# Southchurch High School’s silent corridor policy sparks parental backlash



Southchurch High School in Southend-on-Sea has introduced a controversial new policy enforcing “silent transitions” between lessons, which has sparked backlash from some parents and pupils. Under the policy, students are prohibited from talking while moving between classrooms, with same-day hour-long detentions imposed for any breach, including talking in corridors.

The policy was implemented on Wednesday, accompanied by additional rules communicated via an email to parents. These included one-hour detentions for various minor infractions such as forgetting stationery, wearing incorrect uniform, or failing to complete homework.

The head teacher of Southchurch High School, Tracy Airoll, defended the initiative, stating that the silent transitions policy had been “tried and tested” at other schools within the same academy trust. However, the policy has encountered significant criticism from parents.

Lee, a father whose son is a pupil at the school, expressed serious concern about the impact of the policy on his son's wellbeing. His son is currently preparing for GCSE examinations and is already grappling with depression and anxiety. Lee told BBC Essex, “For somebody like [my son] who has to verbalise at short notice when he’s feeling something, not being able to speak to somebody in between classes in the corridor is going to be really, really bad for him.” He has reportedly sought to transfer his son to a different school due to these concerns.

Another parent, Stuart, criticised the school's disciplinary measures as disproportionate, saying the approach was “using a sledgehammer to crack a nut”. He alleged that the school was applying the same level of punishment for minor offences, which he described as “stupidly minuscule,” and has advised his son to refuse attending the same-day detentions.

Abbey Riley, a 35-year-old parent, has voiced similar frustrations, emphasising that students are being penalised for trivial matters such as losing a pen or talking during corridor transitions. She launched an online petition to urge the school to reconsider the policy. Within 24 hours, the petition gained over 500 signatures, including a comment from Matt Dent, the Labour cabinet member for culture, tourism, and business at Southend-on-Sea City Council, who joined more than 600 others in expressing concern.

Data from a recent Teacher Tapp survey, which included 6,283 educators, revealed that silent corridor rules were relatively uncommon, with only 1% of teachers in the East of England reporting their schools had such policies, compared to 7% in London.

The controversy continues as the school weighs the concerns of parents and students against its disciplinary aims.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.change.org/p/southchurch-high-school-like-a-prison-not-a-school> - Corroborates the existence of the petition against Southchurch High School's 'silent transitions' policy and the associated backlash from parents and students.
2. <https://thelondonweekly.net/eeducation/9467-dad-threatens-to-move-son-over-school-s-silent-corridor-policy> - Supports claims about parental opposition, including one father's intent to transfer his son due to concerns over the policy's impact on mental health.
3. <https://www.southchurchschool.com/?page_id=10694> - Confirms the school's official policy documentation, aligning with the email communication to parents about disciplinary measures.
4. <https://www.southchurchschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Behaviour-Policy-2024.pdf> - Details specific disciplinary measures, including detention criteria and the use of ClassCharts for behavior tracking, consistent with the article's description of penalties for minor infractions.
5. <https://www.noahwire.com> - Parent source referenced in the article, though specific content cannot be verified without direct access.
6. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMiiAFBVV95cUxNdlRRUW5FNlJJc3hOcjRJRkpiMkw5b2wxNnNZLWtEVU9NMnhveDFUV0VmUjFZaWI3SUJ5R3JSRV82R2dkeGEzdlBaN3pYdzJBZDFpTXlNZV8tQ0RQa3Vhai1aenh6QjVIQVFVRzVCdzBsYVhmamNGanIxczJheHpaUTlIRGIxcFZE?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data