

Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors

We use the term ‘parents’ to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents/carers or child-minders)
- School Community = pupils, staff, parents, relatives, carers and visitors

At Coit Primary School, we are proud and fortunate to have a dedicated and supportive school community.

At our school the staff, governors, parents and carers all recognise that the education of our children is a firm partnership between home and school.

For this partnership to work successfully we believe it is important to:

- Work in partnership with parents to support their child’s learning
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents
- Model appropriate behaviour for our pupils at all times

To help us do this, we are setting out clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes parents/carers, staff (through the staff code of conduct) and pupils (through our behaviour policy) We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – always using appropriate language and behaviour
- Seek a peaceful solution to all issues
- Work together with staff in the best interests of their own child in dealing with emerging problems at the earliest stage
- Approach/Contact a member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern about **someone else’s child** (If an adult approaches another child this may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences)
- Approach/Contact a member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern about another parent/carer
- Manage and correct their own child’s behaviour (or those in their care), where it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe behaviour in the playground
- Understand that the school needs to work with a child /parent/carer/other witnesses to clarify their version of events

- Understand that other families/children will not be discussed with another parent
- Raise concerns about the school through the appropriate channels by contacting in the first instance 1) the relevant teacher 2) Head of School or Executive Headteacher or the Chair of the Governing Body so that concerns can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

Behaviour that will not be tolerated

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (classroom operation, office area an employee's office or in any other area of the school including on the school grounds and events on the school grounds/hall and at off-site events)
- Displaying a temper, or shouting at members of staff, pupils or other parents
- Damaging or destroying school property
- Defamatory, derogatory language and swearing
- Abusing school staff whilst they are supporting pupils at entry/exit times and monitoring traffic flow at the school's entrances
- Threats to do harm to a member of school staff, governor, visitor parent/carer or pupil verbally or with written comments
- Using equipment to record conversations with members of staff and governors without permission.
- Sending abusive messages to another member of the school community, including via text, email or social media*
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about school staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms
- Use of physical punishment against your own child while on school premises
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally or in writing) towards another child, parent or staff member
- Disciplining another person's child (where the child in question is not in the care of the said parent/carer) - please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention immediately
- Smoking (including vaping) and drinking alcohol on the school premises
- Possessing or taking drugs and entering school premises whilst under the influence of drugs/alcohol (including legal highs)
- Bringing dogs/or other pets onto the school premises (other than support dogs)
- Excessive displays of public affection with a partner in the playground/school grounds.

***Inappropriate use of social media**

Any concerns that parents or other community members may have about a school must be made through the appropriate channels by contacting the relevant teacher, the Headteacher or the Chair of the Governing Body, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

If any parent/carer of a pupil at school or other community member is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments through any medium, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site.

All social media sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report content or activity which breach this.

The School will also expect that any parent/carer, pupil/student or community member removes such comments immediately.

Where comments are of a threatening, abusive or harassing nature, the School will consider the appropriate action to be taken such as banning parents from entering the school premises and alerting the police and or other relevant agencies as to the existence of the comments.

Code of conduct during meetings

Meetings between staff or governors and parents/carers are an important aspect of the partnership to provide an effective education in school.

Sometimes, the focus of these meetings will be on sensitive or emotive issues; therefore, to maximise the effectiveness of the discussions, the School expects a formal meeting to be conducted as follows.

- The meeting will be held in a location which can enable confidential or sensitive issues to be discussed without undue interruption
- Identify who will Chair the meeting
- Each party is entitled to be accompanied by a representative if they wish (for example, a parent can be accompanied by a friend or legal representative, whilst a staff member or governor can be accompanied by a professional support representative such as a senior colleague from another school in the Trust)
- A clear understanding by all parties of the objectives of the meeting should be established at the beginning of the meeting
- Where appropriate, a maximum length of the meeting will be agreed by both parties at the beginning of the meeting
- Each party should listen to the other party without interrupting unnecessarily

- The use of equipment to record meetings is not permitted
- Each party will contribute positively to the discussions, always focused on reaching mutual agreement to seek a resolution
- Using intimidating or offensive language or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated; the meeting will be ended immediately should such language or behaviour occur

Breaching the code of conduct

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached this parental code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved in the first instance and speak to the parent(s)/carers about the incident.

Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may then follow the actions below. An escalation to more serious consequences may occur without working through the following list.

- Invite the parent into school to meet with a senior member of staff or the headteacher
- Send a warning letter to the parent(s)
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from the local authority's legal team regarding further action
- Ban the parent from the school site

Dealing with incidents

- All incidents of abuse, threatening behaviour, violence (verbal and physical) or any other breaches of this Code of Conduct will be recorded on the School's Incident Report Form
- A record of an incident (supported by any available photographs of injuries or damage/witness statements, written evidence where available or appropriate) will help in the collection of evidence where necessary (for example, for legal proceedings)
- Any person who witnessed the incident will be asked to produce witness reports in writing as soon as possible after the incident. These should be signed and dated and provided to the school
- Recording details of incidents will help to inform the ongoing review and monitoring of this policy and future risk assessments

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional way.

The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the code of conduct rests with the headteacher.

The headteacher will consult the chair of governors before banning.

Appendix

Access to school premises

A parent/carer of a pupil/student at school normally has implied permission to be on the school's premises at certain times and for certain purposes. However, this permission may be withdrawn – either temporarily or permanently - in instances of breaches of this Code of Conduct, in which case the parent/carer or visitor will become a trespasser.

- Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it an offence for a trespasser on school premises to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance and allows for the removal and prosecution of any person believed to have committed the offence
- A person who persists in entering school premises and displaying unreasonable behaviour when permission has been withdrawn may be removed

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