention
8. field trip (visiting jail for shock therapy or restaurant for good behavior)
9. Saturday suspension
10. reinforcing systems (using small awards to reward proper behavior)

While completing my junior experience at St. Mary’s Church of England Primary School, a parent approached me, concerned with her upcoming move to America. Her husband had been relocated to Florida, and her son would have to go to American schools. Her major concern was the use of grades. She had heard horror stories of how students were given bad grades for misbehavior and were retained as a result. English schools do not retain students, and this practice was also troubling for her.

Dockings addresses the topic of reducing scholastic grades due to poor conduct briefly by using research by American economists Bowles and Gintis. According to their studies, “Teachers are likely to reward those who conform to and strengthen the social order of the school with higher grades and approval, and punish
violators with lower grades and other forms of disapproval, independent of their respective academic and cognitive accomplishments’" (Dockings 1980 22). Gardner Hobbs, an associate professor of Education Administration at South Carolina State College, addressed the legality of reducing students' grades for misbehavior in an article in The Clearing House magazine. He wrote of several court cases that challenge the legitimacy of using factors other than academic performance to determine scholastic grades. He discovered that although some school boards hold policies that direct teachers to lower grades as a disciplinary measure, these policies are unconstitutional.

Hobbs holds the position that “discipline for nonacademic misconduct and academic achievement are different and should be reported differently” (Hobbs 204). The School City of Hammond currently practices this approach. Students in Hammond schools receive scholastic, effort and conduct grades. Teachers use various methods to assign the grades. An approach that in my opinion is very effective is the use of conduct strips. Students receive a strip of paper weekly with the grades “A+” to “F” on it. Pluses and minuses for each grade expect “F” appear on the strip. Students clip a grade when they exhibit inappropriate behavior. The grade that is left on the strip at the end of the week is the student’s weekly grade. The semester grade that appears on the report card is the average of the student’s weekly grades.

Although the previous pages have discussed approaches to discipline, the appendix presents specific discipline policies from St. Mary’s Church of England and John H. Vohr in Gary, Indiana. The guide for St. Mary’s is specifically for discipline and is more detailed, but the two policies have many of the same features. For example, they both give a rationale for discipline. They list specific rules for students to follow. In addition, the rules generally tell students what to do instead of what not to do (i.e. walk in the building as opposed to don’t run in the building). St. Mary’s adds an
additional aspect of giving a rationale for each rule. And finally, the consequences of breaking the rules are explained.

American students participating in the Elementary Education Overseas program (EDEL-O) and Elementary Education 360 (EDEL 360) were given an opportunity to evaluate the discipline practices of teachers and to give their overall perception of British and/or American discipline. The twenty EDEL-O participants surveyed taught in ten schools in the surrounding cities of London, and the fifteen participants from the EDEL 360 group taught at Grissom Elementary in Muncie, Indiana. The survey results were very interesting. The chart below reports student views on the questions asked.

EDEL-O and EDEL 360 Survey Report

QUESTION: Was there a unified system of discipline in your school (such as "freeze")?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDEL-O</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDEL 360</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUESTION: Does your teacher call the students degrading words?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDEL-O</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDEL 360</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUESTION: Does your teacher try to have control over the students at all times?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Usually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDEL-O</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDEL 360</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTION: Do you feel American schools in general are well discipline?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Usually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDEL 360 only</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUESTION: Do you feel American schools are more disciplined than English Schools?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Usually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDEL-O</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first question addressed unified systems of discipline in schools. This question was a concern because “studies in school effectiveness have pointed to the fact that good behaviour is more likely to be achieved if the staff as a whole work in relation to a common policy” (Docking 1987 96). Only twenty-five percent of the EDEL-O group and sixty-percent of the EDEL 360 group were aware of a unified system. A cute system described by an EDEL-O participant was “roll them (your hands), roll them, give a little clap; roll them, roll them, put them in your lap.” Those students at Grissom who were aware of the unified procedure described a check system where students received checks for such behaviors as being off task, talking and leaving class without permission. The accumulation of three checks resulted in detention. Fighting and being disrespectful are examples of behaviors that led to an automatic detention.

Unified systems were observed in both American and British classrooms by me. Teachers at St. Mary’s consistently used “freeze” as a discipline system. This system was observed in assembly, on the playground and in the classroom. Wallace school in Hammond has seven school rules that are posted throughout the school. The
discipline committee developed hand signals for each rule. Teachers would give the signal and either thumbs up or thumbs down. For example, the sign for walk in the building is the movement of the index and middle finger in a walking fashion in the palm of the opposite hand. This sign and thumbs up indicates a good job of walking in the building. A unified system is an aspect of discipline that American and British schools have in common. From my observations, this aspect is generally effective.

Verbal abuse of students by teachers was referred to previously in this paper as an inappropriate means of dealing with discipline problems. The second question deals with the use of degrading remarks by teachers. An overwhelming eighty-five percent of the EDEL-O group and only one of fifteen in the EDEL 360 group reported that their instructors degraded students. Examples of the demeaning words reported were “stupid,” “useless,” “disgraceful,” “nuisance” and “idiot.” Students participating in EDEL-O also described in detail degrading acts such as a teacher telling a child who kicked another child to remove her shoes because she is a donkey for the rest of the day, and donkeys do not wear shoes. Another example is a teacher drawing a circle on the board and having a student put his nose in it. Punishments similar to this, from my experience, were common in America prior to 1980. Teachers in my elementary school made gum chewers wear the gum on their noses and made students who acted “babyish” display pamper boxes on their desks. Although such acts may still exist today, they do not appear to be as prevalent. This type of punishment was not witnessed by me at St. Mary’s or any of the schools at which I have taught.

Having control, as mentioned before, is necessary to teach. One hundred percent of the EDEL 360 group and seventy-five percent of the EDEL-O group reported that their instructors tried to have control of the class at least some of the time. My instructor at St. Mary’s kept control by keeping students busy working and saying
"thank you," indicating to the students that they were getting too loud, she had had enough of the noise and that she did not want anymore. My instructor at Wallace used various techniques as waiting until everyone was quiet while standing at the head of the class, flicking the lights and counting to three.

And finally, EDEL 360 students were asked their overall view of American schools, and each student responded that American schools are at least sometimes well disciplined. All of the EDEL-O group reported that American schools are at least sometimes more disciplined than English schools.

Conclusion

Discipline in America and England have both similarities and differences. They are similar in that they both believe that good discipline is essential to learning. In addition, educators in both countries are fatigued by several types of misbehavior of which the small, recurring problems are the most frustrating. And finally, preventive strategies and unified systems are two approaches that American and British teachers use to shape their discipline systems.

The use of corporal punishment in America is an example of one of the differences in the two discipline systems. Another variation is the reduction of scholastic grades as a disciplinary measure. And finally, differences occur naturally as a result of teacher and administrative styles.

From my survey, observations and personal experiences, Americans have poor perceptions of English discipline and the British have poor perceptions of American discipline. These views lead to one conclusion: Even though some good discipline practices are being used in both countries, there is room for improvement in both discipline systems. Educators in America and England have the opportunity to read and learn about effective approaches to discipline. Researchers agree that there is no
single, correct way to handle discipline. Teachers must search for effective means of controlling their classroom to be able to use instructional time efficiently. Educators must be prepared to handle misbehavior such as the mischief in the cartoon. With the application of some of the strategies in this paper and others, teachers can learn to handle discipline problems effectively and still love their students--for better or for worse.
APPENDIX
"DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES"

The Education Act 1986 states that it shall be the duty of the head to determine measures to be taken with a view to -

a) promoting among pupils self discipline and proper regard for authority;
b) encourage good behaviour on the part of pupils;
c) securing that the standard of behaviour of pupils is acceptable;
d) otherwise regulating the conduct of pupils.

The broad aims of St Mary's School's "Discipline Guidelines" are:-

(1) To develop in pupils a sense of self discipline and a realisation that they must accept responsibility for their own actions.
(2) To encourage mutual self respect within a Christian ethos, conducive to learning.
(3) To encourage a common dialogue for Home/School expectations.
   (A discipline policy statement accompanied by a letter from the Head is given to all parents of children admitted to St Mary's).

SCHOOL RULES

We try to keep these to a minimum, as well as to stress the positive aspect (i.e. DO's not DON'Ts). It is important that the children are aware of the rules and that they understand and agree that they are FAIR. They should also realise that most rules are made for the purpose of their own safety.
SCHOOL RULES (Cont'd)

(1) Always be polite and well mannered. The children will be encouraged to try to be kind and gentle towards others. They should always aim to treat others as they would like others to treat them. (Matt. 7 v 1-5). "Do as you would be done by!" Bullying and unkindness will not be tolerated and will be dealt with firmly, in an appropriate manner.

(2) Always WALK in the school building. The safety aspect of this rule should be obvious.

(3) Always line up QUIETLY and in an ORDERLY FASHION at the beginning of the school day and after playtimes and lunchtimes. We consider that an orderly, well disciplined start to a school session in conducive to a good learning atmosphere. It also helps to ensure a quiet and controlled beginning to lessons.

(4) Always ask permission (and have a good reason) before entering the school buildings during playtimes and lunch-time breaks. Supervision is only provided in the playground during these times (except when lunch is being eaten). Misdemeanours often occur when children are unsupervised on these occasions.

(5) Certain things are not allowed to be brought into school. These include sweets, chewing-gum, sharp objects, jewellery, fizzy drinks and money (unless requested by the School Secretary).

The school has a right to expect basic good manners and general co-operation from the children to all members of the school community and it is essential that parents work alongside the school towards the fulfilment of this expectation.

As recorded in our "Discipline Policy Statement" the purposes of such a policy are:-

1. To engender a calm atmosphere/ethos.
2. To engender mutual self respect, as well as respect for oneself. The positive side of discipline should be emphasised here. Often encouragement and praise are more meaningful than criticism and punishment. The use of "Smiley Books", rewards, public acknowledgement, reports to parents etc. may well prove to be valuable.
3. Consideration of Safety aspects. Not only are these inherent in the school's basic rules but they feature in many varied day to day "incidents" which are all part and parcel of life in a primary school.
4. To engender respect for authority. Society relies on an ordered environment and authority is instrumental in achieving this.

cont'd..
4. To engage respect for authority (cont'd)
   Such authority should always be consistent and fair. Authority which
   is inconsistent and unfair does not deserve respect. We should always
   be aware of the essential need for equality of opportunity. All
   instances involving the imposition of discipline should be investigated
   fairly and there should always be a valued recognition of a child's
   sense of grievance.

5. To engage respect for the environment. We refer to the immediate
   school environment at large. Children should be taught to do their
   bit to keep the school tidy. Furniture and fittings should be treated
   with care and respect. Litter and graffiti should be discouraged.

6. To encourage a harmonious home/school contract of partnership. The
   discipline and welfare of the children is a joint responsibility.
   The home has a greater influence than the school but it is vital that
   both home and school agree upon the basic tenets of good discipline,
   and work together to achieve them.

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CHAIN OF DISCIPLINE

(a) TEACHER The teacher is responsible for the immediate checking of
   misbehaviour. It is hoped that a well planned classroom environment will
   encourage good discipline. Bad behaviour is also less likely if work is
   interesting, varied and suited to each child's needs and abilities. At
   St Mary's we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which is devised
   to foster continuity, progress and interest. We expect that the class
   teacher will be able to deal with the vast majority of misdemeanours.
   Only the more serious ones need to be dealt with by the Head.

(b) HEADTEACHER The Head will be involved if the matter is serious or
   if, after a number of warnings by the class teacher, the offender still
   persists. At this stage the use of sanctions may be decided upon but it
   is more likely that a final warning may be given before sanctions are
   employed.

(c) SANCTIONS In some cases sanctions may be imposed by the class teacher,
   without reference to the Head. It is more likely, however, that the Head
   will be involved. A range of sanctions (which should never be overused)
   are available, such as:-

   cont'd..
(c) SANCTIONS (Cont'd)

(1) A minor penalty e.g. picking up litter for those who drop it.
(2) Repeated or extra work (especially where the level of presentation is clearly below the pupil's potential).
(3) Loss of privileges e.g. playtimes, membership of clubs, the right to go on visits, membership of school teams.
(4) Minor "community" service of some kind e.g. removal of graffiti.
(5) Restitution or repair of wilful damage and/or payment for it.

(d) PARENTS In serious cases, parents may be sent for at once.
Involving parents has the advantage of being a sanction, as well as giving an opportunity to throw more light on the problems behind the misbehaviour. It also provides the possibility of joint/consistent action between school and home; thus preventing the pupil from the temptation of playing one off against the other.

(e) EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES The LEA has support services (Psychological Service, Service for children with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties) which could be approached. Parents must first agree to this course of action.

(f) GOVERNORS If problems persist when all else fails, the Governors may be asked to make a decision about the future education of the pupil, as it affects St Mary's.

(g) EXCLUSION The power to exclude from school may be exercised only by the Head. The exclusion must be "fixed term", "indefinite" or "permanent". Procedures relating to exclusion are laid down by LEAs and Governors in accordance with the 1986 Education Act's legislation.

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CONCLUSION

As a caring, Christian school we must be constantly aware of the importance of good discipline, fairly administered. Our children need to be aware of the parameters. (A line has to be drawn somewhere, but wherever it is drawn, it is likely to be challenged. Some pupils will want to test the system to see if they can get away with it.) It is cont'd.
INCLUSION (Cont'd)

important for pupils to know that they are under supervision and that checks are made. Prevention is always better than cure! It is essential, therefore, that staff are consistent and that they set the right examples to pupils regarding punctuality and commitment. It is expected that teachers will consider themselves responsible at all times for the behaviour of pupils within sight and sound of them. A teacher's influence will depend upon attitude, example, teaching skills and the rapport established with pupils.

I am convinced that at St Mary's we have a conscientious and committed staff. With support and co-operation from the parents, I look forward to the creation of an orderly and well controlled environment within the school, where mutual self respect will flourish and where learning will prosper.

T A English
Headteacher
JOHN H. VOHR
PARENT-STUDENT
GUIDE
1992-1993
W. COOK,
PRINCIPAL
SECRETARIES

D. Thomas, Registrar
A. C. Yarber, Treasurer
STUDENT APPEARANCE

Students will be expected to keep themselves well groomed and neatly dressed at all times. Any form of dress which is considered contrary to good hygiene or which is disruptive or distracting will not be permitted.

Shorts, tube tops, halter, or other similar items of clothing will not be permitted. Shirts advertising alcoholic beverages, or those with obscene or questionable printing on them will not be permitted. Because of their destructive nature, no metal cleats or taps can be permitted on boots, shoes, belts, or arm bands.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students are asked to bring a pair of gym shoes for use inside the gym. Students may leave their shoes at school if they are marked with their name in clear writing and the child assumes responsibility for their shoes. Students in grades 4-6 must dress for gym and are required to wear appropriate clothing during this activity.

VANDALISM AND PROPERTY DAMAGE

Our school building and equipment cost you as taxpayers to construct, purchase and maintain. Students who destroy or vandalize school property will be required to pay for losses or damages. If students willfully destroy school property, suspension may be necessary.

BOOK RENTAL FEES

The book rental fee is due by Friday of the first week of the semester. The fee will provide your child with necessary textbooks. It does not pay for instructional supplies. Your prompt payment is important for your child and all other children in the schools.

If parents were required to purchase textbooks the cost would be far greater than the rental fee.

SCHEDULE FOR SEMESTER FEES

| Kindergarten | $5.00 | $5.00 |
| Grade 1      | 15.00 | 15.00 |
| Grade 2      | 17.00 | 17.00 |
| Grades 3     | 18.50 | 18.50 |
| Grade 4      | 17.00 | 17.00 |
| Grade 5      | 18.00 | 18.00 |
| Grade 6      | 18.50 | 18.50 |

You may pay fees in the general office or send a check payable to John H. Vohr School.
1992-1993 CALENDAR

August 25......................First Day for Teachers
August 26......................First Day for Students
September 7....................Labor Day - Schools are Closed
October 22 - 23.............Teachers' Institute Days - No School for Students
October 30.....................End of 1st Grading Period (1/2 Day for Students)
November 6.....................1/2 Day for Elementary Students Parent/Tea. Conf.
November 11........................Veterans Day (Schools are Closed)
November 26-27..............Thanksgiving Holiday - Schools are Closed
December 21 - January 1.....Winter Break - Schools are Closed
January 18.....................Martin L. King, Jr's Birthday-Schools are Closed
January 20-21..................Semester Exams for High Schools
January 22.....................End of 2nd Grading Period (1/2 Day for Students)
March 26........................End of 3rd Grading Period (1/2 Day for Students)
April 1-2.......................1/2 Day for Elementary Students Parent/Tea. Conf.
April 9-16......................Spring Break
May 31..........................Memorial Day - Schools are Closed
June 9.........................1/2 Day Elementary Students
June 9 - 10.....................Middle School Exams (1/2 Day for Students)
June 10........................High School Exams (1/2 Day for Students)
June 10........................Last Day for Students
June 11........................Last Day for Teachers

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be in school except in cases of emergency or for reasons explained below. The list following are the only legal excuses for absences from school:

1. **Personal Illness** - Students who are absent must bring a note from the parent or doctor.

2. **Death of a Relative** - Any absences arising because of this circumstance must have a written note from the parent or guardian.

3. **Observance of a Religious Holiday** - Any student of any religion shall be excused if his/her absence was for the purpose of observing a religious holiday consistent with his/her creed or belief.

4. **Vacation Plans** - Vacation plans for families can be facilitated by notifying the school at least one (1) week prior to the date of vacation so that teachers can prepare work for students.

5. **ANY OTHER REASONS MUST BE EXCUSED BY THE SCHOOL PRIOR TO THE ABSENCE.**

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

Students are not permitted in the building before 7:55 a.m. in the morning. At 7:55 students will be allowed to enter the building. When the bell rings at 8:00, students are expected to be in their classrooms, seated and ready to begin the day's activities. Classes begin promptly at 8:00 and end at 2:30 p.m. each day. The morning kindergarten classes begin at 8:00 and end at 10:45 a.m. Afternoon kindergarten classes begin at 11:45 and end at 2:30 p.m.
HEALTH SERVICES

A school nurse is available on Tuesday and Thursday of each week. Students who become ill at school should report to the nurse's office. Students must report to the office whenever the nurse is not in the building. If the illness or injury is of such a nature that your child should go home, the parent will be notified either by the nurse or office. STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO LEAVE SCHOOL WITHOUT PERMISSION.

LEAVING SCHOOL

As a matter of principle, students are not permitted to leave or visit any of the nearby stores, restaurants, or go home with a friend or classmate during either lunch hour if they are expected to remain at school during lunch hour.

Special permission may be granted to students bringing a note from home signed by a parent with a working telephone number and approved by the principal. All notes will be confirmed by the office before permission to leave the school grounds will be granted. This procedure is limited to one day at a time.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS

If it is necessary for a student to leave school early, he/she must have a written note from the parent. Teachers cannot release a student to anyone without prior approval from the office. All students will be released to parents from the office.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER

So that our files can contain accurate information, students are requested to submit to the office any change of address or telephone number. All parents should have an emergency number where they could be reached during the school day.

TELEPHONE

Students will not use the office phone for personal calls except in emergency and with office permission. The pay phone in the foyer is for student use.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES - VISITATIONS

Parents are invited and urged to visit our school at any time. Unless you are coming to observe a program, please report to the school office for a Visitor's Pass before going to the classroom.

Teachers are very willing to discuss the progress of your child, but in general, an appointment should be made for a conference. Teachers should not be expected to stop regular classroom work to have a conference with a parent. Individual conferences can be arranged between 2:30 and 3:10 p.m. Report card conferences are held following the end of the first and third grading periods. Report cards will not be distributed to the students unless a conference is held at these times. Appointments will be made by the teacher.
REPORT CARD DISTRIBUTION

Kindergarten through grade 6 report cards are sent home four times during the school year.

November 6  1st Grading Period (1/2 Day for students Parent pick up cards)
January 22  2nd Grading Period
April  1/2  3rd Grading Period (1/2 Day for students Parent pick up cards)
June 10   4th Grading Period

Marks
All marks must measure the achievement of students in class work. Marks are never used to punish students. The following system of marks will be used for grading instructional area:

KINDERGARTEN

+  - Mastery of a skill - The child performs skills successfully most of the time.
✓ - Progress Toward Mastery - The child is making satisfactory progress toward mastery of the skill.
\ - Insufficient Progress - The child is not showing sufficient progress toward mastery of the skill area.

PRIMARY 1 - 3

R - Rapid Progress
S - Sufficient Progress
N - Needs to Improve
I - Insufficient Progress

INTERMEDIATE 4 - 6

A - Excellent Progress
B - Good Progress
C - Satisfactory Progress
D - Needs to Improve
F - Failure

Letter grades/symbols are to be assigned to major instructional areas. Grade level refers to traditional grade placement and should be indicated to the left of slash marks for instructional areas. Possible retention will be checked only following the 2nd & 3rd marking periods.
Works Cited


