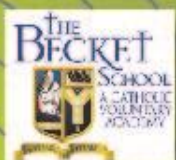


WORK HARD.

BE KIND.

DO THE RIGHT THING.



THE BECKET WAY

THE BECKET WAY - INTRODUCTION

"WORK HARD. BE KIND. DO THE RIGHT THING"

The Becket School

The Becket School has a rich history and was founded as a grammar school back in 1929; it then merged with Corpus Christi School in 1976. It has always had an excellent reputation in Nottingham, the East Midlands and the country for its academic results, sporting achievements and its values. Students from The Becket have left to be doctors, lawyers, teachers, priests, entertainers, professional sportsmen and much more. For staff and students it is a privilege to be part of this community and we have the responsibility of ensuring that this continues to be a wonderful school; for every one student that joins The Becket School, there are at least four who were unable to join. What has made The Becket so successful during all of this time? Whilst the buildings, students and staff have come and gone over the years, it is the school's values and focus on Catholic education that have never changed.

The Becket Way

The Becket is a Catholic school. It is the gospel values that have underpinned the school's success in all of that time and our focus on following Jesus' example.

So, what are the gospel values that we refer to in our School Mission statement? Jesus summarised these during the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-12) where he gave several blessings, each beginning with the phrase "Blessed are (e.g. the pure in heart)....". He was referring to the values and qualities required to get to heaven. According to the sermon, the following character qualities and values help individuals to live fulfilled and happy lives:

- Integrity
- Compassion
- Gentleness
- Justice
- Forgiveness
- Peacemaker
- Service



We have summarised these further into one simple message: **Work Hard. Be Kind. Do The Right Thing.**

| Work Hard. | Be Kind. | Do The Right Thing. |
|------------|--|--|
| Service. | Compassionate. Peacemaker. Gentle. | Integrity. Justice. Forgiveness. |

The Purpose of Education

The purpose of The Becket School is to educate. The purpose of Catholic education is to develop you academically, socially, spiritually and to grow in the love and knowledge of Jesus Christ. We believe that all of you can live up to the challenge that Jesus has set for us and maintain the successful legacy of the school. We will help you to do this through a mixture of support and challenge. If we're strict, always know that this is because we believe in you and want the best for you. Part of our job is to teach you the benefits of these values and help you to put them into practice.

TOP OF THE PYRAMID

"HABITS BECOME YOUR CHARACTER, YOUR CHARACTER BECOMES YOUR DESTINY."

Key terms

- Discipline: Training people to be in control of themselves through rules.
- Habits: A routine of behaviour that is regularly repeated.
- Character: The qualities of a person that make them who they are.
- Trust: Believing in the reliability and truth of someone.

What is discipline and why does it make us successful?

Discipline comes from the word disciple, which means learning how to follow rules and norms. Jesus taught the disciples how to follow God's plan and at The Becket we use discipline to help you to be the best disciple and the best version of yourself. Discipline allows you to **Work Hard. Be Kind. Do The Right Thing.** In one experiment, three-year old children were offered a choice between one small reward (a marshmallow) or two small rewards if they could wait 15 minutes during which the adult left the room. The child who could control themselves and their temptation for the immediate reward tended to be more successful people (education, jobs, health) later in life.

It is not just the teacher's job to teach you their subject, it is also their job to teach you and help you to be disciplined. They can help to do this by instilling good habits, challenging behaviour which won't make you successful, or rewarding behaviour which will make you successful. Teachers will remind you when your behaviour is not in keeping with 'The Becket Way' and any detentions you may get are to help you learn an important life lesson and to help you to succeed. Detentions are reminders to improve and signal to you what the community and society values are: responsibility, punctuality, hard work and kindness. Remember that when your teachers are being strict, they are doing this because they want the best for you and believe in having high expectations of you.

We don't just want you to behave according to 'The Becket Way' in order to avoid detentions, we want you to do it because we genuinely believe that it is the way that enables you to be the most successful person. The Becket pyramid is there to remind you of the best reasons to do this; we want you to always aim to be at the top of the pyramid and to be an attentive, hard-working, respectful and kind person because it is *who you are*. It is your habit and your character.

THE BECKET WAY: WORK HARD. BE KIND. DO THE RIGHT THING.



Working towards the top of the pyramid means building trust. For you to work well with the teachers, they need to trust you. Trust is like a bucket; easy to spill but harder to fill. Do everything you can to fill your bucket; when something does goes wrong, take responsibility for your actions and avoid not telling the truth.

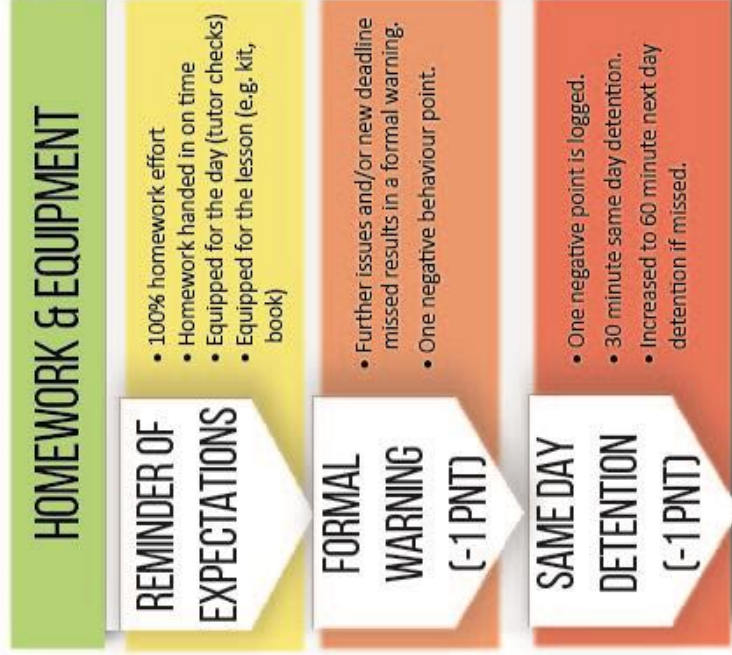
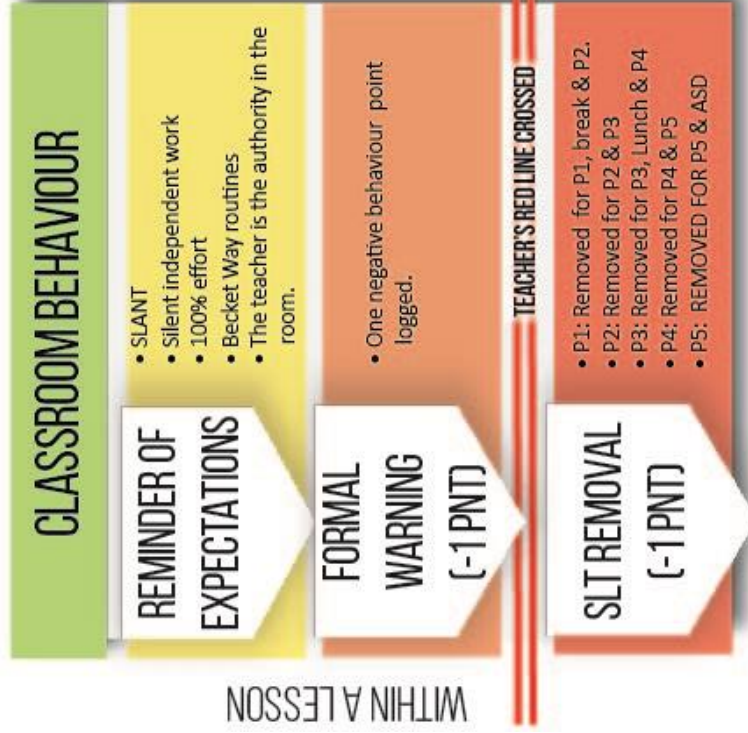
Behaviour and Rewards at The Becket School

We aspire for our students to **Word Hard. Be Kind. Do The Right Thing**. Because it is who they are, not because they are avoiding detentions or chasing positive points. However, in order to protect the community, challenge you to be the best you can be and encourage successful habits, we will operate a strict system of rewards and consequences. Remember also that for learning to work for everyone, sometimes imperfect decisions must be taken swiftly by the adults. We will learn later about how you should deal with moments where you feel this may be unfair.

The consequence and behaviour systems are shown over the next two pages.

THE BECKETT WAY:

WORK HARD. BE KIND. DO THE RIGHT THING.



OUTSTANDING BEHAVIOUR

DO NOT LET ANYONE LOOK DOWN ON YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE YOUNG. BUT BE AN EXAMPLE FOR THE BELIEVERS IN YOUR SPEECH, YOUR CONDUCT, YOUR LOVE, FAITH, AND PURITY - 1 TIM 4:12



THE BECKET SCHOOL REWARDS SYSTEM

EVERY HALF TERM THOSE STUDENTS WHO HAVE EARNED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF HOUSE POINTS WILL EARN REWARDS TO **CELEBRATE THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS**.

EVERY STUDENT WILL NOW COLLECT **HOUSE POINTS** AND THESE WILL NOT ONLY EARN REWARDS FOR YOU BUT ALSO FOR YOUR HOUSE.

EVERY HOUSE POINT EARNED NOW GOES TOWARDS YOUR HOUSE TOTAL AND THE PRIZE FOR THE WINNING HOUSE IS A NON UNIFORM DAY PLUS AN EXTRA REWARD FOR EVERYONE IN YOUR HOUSE.

ROUTINES — READY TO LEARN

“NOT A MINUTE WASTED. EVERY SECOND COUNTS”

Key Terms

- Routines: A usual or fixed way of doing things.
- Clarity: When something is clear and easy to understand.
- Attention: Taking notice of someone/something.

Why do we need routines?

The average student at The Becket can have between 12-20 teachers in any one year. It is very difficult to remember the demands of all of these different teachers in all of the different classrooms. ‘The Becket Way’ routines make it easier and simpler for all students and staff at the school. Without clarity, it is difficult to know whether we are doing the right thing. Routines helps everyone to know that they are doing the right thing and for good reasons.

For example, at other schools, it can take up to 5 minutes for students to enter the classroom and to be ready to learn. At The Becket, our aim is to be ready within 30 seconds of entering the classroom. If we can save 2 minutes per lesson by practising strong routines, we can save 10 minutes per day. That means 50 minutes per week. In a term, that equates to around 10 lessons saved. In a whole year that is equivalent to 30 whole lessons. In your time at The Becket School between Y7-11 that adds up to a staggering 150 lessons. The amount of knowledge, skills and practise that can be achieved in 150 whole lessons can help you to be the best artist, historian, athlete, writer, musician, mathematician you can possibly be.

Similarly, if it takes students 5 minutes to pack away at the end of the lesson we lose more learning time. If a teacher has to keep asking the classroom for their attention, we keep losing vital seconds. Your teacher is the expert in the room so taking notice of that person and what they are saying is one of the most important things for you to do in school. There are some simple routines we can learn to ensure that this happens.

If all students cooperate, everyone wins; everyone learns; everyone has a productive time; lessons become great places to learn; we can exceed everyone’s expectations of what is possible. We can **Work Hard**. The only way we can do that is by everyone working together, and that means following the rules and routines in place to optimise our opportunities. The Becket School and all your teachers care for you; they want to make sure everyone is safe, secure and can learn in peace. They will ensure that no one disturbs that contract of working together.



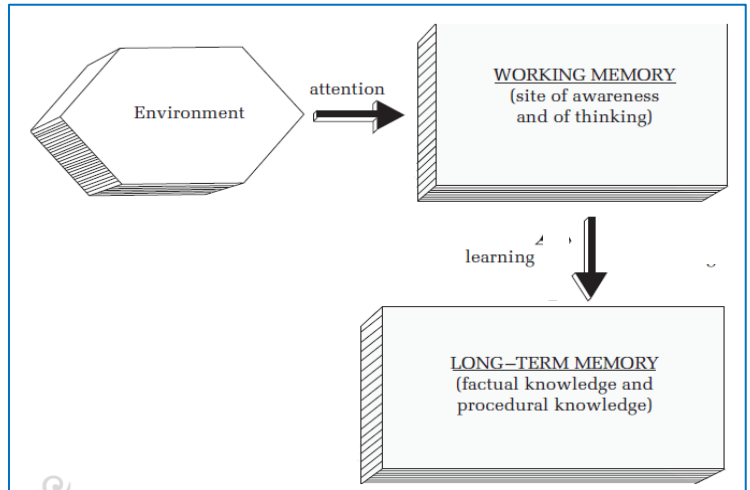
What are ‘The Becket Way’ routines I need to practise?

1. Entering the classroom (under 30 seconds)

- Wait quietly for the teacher to call you into the classroom.
- Greet your teacher (it is a positive way to start the lesson).
- Go straight to your desk and get out the books/equipment you need (and place them on the desk).
- Put your bag/coats underneath the desk.
- Wait **silently** (stood up straight) behind your chair until invited to sit down.
- The teacher will say “Good morning/afternoon Year X” at which point you may sit down.
- You can now immediately start the lesson or task set by your teacher.

2. Paying attention

- A teacher may say “I need you to pay attention” but perhaps it isn’t clear to you what this means. “SLANT” is a word that can remind you what this looks like:
 - Sit up
 - Listen
 - Ask and answer questions
 - Never interrupt the speaker
 - Track the speaker (student or teacher).



3. Silence.

- The science of memory would suggest that in *most* cases, you are more likely to learn if the class is silent rather than noisy.
- Why? Your ‘working memory’ is a very limited space where you do your thinking. It is very easily overwhelmed because it can only deal with a small amount of information at a time. That information includes things you can hear in the classroom (e.g. conversations) and the information you are working on learning in that lesson. The science of memory tells us if your working memory is overloaded, you are very unlikely to place that information in your long term memory.... so you won’t actually learn it.
- So if your teacher asks you to be silent because the work you are doing is difficult, you must respect your classmates by not talking or distracting others.
- It is up to your teacher when silence is needed.
- If you need to ask a question or need support, put your hand up.
- If your teacher is supporting another student, that is NOT a signal for you to start talking.

4. Classroom exit routine

- Your teacher will ask you to pack away.
- Stay in your place. Do not wander from your seat.
- Put your things into your bag as quickly as possible.
- Stand up silently behind your chair until dismissed (by row or table) by your teacher.
- Go immediately to your next lesson using the quickest route. Do not stop to chat or wait for other people.

THE BECKET WAY – TOUR AROUND THE SCHOOL

Tour Place 1: Tram Stop / Bus Stop / Town / To and From School

Remember that when you're wearing The Becket Uniform you are representing our school. As you heard this morning, The Becket School has always had a great reputation and your job is to help maintain that reputation and advertise our values to others. Most importantly though is that you do the right thing because it is who you are; from the very start of the day until you get home.

For many students that starts on the walk to the bus or the tram. It may mean that you spend some time in local shops and in the City Centre. You should make sure you are heard to talk in a way to other people, including your friends, in a way that is respectful. No one, for example, should ever hear a Becket student shouting or swearing.



When you're waiting to get on a tram or bus you need to do that patiently and pay attention to any queuing, especially if other members of the public are using the tram/bus. When the tram/bus arrives, you must allow people to get off first. Do not rush on to the bus or tram, even when it is busy. Do not shout over to others and try to remember other people are on the way to or from work. Do not play music or videos on your phones in a way that disturbs other people. Check that the volume on your headphones isn't too loud. NEVER leave litter on the tram/bus even if you think nobody is watching. Look for opportunities to give up your seat to those that might need it more e.g. young children, older people, someone who is pregnant or someone who looks very tired. If you're walking to/from school, use the pedestrian crossings and do not put yourself or other drivers in danger.

If you have the opportunity, say a genuine thank you to the staff or driver or shop keeper. Look them in the eye and make them feel that you genuinely appreciate their service. Leave them with a wonderful impression of yourself and The Becket School. Remember that you will sometimes see other students NOT following The Becket Way, but you should have the courage and the morals to do it any way.

Tour Place 2: The School Gates

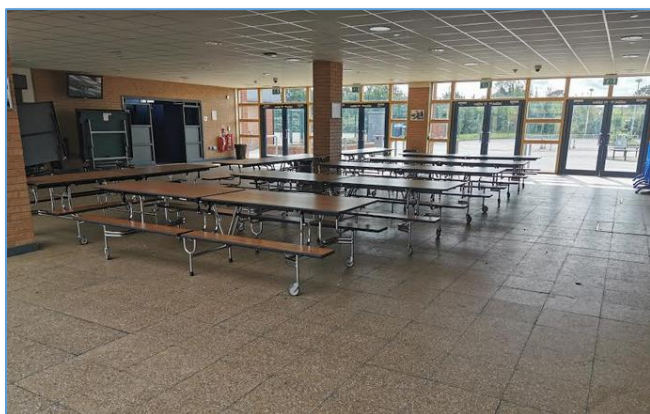
At the start of the day and the end of the day there is likely to be a member of staff on the school gates. Make sure, if you can, that you say a genuine good morning or goodbye. Manners and respect are attributes of successful people so we want to make sure these become who you are at The Becket. It's a lovely start and end to the day.

When you enter the school gates there is one major rule that should now be applied and that is that your mobile phone, headphones and other electronic devices should NEVER be seen. A school is a place of learning so we do not allow these distractions. We know from experience and at other schools that they can also be used for bullying so we do not allow that at The Becket. So, without reminding, your headphones and phones should NOT be seen inside these gates during the day. They will be confiscated if they are seen. The first time you will be able to collect this from Reception at the end of the day. Every time after that a parent will have to collect it from Reception. They can be confiscated after school as well.

If you are biking to school, you must NOT ride your bike inside the school gates. You need to get off your bike at the gate and walk with your bike sensibly on the school premises. This is to avoid accidents.

Tour Place 3: Entry to school

Being punctual and on time is also another really important quality in a person. It is respectful and more likely to be found in people who are successful. The bell for the start of the day goes at 8:40 and you should be in the building by that time. In fact, you should arrive to school about 8:30 so that you are here in plenty of time. If you are not, a member of staff will sign your conduct card to help challenge that bad habit. If there is a genuine reason for you being late (e. g. the school bus was late) then that may be taken into account, but make sure you bring a note from a parent if you need to. You should make sure you get a bus or tram that gives you plenty of time to get to school. If the last tram is late, this WON'T be taken into account because the last tram only gives you 2 minutes to get to school.

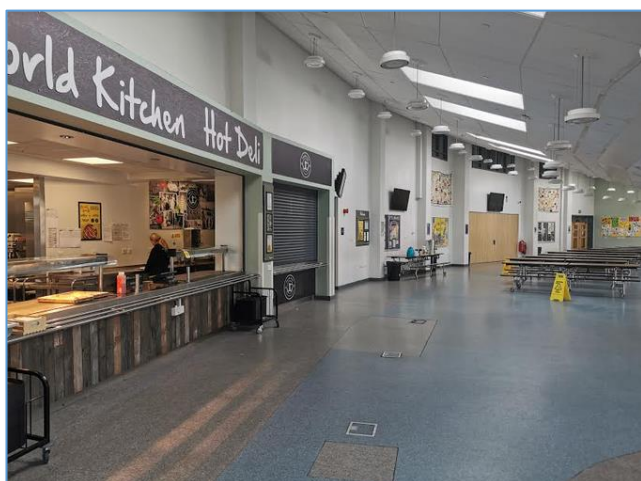


Tour Place 4: Canteen and Atrium

This area is known as the Canteen/Atrium. It is one of the areas that you can be before school, break time and lunch time. For many of you, it may be a place where you choose to eat your breakfast, lunch or snacks. We want to ensure that The Becket is an environment where you feel safe, welcomed and respected and therefore there are some things you need to remember when you are in these areas.

As we mentioned before, it is important that Becket students are not heard to be shouting or swearing or being unkind to each other so that everyone feels that this is a good community to be part of. It is important that you ALWAYS look after your litter, even if you feel no one is watching – that is a true measure of who you are as a person. Make sure that you are talking to others in a calm and respectful way.

If you are choosing to buy food from the school canteen make sure that you queue in a respectful way as well. There should never be any pushing and you shouldn't stand in big bunches. If you are not queuing for food, you shouldn't be in the queue or standing next to the queues. You should NEVER take food without paying for it; that is called stealing and it is against the law. There are separate queues for sandwiches, pasta, grab and go, and hot meals (your staff will point these out to you). Make sure that you say a genuine thank you to the staff looking after you; whether that be those cooking food, giving you food, helping to clear your tables, or supervising the areas.



Tour Place 5: Outside (Plaza, Astro, MUGA).

This area is known as the Plaza and is another area you are allowed to be before school, break time and lunch time. The Astro is a place where Y7-9s can play football/other sports if they are wearing trainers; you can change over by the astro but you must not wear trainers elsewhere in the school and need to change them as soon as you come off. The MUGA is for Y10-11s to play football/sports. The four doors by the MUGA are where you line up if you have a PE lesson. No ball games are allowed anywhere else in the school.

It is a place to chat with friends and rest in between lessons. All the same things apply here in terms of being respectful, looking after your litter and never being heard to shout/swear at each other. An extra rule that we have out here is that you should not 'play fight' with each other, even if it is just friends joking between each other. In a similar way, you should not chase each other around the plaza or school site. If everyone did that, The Becket School would not seem like a welcoming or friendly place. It is also hard for staff to know what is 'joking' and what is actually people being unkind to others. Sometimes 'play fights' can get out of hand and it turns into something more serious so it is something that you should not do at The Becket School.

So, those are the areas you can be before school, at break time and lunch time. They are the ONLY areas you are allowed to be unless you have arranged something with a teacher. Five minutes before the bell goes (for the start of the day, after break or after lunch), you are allowed to go on the corridors in order to go to your lockers.



Tour Place 6: Hall/Chapel

Once you are in the building, you need to remove coats. The hall and the chapel are the places where we gather as a school community or as Year groups for Acts of Worship and to pray. They are therefore a place to be even more respectful. We should enter an Act of Worship without talking and take our places in tutor groups. We should never eat or drink in these spaces (unless we are told that we can). Religion and faith can mean different things to different people and can also change as we get older; however, we ALWAYS need to remind ourselves of the fact that The Becket is a Catholic school based on Christian values and ensure that we give that the upmost respect.



Tour Place 7: Student Services

Students services is a place you can go to if you have queries about lots of different things; for example, paying for trips, handing in attendance notes, uniform, conduct cards, transport, lost property, calling parents, detentions and lots of other things. It is place that can help you in lots of situations. However, you should only go to student services outside of lesson times and never during a lesson unless you have permission. It is not a reason for being late for a lesson.

Tour Place 8: Corridors

Where possible on the corridors, keep to the left as that makes them a calmer place. Remember to keep the noise down, walk sensibly and never be heard swearing, shouting or saying unkind things, playfighting etc. It is not a place for waiting for friends after lesson. Say good morning and good afternoon to staff as this helps to build good relationships and makes The B ecket a great place to be a part of.

This is A floor. Above us is B floor. On the top is C floor. On your timetables it gives you room numbers and that is what these letters refers to. Each classroom also has a number which helps you to find the correct room. We're now going to go upstairs to B floor.



Tour Place 9: Damascus

Damascus is a place where students are supported. If you're having problems in school then the first person you should try to talk to is your tutor. They may talk to Damascus or your Progress Leader to make sure you get the best support and maybe someone to guide you, listen to you and mentor you. It isn't someone where you can come during lessons unless that has been agreed though so you need to make sure you are not late to lessons or absent to lessons because you are here. Therefore, you should also NOT go to Damascus at the end of break or lunch time. Being in lesson and on time to lesson is always your priority.



Tour Place 10: Find three classrooms!

Now that you've had the tour, you need to find three classrooms as a group and sign your name on the sheet on the tour to prove you found it! You need to find C20, A7 and B1. Then you can make your way to the canteen for lunch.

KINDNESS AND GRATITUDE

“KINDNESS + GRATITUDE = HAPPINESS”

Key terms

- Happiness: Experiencing frequent positive emotions such as joy, pleasure and satisfaction.
- Kindness: Being friendly, generous and considerate of other people.
- Gratitude: The quality of being thankful; showing appreciation to others and returning their kindness.

We want you to be happy!

At The Becket, we want to create a culture and community where people feel happy. We also want to encourage habits in students that are more likely to make themselves and others feel happy.



What makes us happy?

Scientists have found some surprising things about what does and doesn't make us happy.¹

They have found that money (as long as we are not poor) doesn't make us happier. Living in a sunnier place doesn't make us happier. Having higher intelligence doesn't make us happier. Whether you are young or old appears to make no difference to happiness.

Things which have been shown to make us happier are friends/family, marriage/relationships, having religious faith, gratitude and kindness.

Gratitude makes us happy

In 2005, a large study on happiness was conducted with nearly 600 people. The people in the study were asked to do one of 6 things:²

1. **Early memories:** Write about their early memories of childhood one day for every week.
2. **Gratitude:** Take a week to write a letter of thank you to someone who had been especially kind to them and then deliver it to them.
3. **Three good things:** Write down three things which had gone well each day for a week.
4. **You at your best:** Write about a time they were at their best and reflect on what strengths they showed every day for a week.
5. **Feedback on strengths:** Complete a personality survey and get feedback on what their personal top 5 strengths were.
6. **Use strengths in a new way:** The same as 5, but the people were encouraged to use their strengths in a new way in the following week.

Which group showed the largest increase in happiness? It was the gratitude group? Not only immediately afterwards, but also one week and one month afterwards. Those that were unhappiest before the study showed the biggest increase in happiness. **Expressing your thanks makes you a happier person! If you're having a tough time, saying thank you has an even bigger impact!**

¹ <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1015832-1,00.html>

² <https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier>

What can gratitude give you? A 25% increase in happiness says University of California Psychology Professor Dr. Robert Emmons. He says, "Gratitude is literally one of the few things that can measurably change people's lives." Dr. Emmons has researched and discovered that the practice of gratitude helps us to cope better with stress, gives us greater health, and increases positive feelings such as hope, peace and happiness.

Kindness makes us happy

Many studies³ have linked kindness to happiness and health. Kindness makes us less lonely and less depressed. It strengthens our immune system (which fights illness), reduces aches and pains and improves the health of our heart.

In one famous study, people who spent \$5 or \$20 on others were happier at the end of the day, while people who spent it on themselves got less happy – a finding that is the same in many different countries.

Another study⁴ found that it didn't matter whether the kindness was directed to people you were close to (e.g. friends/family) or people you were not close to (e.g. strangers or people you know less well)..... acts of kindness produced the same amount of happiness!

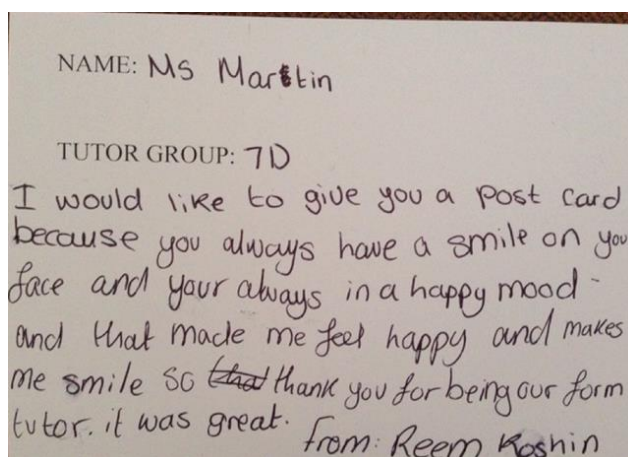
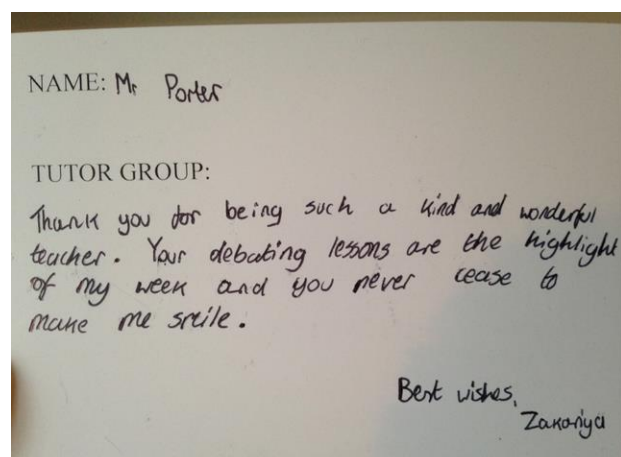
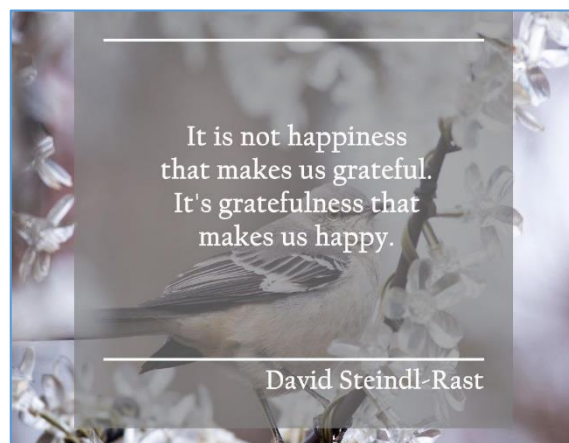
Gratitude and Kindness at The Becket

Gratitude and kindness are qualities you should practise as often as possible at The Becket School. However, we will regularly give you reminders and opportunities to do that so that they become strong habits, part of your character, and help to make you a happy person.

You will be given a 'Gratitude and Kindness' diary.

Each week, you will reflect on what you have done that week and who/what you appreciate.

Each half term, you will be given time to write a thank you note to someone in school and to complete a 'random act of kindness' and reflect on how this made you feel.



³ <https://positivepsychlopedia.com/2014/10/02/kindness-and-compassion-week-3-science-of-happiness-edx/>

⁴ https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/what_types_of_kindness_will_make_you_happiest

CALM, SAFE AND RESPECTFUL AT THE BECKET SCHOOL

“COMFORTABLE FOR EVERYONE.”

Key terms

- Calm: Peaceful, quiet and without worry.
- Safe: Protected from danger or risk.
- Respect: Showing regard for the feelings, wishes and rights of others.

Why is it important for the school to be calm, safe and respectful?

Outside of lessons and classrooms, you are at your most unsupervised. This can include before school, in between lessons, break times and after school; this is when you are trusted the most and where there is the most potential to feel unsafe. We must all work together to make sure our community is calm, safe and respectful. We must **Be Kind. Do The Right Thing**. We must make sure that our community is not boisterous and chaotic in these spaces so that everyone feels comfortable. In some schools students are expected to be silent in order to prevent bullying; at The Becket, we will trust you to have calm and polite conversations with each other. However, we will protect the atmosphere in the school by challenging you if your behaviour contributes to a loud, boisterous, unsafe or impolite atmosphere. Students deserve to be able to walk around the school without the fear of being pushed/jostled, hearing shouting or unkind comments.



Manners

Just as important are manners – treating others with consideration, respect and politeness. Manners are also good habits to learn and our roles as educators is to encourage habits which are also more likely to make you a successful person. A community full of people who have good manners is a better community for everyone.

How can you be calm, safe and respectful in the corridors?

- Use the corridors to get from one place to the next as quickly as possible without running; the only time you should stand still is when you have arrived at your next lesson.
- Have quiet and calm conversations. Never shout, sing or make silly noises.
- Do not push others or have ‘play fights’.
- Drinks bottles need to be in bags, not in coats or carried around. They must NEVER be used to squirt at each other.
- Help others by opening doors for them.

How can you be calm, safe and respectful in the atrium and canteen?

- Say please and a genuine thank you to the canteen staff.
- Queue properly. NEVER use your age or body to push in. Do not push forward. If you do, you will be sent to the back.
- NEVER steal.

- Make sure that you are sat down and not stood around in groups.
- Have quiet and calm conversations. Never shout, sing or make silly noises.
- Do not push others or have 'play fights'.
- Be accountable for your own litter and those in your friendship group. Make sure you clear it away.
- CCTV will be used to track those who have left a mess; but clear up because it is who you are, not because you don't want a detention.

How can you be calm, safe and respectful outside?

- Have quiet and calm conversations. Never shout, sing or make silly noises in groups.
- Do not push others or have 'play fights'.
- Liquids are for drinking, not for squirting on the floor or at other people.
- Be accountable for your own litter and those in your friendship group. Make sure you clear it away.
- CCTV will be used to track those who have left a mess; but clear up because it is who you are, not because you don't want a detention.
- Do not play ball games apart from on the MUGA/Astro.

Why play fighting is NOT allowed.

- Play fighting is NOT allowed at The Becket School, even if it is between two/three students who are friends and have agreed to do it.
- At least half of all real fights in school have started as a play fight that has got out of hand.
- The impression play fighting gives to members of the school community and to visitors is that the school is not safe, kind or welcoming (imagine being a younger student who is observing older and bigger students have a play fight).
- It is harder for staff to spot bullying because the bully might say "we were just joking, we always do this".

STOICISM

“ANGER IS WEAKNESS, SELF-CONTROL IS STRENGTH”

“DO NOT COMPLAIN, THINK YOUR WAY THROUGH DIFFICULTIES.”

Key terms

- Stoical: The philosophy of overcoming destructive emotions and keeping self-control.
- Control: The power to influence something.

What is stoicism?

Stoicism was created over two thousand years ago by Ancient Greeks and Romans. It is designed to help people live their best possible lives and looks at the following questions.

What is the best way to live life?

How can we deal with difficult situations we face?

What does it take to improve our minds?

We can use the advice of ‘stoics’ in school in order to **Be Kind. Do The Right Thing.**



What you can and cannot control

Epictetus was a former slave and influential ‘stoic’. He wrote this well-known prayer:

“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, And wisdom to know the difference.”

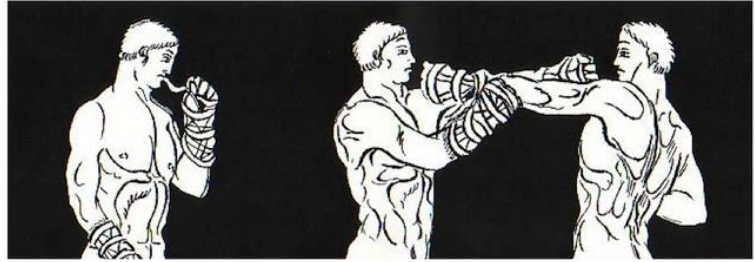
So what does that mean? Epictetus suggests that we should accept that we don’t have control over everything that happens in life. He suggests that worrying about things outside of our control is unproductive.

Instead, stoics suggest that our energy is better spent thinking of things we *can* control (such as our opinions, reactions, our mind) and looking for creative solutions.

He said that “Whoever can be irritated – that person is a slave. No one can frustrate you without your cooperation. So when we are frustrated or angry, never hold anyone except ourselves responsible.”

Difficulties provide an opportunity for practice

Stoics take a very different view of difficulties and misfortune than most people. They expect problems and use them as opportunities to practise their stoical skills of self-control.



Epictetus suggests: *“Difficulties show a person’s character. So when trouble comes, think of it as training, strengthening, toughening. When a challenge confronts you, remember you are being matched with a stronger sparring partner, as would a physical trainer. A boxer derives the greatest advantage from his sparring partner, training his patience and even temper.”*

Seneca, another influential stoic, advises: *“Think your way through difficulties:”*

How we think about difficulties is important

Marcus Aurelius was a Roman emperor who wrote a lot of about stoicism. He argued that thinking, emotions and behaviour all interact. So, people who face the same difficulty may *think* about it differently which means they experience different *emotions* and *behaviour*. Aurelius therefore believes we need try to *think* about our difficulties differently. Similarly, stoics believe we need to constantly remind ourselves of the good things in our lives in order to keep perspective.

Are emotions bad?

Emotions are not bad! Feeling frustrated, fearful, angry, jealous, bitter and anxious are all very normal and healthy feelings. In fact, evolution has shaped us to have these feelings because they helped our ancestors to survive (known as the ‘fight or flight’ response). Stoics are simply suggesting that we practise not letting these emotions control us and our behaviour; that we use our thinking to keep them in check so that we are not slaves to our emotion.

How can you practise stoicism in school?

1. When you’ve been challenged by a teacher... stay stoical!

Sometimes, students feel upset or resentful about being challenged or being given a detention. Stay calm, stay stoical, keep your perspective, keep your self-control. Do not grumble, roll your eyes or suck your teeth. Work out what you can control and how you can build trust in the future, what can you do differently next time? Staff care about you and your future so even in times of difficulty treat them with respect.

2. When you think your teacher has been unfair... stay stoical!

Stay calm, stay stoical, keep your perspective, keep your self-control. Do not grumble, roll your eyes or suck your teeth. Find your teacher later and explain why you think it is unfair. Control your voice so that you do this in a calm and civil way. As Seneca suggests, *“think your way through difficulties.”* Remember that for learning to work for everyone, sometimes imperfect decisions must be taken swiftly by the adults and that the teacher’s word is final.

3. In arguments... stay stoical!

When you get into disagreements with your friends, stoicism can help to remind you to practise keeping a calm mind, ignoring gossip, rumours and insults.

4. At sport/competitions... stay stoical!

Sport is competitive by nature, it is a time when tempers can run high. Stoicism reminds students not to over celebrate and jeer at others when scoring a goal; and not to despair or blame others (the ref, team-mates) when losing. Remember what *is* in your control, and what *isn't* in your control.

5. When something goes wrong or we're struggling... stay stoical!

Sometimes we will come across situations that are hard or difficult. It might be a particular subject, exam or lesson. Sometimes it might go wrong. Try to stay stoical and keep your control. Think your way through that difficulty. What could you do differently next time? What help could you get? How could you prepare differently? How can this experience help to train your resilience?

- **An emphasis on hardship.** As the [FSB](#) points out, Paul's letters also feature "hardship catalogs" — for example, [2 Cor. 4:8–9](#) and [6:9–10](#). And, like the Stoics, Paul believed that enduring hardships leads to growth in character: he writes, "we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character" ([Rom. 5:3–5](#); cf.

THE WAY WE TALK TO EACH OTHER: “BANTER”

“DO NOT USE HARMFUL WORDS, ONLY HELPFUL WORDS, THE KIND THAT BUILD UP”

Key terms

- Bullying: Behaviour that is hurtful, intentional, repetitive and may involve an imbalance of power.
- Banter: Playful and friendly teasing.

BUT, just because something isn't bullying doesn't mean it is acceptable. Just because you think something is 'banter' doesn't mean someone else will.

Two Apples

Imagine two apples.

The two apples look the same; they are a similar size, colour and look juicy enough to eat.

Apple A we decide we dislike and we call it names and insult the apple about how short it is, or its colour, or its smell. Each time we do that, we poke the apple on the skin or drop it on the floor.

Apple B we decide that we like. We say kind things such as 'you're a lovely apple', 'what a lovely colour you are'.

We then look at the apples again and discuss the similarities and differences. Actually, they still look the same.

But then we cut them in half. The apple we'd been kind to (Apple A) was clear, fresh and juicy inside. The apple we'd been unkind to (Apple B) was bruised and all mushy inside.

When people mistreat us, call us names and are unkind to us it is a bit like Apple B. We may look fine on the outside, we may laugh at their insults.... but inside, those actions may hurt us a bruise us. Like the apples, we never truly know how someone is feeling inside and therefore we have to be careful how we communicate with each other.

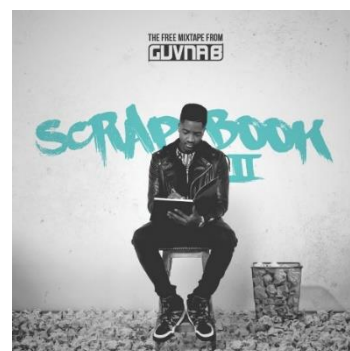


Example – Bruising on the Inside

GuvnaB is an award winning UK rapper that has written about his experiences of 'banter'.

"I grew up as quite a confident kid. I was never self-conscious until I got to secondary school, when one of the class clowns shouted across the room: 'The gap in your teeth is so big you could fit a sumo wrestler through it.' To be totally honest, it was quite funny at the time, but the gap-tooth jokes kept coming for the rest of my school life. I remember on one occasion at the local train station when my friends and I had been waiting for a delayed train that was finally pulling up to the platform. As the doors opened the train announcer belted out 'As you board this train, please mind the gap between the train and the platform. Please mind the gap.' Almost immediately, every single one of my friends looked at me, paused for what seemed like an age, then proceeding to laugh hysterically – implying that the train announcer was referring to the gap in my teeth.

After that incident, I decided I'd had enough and wanted to get braces. However, the truth is that I never really wanted to. What was important was that before I had got to secondary school I had never had a problem with the gap in my teeth. I had looked in the mirror hundreds of times and been totally OK with how I looked. The opinion of people at school and their 'banter' had changed that. I think it is totally fine to get braces to straighten teeth, or to change the colour of your hair, but don't allow anyone to make us feel that there's something wrong with us. God doesn't make mistakes."



Banter or Bullying?

How do you know when something is 'just banter' or bullying? Well the truth is that it is now always easy to tell. However, if the person knows that what they are doing is hurting someone else but they continue anyway, it's likely to be bullying.

If you're guessing whether someone finds what you are saying hurtful or not, DON'T say it. Like the apple we mentioned earlier, it is difficult to know the effect of our actions on the inside of a person. Your friend may even agree with you that it is 'banter', when on the inside, they find the comments hurtful.

We should avoid making comments about other people's physical appearance, embarrassing events that have happened in the past etc.

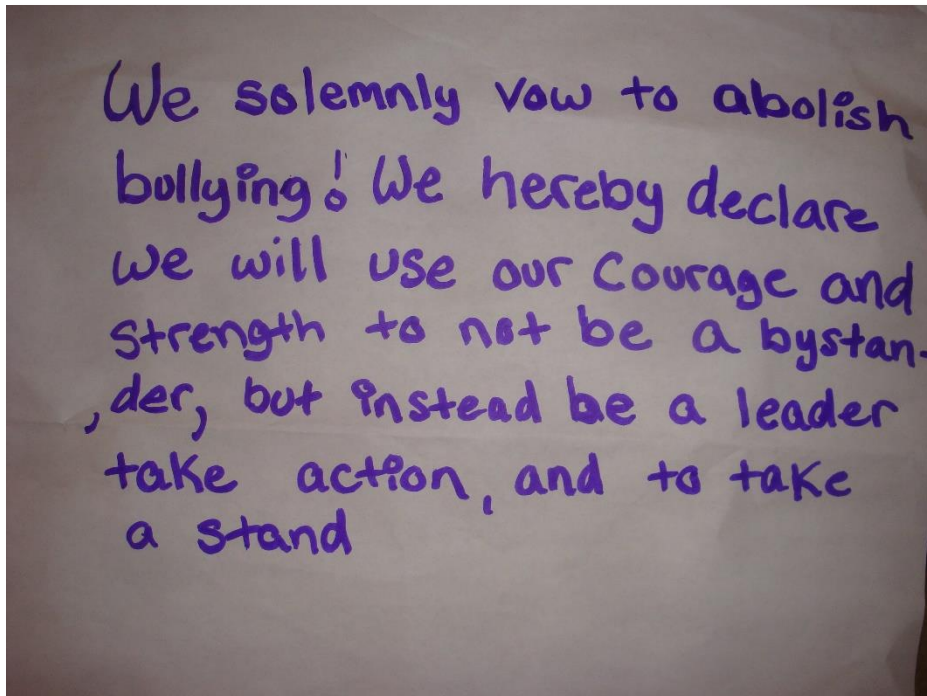
**Saying
"Banter" is
not an
excuse for
bullying.**

The language we use

Even if we feel our comments are 'banter', there is certain language that is never acceptable. It may not offend you, or your friends, but may still be hurtful to those that hear it. For example, we should NEVER describe something as 'gay', or 'retarded' negative comments about people's religion, skin colour or ethnicity.

Hurtful comments and 'Snitching'

The effects of hurtful comments of people, their families and friends can be devastating. As such, we must be a zero-bullying school. We must commit to standing up against it. Bystanders must stand up, speak up and let adults know so that it can be fixed. **There is no such thing as 'snitching' at The Becket.**



We solemnly vow to abolish bullying! We hereby declare we will use our Courage and strength to not be a bystander, but instead be a leader take action, and to take a stand

THE WAY WE COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER

“DO NOT USE HARMFUL WORDS, ONLY HELPFUL WORDS, THE KIND THAT BUILD UP”

Key terms

- Suffragettes: a group of women seeking the right to vote through organized protest.
- Body language: the conscious and unconscious movements and postures by which attitudes and feelings are communicated.
- First Impressions: The judgement people make on someone based on their initial meeting with them.

Why is it important to be mindful of how we behaviour towards each other?

More and more young people spend a large proportion of their time using social media and surfing the internet. With this, girls in particular are exposed to images of others that have been photoshopped or manipulated in other ways (changed to make the pictures look better). This has created unrealistic expectations on how they should look and behave and this will often result in girls speaking negatively about each other or feeling negatively about themselves.

By recognising the work of the suffragettes, girls are able to reflect on the way that things have changed for the better for women and with this helps them to recognise how important it is to continue on this journey and support each other.



How we present ourselves is very important as first impressions count and following trends on the internet is not necessarily the best form of guidance for young people.

According to many surveys conducted about first impressions, it can take as little as 7 seconds for a human brain to create an impression of a person when you first meet them. With this in mind students need to be aware of the messages they are subconsciously giving out.

If girls are more mindful about the way they talk about each other and the way they present themselves there is likely to be a reduction in ‘gossiping’ and an increased focus on learning and achieving. This will also ensure that fallouts between friends are reduced and a positive sense of community can be created.

Tips on how to present yourself and communicate with others in a positive way at the Becket:

1. Take pride in your appearance by adhering to the Becket uniform code. You will gain respect and trust and respect from your teachers.
2. Do not compare yourself to images you see on the internet, they are often photo shopped and unachievable.
3. Words are a powerful tool, be mindful of how you use them when talking about others, the suffragettes risked their own lives for the good of women, we now have a duty to them to continue to work as a team rather than against each other.
4. Focus on the learning in school rather than the social aspect, friends will come and go but your qualifications will stay with you for the rest of your life.

COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

“DO WHAT IS RIGHT, NOT WHAT IS EASY.”

Key terms

- Conformity: Behaving in a way that others do.
- Deindividuation: Feeling less responsible for your actions in a group. Losing your sense of self.
- Responsibility: Accountability for our own behaviour.

What is conformity?

As humans we all feel the need to conform and to be liked. This is why we change our beliefs or behaviour in order to fit in with a group. We may feel pressure to fit in with a particular group through persuasion, teasing, name-calling or criticism.

Conformity can be positive. For example, most people in society conform to behaviours such as good manners (e.g. please, thank you), queuing, being on time and working hard.

Conformity can also be negative. This is when we behave in ways which are wrong or say things that we don't mean because we want to be liked by a particular group. Sometimes, we might even convince ourselves that it is the *right* thing to do.

So it is very important that we consider the groups we choose to belong to. How do we conform to those groups? Are they making you a better or more successful person? Is it helping us to **Work Hard. Be Kind. Do The Right Thing?**

It is easier to resist conformity when we feel confident in ourselves, feel responsible for our own behaviour and have other people around us who also support our view.

Even when we're in a group, we are fully responsible and accountable for our *own* behaviour and choices.



How do we behave in groups? What is deindividuation?

In the 1950s, psychologists noticed that peoples' behaviour in large groups and crowds could be very aggressive and antisocial. They called this 'deindividuation' meaning that when an individual becomes part of a large group, they feel like they cannot be identified and do not behave in line with their own morals and beliefs. This has been used to explain why riots start, when there is sometimes aggression at sporting events.

Deindividuation can also be seen on social media because it is not face-to-face. Researchers have found that communication is more aggressive on social media.

Remember, even when we're in a group and we feel less responsible for our actions... we *are* responsible and accountable for our actions and choices.

The Becket Way

- You are always responsible and accountable for your actions.
- Act in line with your own morals, values and beliefs.... not other peoples.
- Choose your groups carefully.
- Don't say something unkind, impolite and disrespectful to someone because you think that will make you more liked by a group.
- NEVER run towards an argument or fight or do anything to encourage it.
- Do not do or say anything on social media that you wouldn't say in person.