



Parents and Visitors Code of Conduct Policy

Introduction

Governors and staff at Oldcastle Primary School are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent and carer community. Our parents and carers recognise that educating children is a process that involves a partnership between them and the school. We welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our school, and we will act to ensure it remains a safe place to learn and work. Behaviour that is harassing or causes alarm or distress contradicts those aims.

We would be grateful if parents and carers could ensure that they make all persons responsible for collecting their children aware of this policy.

Purpose

We expect all members of our school community to behave in a reasonable way. However, there may be occurrences when behaviour by parents, carers and/or visitors to the school may be considered unacceptable. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken in those rare circumstances.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to ensure that all members of our school community treat each other with respect and that they feel safe on the school site. The vast majority of our parents, carers and visitors are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school's work. If anyone has concerns, we will always listen and seek to address them. We trust that parents, carers and visitors to our school will assist us with implementing this policy and we thank them for their continuing support of the school.

Expectations

We expect all parents, carers and visitors to:

- Respect the caring ethos and values of our school and cluster.
- Understand that school staff, governors and parents/carers need to work together for the benefit of the learners.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect.

- Approach the school and our staff courteously to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Remember and appreciate how busy members of staff are during the school day.
- Make an appointment when you need to speak with a member of staff.
- Remember that staff will not be asked to leave a class to meet a parent, carer or visitor who has not made a prior appointment.
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- Speak to their child when their behaviour poses a risk to the safety of the school community to avoid any risk of conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour.
- Comply with other relevant school policies and reinforce this with their children.
- Avoid using staff as threats to influence children's behaviour.
- Respect the school environment and equipment, including but not limited to: using correct pedestrian footways into school, driving carefully and considerately within permitted areas following any instructions issued by school staff.

Types of Unacceptable Behaviour

To support a peaceful and safe school environment, the school will not accept the following behaviours exhibited by parents, carers or visitors;

- Behaviour or conduct which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, office or any other area of the school grounds and playing fields, including but not limited to team matches. The school will support any decision made by a referee to sanction a parent, including abandoning a fixture.
- Using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards the school staff, learners, other parents, carers or visitors, including but not limited to: loud/or offensive language, shouting, swearing, cursing, using profane language, attempting to physically intimidate, use of aggressive hand gestures or displaying temper.
- Threatening to harm a member of school staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or learner, regardless of whether the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Sending abusive, vexatious or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications.
- Dictating behaviour to staff about how their professional duties should be discharged.
- Speaking to any school staff member at the school in a manner that is aggressive, demanding or intimidating, including invading their personal space.
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to any member of school staff, governor, visitor, fellow parent/carer or learner, regardless of whether that behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.
- Defamation of the character and/or reputation of the school or any staff member on any social networking sites.
- Please note that any concerns you may have about the school must be made through the appropriate channels so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and

effectively for all concerned using the appropriate complaints procedure. You should ask for a copy of the school's Complaints Policy and follow the steps identified in making a formal complaint.

- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on school premises/grounds.
- Approaching someone else's child to discuss or chastise them because of their actions towards your own children.
- Wearing clothing that may include offensive language and/or images.
- Making racist, homophobic, transphobic or sexist comments.
- Smoking (tobacco or e-cigarettes) and consuming alcohol or illegal drugs on school premises/grounds.
- Attending school premises/grounds under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Bringing dogs, except for assistance dogs, to school grounds.

This list provides illustrations of unacceptable behaviour. It is not exhaustive.

Consequences of unacceptable conduct

Any parents, carers or visitors whose conduct is deemed to be offensive, threatening, aggressive or causes any form of distress will be asked to leave the school premises/grounds and must leave at once. If this behaviour is demonstrated via telephone, then following a warning and advice, the call will be terminated.

Should any of the above behaviours occur on school premises/grounds the school may contact the appropriate authorities, including the police and/or social services. If necessary, the school will restrict the access of the person concerned to the school, which may mean prohibiting this person from entering the school grounds. The school may also put in place a communication strategy to restrict communication between this person and the school. The school reserves the right to take any necessary actions to ensure that members of the school community are not subjected to abuse. This includes a lockdown of the school and the immediate request for the police to attend the school.

Please note that any concerns you may have about the school must be made through the appropriate channels so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively. When making a formal complaint, you should follow the steps identified in the school's Complaints Policy. The school will also consider its safeguarding protocols should the behaviour of a parent, carer or visitor raise concerns.

Inappropriate Use of Social Networking Sites

Social media forums are increasingly being used to fuel campaigns and voice complaints against schools, headteachers, school staff, and sometimes other parents/learners.

The school seeks to teach learners the importance of appropriate and responsible use of social media. It is, therefore, vital that everyone in the school community, including parents and carers, leads by example.

The governors of our school consider the harmful use of social media as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the learners or the school community. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors.

If any learner or parent/carer is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on their site and provide robust mechanisms to report activities which breach them. Our school also expects that any parent/carer or learner remove such comments immediately. Parents/carers making such comments will be invited to the school to discuss the implications of posting slanderous comments.

The school also reserves the right to contact and report such comments or statements to the relevant authorities, including but not limited to the police and/or social services.

In serious cases, the school will consider legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking sites.

Finally, and perhaps more importantly, is the issue of cyberbullying or the use of social media by a learner or a parent/carer to publicly humiliate another or a member of school staff. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of bullying. Thankfully, such incidents are extremely rare.

Responding to serious incidents

At any stage, the school may report serious incidents of abusive and threatening behaviour to the Local Authority or South Wales Police. Any incident of violent conduct will be immediately reported to the police. Additionally, the school has a statutory responsibility to report any racist or discriminatory incidents to the Local Authority.

The school has an overarching legal obligation to safeguard and protect the well-being of its learners and will not hesitate to take such steps as are required to protect learners from harm or the risk of harm.

STEP 1: Abusive behaviour on the school site: VERBAL WARNING

The headteacher (or a member of the Senior Leadership Team) will consider any risk presented by the abusive actions. Subject to a satisfactory risk assessment, they will speak to the person(s) committing the harmful act privately. It will be put to them that such behaviour is unacceptable, and an assurance will be sought that it will not be repeated. It will be stressed on this occasion that repetition of such an incident will result in further, more serious action being taken. A written record of the incident will be made, and a note of the warning added to the learner's record.

STEP 2: WRITTEN WARNING

A letter will be sent to the perpetrator informing them that their conduct is unacceptable. A copy of this letter will be added to the learner's record.

STEP 3: FINAL WRITTEN WARNING

If after STEP 2, a further incident occurs involving the same person, another letter will be sent to them giving a final warning that this abusive and threatening behaviour is unacceptable and that a repetition of this conduct will leave no option but to take further action. A copy of this letter will be added to the learner's record.

STEP 4: EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL PREMISES / GROUNDS

If a further incident occurs or if an initial incident is considered serious enough, the school will enforce an exclusion from school premises/grounds. The school will also contact South Wales Police and complete an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) referral. Details of the exclusion will be added to the learner's record.

STEP 5: EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL PREMISES and/or REMOVAL BY POLICE

If, following a decision to exclude a person from the school premises/grounds, that person persists in entering the premises/grounds, we may report this to the police and request that they be removed by the police as a trespasser and guilty of an offence under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996. Individuals may also be charged with an offence under the Public Order Act 1986.

Parents, carers and visitors who are excluded from school premises/grounds may still seek an appointment to speak to school staff about their child's educational progress and enter the school premises/grounds for that purpose. Details of the removal will be added to the learner's record.

Any decision to exclude a parent or visitor from the school premises/grounds should be reviewed at an interval of no longer than 6 months. When deciding whether it is necessary to extend the withdrawal of permission to come onto the school premises/grounds, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expression of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you and, generally, any evidence of your co-operation with the school.

STEP 2 LETTER TEMPLATE

Dear

It has been reported to me that you have demonstrated behaviour that is not in line with the school's Parent, Carer and Visitor Code of Conduct on [date].

Delete as appropriate;

On this occasion, your behaviour has upset members of our staff team and learners who were present.

or

On this occasion, your use of inappropriate and abusive language has upset one of our staff team. [Provide a brief summary of the incident and its effect on staff and learners]

If you are unhappy about any aspect of your child's education, we can arrange to have a meeting at an appropriate time and place.

This letter serves as a written warning, in accordance with our Parent, Carer and Visitor Code of Conduct. I must inform you that any repetition of such behaviour could lead to an immediate withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises / grounds.

A copy of this letter will be added to your child's record

Should you wish to discuss the content of this letter, please make an appointment to see me via the school reception.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

STEP 3 LETTER TEMPLATE

Dear

Further to our letter dated [DATE], I have received a further report of unacceptable conduct on (date).

[Provide a brief summary of the incident and its effect on staff and learners]

I must inform you that we do not tolerate conduct of this nature and will act to safeguard and protect school staff and learners from further incidents.

If you are unhappy about any aspect of your child's education, you can arrange to have a meeting with me at an appropriate time and place.

This letter serves as a final written warning, in accordance with our Parent, Carer and Visitor Code of Conduct. I must inform you that any further incidents of unacceptable behaviour will lead to an immediate withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises / grounds.

A copy of this letter will be added to your child's record.

Should you wish to discuss the content of this letter, please make an appointment to see me via the school reception.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

STEP 4 LETTER TEMPLATE

Dear

Further to our letter dated [DATE], I have received a further report of unacceptable conduct on (date).

[Provide a brief summary of the incident and its effect on staff and learners]

I must inform you that we do not tolerate conduct of this nature and will act to protect and safeguard school staff and learners. I am therefore instructing you that, until I have reviewed this incident and informed you otherwise, you are not to enter the school premises / grounds.

If you do not comply with this instruction, and attend school premises / grounds, we will have no alternative but to contact the police and ask that you be removed as a trespasser on school premises / grounds. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises / grounds, you may be prosecuted under section 547 of the Education Act 1996. I trust these steps will not be necessary.

Special arrangements can be made for you to meet with the headteacher, if necessary, but this may only be with the written permission of the governors.

The withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises / grounds takes effect immediately and will be in place for [insert days] school days in the first instance, subject to any review.

I still need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm this decision. Before I do, I wish to give you an opportunity to write to me with any comments or observations of your own in relation to the report that I have received. These comments may be to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, to express regret and/or give assurances about your future good conduct.

To enable me to take a decision on this matter, please send me any written comments you wish to make by (date: 10 school days from date of letter). If, on receipt of your comments, I consider that my initial decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of how to pursue a review of your case.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

STEP 5 LETTER TEMPLATE

Dear

On (date) I wrote to inform you that I had withdrawn permission for you to come onto the premises/grounds for a period of [x days]. To enable me to determine whether to extend this period, I gave you the opportunity to give your written comments on the incident concerned by (date).

I have not received a written response from you / I have received a letter from you dated (date), the contents of which I have carefully considered. In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the report, I have determined that the decision to withdraw permission for you to come onto school premises/grounds should be confirmed. I am therefore instructing you that, until further notice, you are not to come onto the premises/grounds of the school without the prior knowledge and approval of the headteacher. If you do not comply with this instruction, I shall have no alternative but to contact the police to have you removed from the premises/grounds of the school. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises/grounds, you may be prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996.

Even though we have taken this decision, the headteacher and staff at the school remain committed to the education of your child(ren), who must continue to attend school as normal.

This decision will be reviewed again on (insert review date, which should be a reasonable period and no longer than 6 months). When deciding whether it is necessary to extend the withdrawal of permission to come onto the school premises/grounds, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expression of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you and, generally, any evidence of your co-operation with the school.

If you wish to pursue the matter further, you have a right to follow the school's complaints policy, a copy of which is available on the school website. Should you wish to raise a complaint you should do so in writing to the Clerk to the Governors, via the school.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Relevant incidents include trespass, nuisance or disturbance on school premises, verbal abuse, sexual or racial abuse, threats, aggression, physical violence and intentional damage to property. Where possible, this form should be completed before any discussion between witnesses is possible, as this might lead to allegations of collusion. This form should be completed as fully as possible please, using a continuation sheet, if necessary. For any incident involving or witnessed by a pupil or parent / carer / visitor, a member of staff should complete the form on their behalf.

Name of person reporting incident:	
Member of staff recording incident:	
Date incident <u>recorded</u>:	
Date of incident:	Time of incident:
Date incident <u>reported</u> (if different to above):	
Name(s) of person(s) causing incident (where name(s) is/are unknown, provide other details of which may allow their identification)	
Status(es) (parents / carers / visitors / trespassers)	
Full description of incident (e.g. names of persons involved; location; nature of any injuries; attendance of emergency services)	

Names and status of any witnesses:

Initial action (refer to stages in code of conduct)

Summary of subsequent actions taken by the school, including risk assessments

Linked incidents (if any)