



# Parents and Visitors Conduct Policy

Ratified by the Governing Body:

Review date:

# Mayflower Primary School

## Policy on Managing the Conduct of Parents and Visitors to our School

### Statement of Principles

The Governing Body of Mayflower Primary School encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one.

At our school, we are very fortunate to have supportive and friendly parents. Our parents recognise that educating children is a process that involves partnership between the home and school and understand the importance of good working relationships to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons we welcome and encourage parents/carers to participate fully in school life. The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents and visitors about expected conduct so that we can work together to ensure a safe and positive school environment for our children.

### Respect and concern for others and their rights

We expect parents and carers to show respect and concern for others by:-

- Supporting the respectful ethos of our school by setting a good example in their own speech and behaviour towards all members of the school community;
- Working together with teachers for the benefit of children. This includes approaching school to resolve any issues of concern and to discuss and clarify specific events in order to bring about a positive solution;
- Respecting the school environment, including keeping school tidy by not littering, using correct pedestrian footways into school, driving carefully and considerately within permitted areas and returning equipment that has been borrowed.

The vast majority of parents, carers and others visiting our School are keen to work with us and are supportive of the School. However, on the rare occasions when a negative attitude towards the School is expressed, this can result in aggression, verbal and or physical abuse towards members of school staff or the wider school community.

The Governing Body expects and requires its members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations and attempt to defuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues.

However, all members of staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse, and the right, in an extreme case, of appropriate self-defence.

We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff. This Policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

### **In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, school WILL NOT tolerate:-**

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes with the operation of a classroom, the office area, the outside learning environment or any other part of school grounds;
- Shouting at members of the school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- Using loud and/or offensive language (swearing) or displaying temper;
- Physically intimidating or threatening a member of staff, e.g. standing very close to her/him/them
- Threatening harm or the use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them and physical punishment against your own child on school premises.
- The use of aggressive hand gestures
- Shaking or holding a fist or finger towards another person
- Pushing, hitting, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking or spitting
- Abusive or threatening emails, phone or social network messages.
- Racist or sexist comments
- Breaching the school's security procedures
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding school or any of the pupils/staff, at the school on Facebook or other social sites (see below). Any concerns you may have about the school must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, a senior leader, the Head Teacher or the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.
- Smoking (tobacco or e-cigarettes) and consumption of alcohol or other drugs or accessing the school site whilst intoxicated.
- Dogs being brought onto school premises, apart from assistance dogs.

These types of behaviour are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour.

**Unacceptable behaviour may result in the Local Authority and the Police called and/or being informed of the incident.**

### **Aggressive and Abusive Behaviour on Social Media**

The way individuals communicate is changing. Parents and carers are entitled to hold opinions about schools, however, negative comments can cause significant distress to staff and reputational damage to the School.

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Head teachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. The Governors of our School considers the use of social media being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the Head Teacher or the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren being educated at our school is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other 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 the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report content or activity which breaches this. Our school also expects that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately. Parents/carers making such comments will also be invited into school to discuss the implications of posting libellous comments. In serious cases, the school will also consider legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites.

Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, is the issue of cyberbullying and the use by one child or a parent with the intention to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of bullying. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

The School takes a proactive approach to minimise these incidents by sharing our expectations about the use of social media and online behaviours and encourages all parents and carers to contact the School directly if you have a complaint or concern. In most instances these can be resolved immediately in a professional manner. As a school, we try hard to be as transparent as possible and make as easy as possible routes available to parents and carers who wish to raise concerns or put forward their opinion. This includes having senior leaders outside every day, the Dojo system of how to contact teachers, easy access to the school office and the Complaints Policy on the Website.

### **Procedure to be Followed**

If a parent/carer behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Headteacher or appropriate senior member of staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the School's Complaints Procedures should be followed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence, the Police may be called and a parent/carer may be banned by the Headteacher/Governors from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review.

All incidents will be recorded on the Schools safeguarding system, CPOMS.

In imposing a ban the following steps will be taken:

- The parent/carer will be informed, in writing, that she/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, e.g. that Police involvement or an injunction application may follow
- Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the Local Authority and the Police will be included
- The Chair of Governors will be informed of the ban
- Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

### **Conclusion**

The Local Authority itself may take action where behaviour is unacceptable or there are serious breaches of our home-school code of conduct or health and safety legislation.

In implementing this Policy, the School will, as appropriate, seek advice from the Local Authority's education, health and safety and legal departments, to ensure fairness and consistency.

We are guided by and may refer to the following:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/controlling-access-to-school-premises>

<https://www.localgovernmentlawyer.co.uk/education-law/343-education-features/42844-banning-parents-access-to-the-school-premises>