



Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct

This Policy has been adopted and approved by Oxlip Learning Partnership and is to be used by all members of the Trust.

History of Document

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Definitions: 'Principal' also refers to any other title used to identify the Leader of a school, where appropriate, or other senior manager delegated to deal with the matter by the Principal.

We use the term 'pupils' to refer to any child or young person in our schools.

At Oxlip Learning Partnership (the Trust) we value our strong relationships with parents and carers. By working together this helps us to achieve the very best for our learners in a mutually supportive partnership between parents/carers, teaching staff and the school community. We also strive to make our schools a place where as adults we model for students the behaviour we teach and expect.

We highly value parental engagement in children's learning and we know the quality of the home-school relationship is associated with improved academic outcomes at all ages.

1. Purpose and scope

At our schools, we believe it's 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 set clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the staff code of conduct) and pupils (through our behaviour policy).

This code of conduct aims to help our schools work together with parents and carers by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

We use the term 'parents' to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)

2. Our expectations of parents and carers

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our Trust and schools
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils, helping to resolve an issue in an appropriate manner
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with language and behaviour

- Seek a peaceful solution to all issues
- Correct their own child's behaviour (or those in their care), particularly in public, where it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct
- Approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern

3. Behaviour that will not be tolerated

While we value parental engagement, we will not tolerate aggressive, abusive, or threatening communications in any form, including those generated using artificial intelligence or automated systems. Examples of behaviour that will not be tolerated, but not limited to:

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches)
- Swearing, or using offensive language
- Displaying a temper, or shouting at members of staff, pupils or other parents
- Threatening another member of the school community
- Physical intimidation, e.g. by standing very close or the use of aggressive hand gestures
- Any kind of insult as an attempt to demean, embarrass or undermine
- Sending abusive messages to another member of the school community, including via text, email or social media
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the Trust, its schools, staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms
- Use of physical punishment against your child while on school premises
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally or in writing) towards another child or adult
- Disciplining another person's child – please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention
- Damaging or destroying Trust or school property
- Smoking or drinking alcohol on the school premises
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs)
- Bringing dogs onto the school premises (other than assistance or guide dogs)

3.1 Recording Conversations

We do not accept the recording of conversations obtained covertly and without the informed consent of all parties being recorded. For the avoidance of doubt staff do not consent to being recorded. Any attempt to record a conversation may result in the school imposing a restriction on how you contact the school in the future. Where any recordings made without consent are made public, this would risk serious legal implications for the person who committed that act and the school would be forced to take legal advice.

3.2 Vexatious Behaviour

High-volume or repeated aggressive communications place unacceptable pressure on staff and divert resources from supporting children's education and wellbeing.

Correspondence with the following characteristics may be deemed to be vexatious:

- Obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious;
- Which makes unreasonable requests that demand a disproportionate amount of staff time;
- Which makes requests in an unreasonable manner;
- Which is designed to cause disruption or annoyance;
- Which lacks any serious purpose or value.

AI-generated, generic correspondence with the above attributes or used in the above manner may also be deemed to be vexatious.

Where a parent/carers sends excessive or aggressive correspondence (including AI-generated content), we reserve the right to:

- a) Warn the parent that their behaviour is considered to be or is becoming unreasonable/unacceptable and if it is not modified, action may be taken in accordance with this policy.
- b) Confirm to the parent in writing that their behaviour is now considered by the school to be unreasonable/unacceptable.
- c) Inform the parent that all meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and that confidential notes will be taken at the meeting in the interests of all parties.
- d) Inform the parent that, except in emergencies, a communications protocol is to be followed going forward.

The Chair of Local Advisory Board of the school reserves the right to inform the parent that their correspondence is deemed to be vexatious and that the Trust will not respond to any further correspondence on this issue or a closely related issue.

4. Breaching the code of conduct

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent or visitor has breached the code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent/visitor about the incident.

Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may then:

- **Invite the parent/visitor into school for an informal meeting with a senior member of staff or the Principal**

The main points of discussion and any agreed actions should be noted and a follow-up letter provided to the parent/visitor to confirm this.

- **Clarify to the parent/visitor what is considered acceptable behaviour**

In some instances, it may be appropriate to ensure the parent/visitor is clear about behaviour standards expected by the school. This will be explained by letter from the school and may contain a warning about additional action should any further incidents occur.

- **Send a warning letter to the parent**

This will be a letter from the school and may contain a warning about additional action should any further incidents occur.

- **Impose conditions on the parent/visitor regarding contact with the school and staff**

Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places and the public has no automatic right of entry. Parents/carers of enrolled pupils have an 'implied licence' to come onto school premises at certain stated times. It is for our schools to define and set out the extent of such access and individuals exceeding would be trespassing.

Depending on the type, level or frequency of the unacceptable behaviour, the school may consider imposing conditions on the individual's contact with the school. These conditions may include, but are not limited to:

- Placing time limits on telephone conversations and personal contacts
- Restricting the number of telephone calls that will be taken (for example one call on one specified morning / afternoon of any week)
- Limiting the complainant to one medium of contact (telephone, letter, e-mail etc)
- Requiring the complainant to communicate only with a designated, named employee
- Requiring any personal contact with staff to take place in the presence of a witness, e.g. with a member of the senior leadership team

- **Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)**

- **Seek advice from the Trust's legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)**
- **Ban the parent/visitor from the school site**
Where other procedures have been exhausted and aggression or intimidation continues, or where there is an extreme act of violence, then the school may consider banning the individual from school premises. This will include banning a parent/visitor from accessing school staff by written communication or telephone.

Following this decision, if you enter the School premises without prior agreement from the Principal you will be committing an offence and you will be asked to leave. If you do not comply with this instruction, either a senior member of staff will arrange for you to be removed from the premises or the school may feel obliged to make a further complaint to the police and it may lead to a prosecution under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500. Separate injunctions and protection from harassment orders may also be obtained if necessary.

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 Principal.

The Principal will consult the Chair of the Local Advisory Board before banning a parent from the school site.

5. Implementing and Reviewing Restrictions

Where conditions or a ban has been placed on a parent/carer or visitor, the individual will be informed by letter from the Principal with details of the restrictions in place. The individual has the right to make representations about these conditions and, if they wish to do so, should write to the Chair of the Local Advisory Board within 10 school days from the date of the letter.

The Chair of the Local Advisory Board will then consider whether to confirm or remove some or all of the conditions or the ban. The decision will be communicated to the individual in writing within 10 school days of the date of the representation letter.

The decision to implement conditions or a ban will be reviewed by the Local Advisory Board after approximately six months, and every six months after that if appropriate. The parent/carer will be invited to make written representation to the governors and this, along with any evidence from the Principal, will be considered at a meeting of the full Local Advisory Board. Governors will consider the extent of the individual's compliance with the conditions in place, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from them. The Local Advisory Board may decide to maintain, extend or remove conditions or a ban, or implement or amend conditions on the individual's access to the school.

The outcome of the review will be communicated to the parent/carer within 10 school days of the meeting taking place.

6. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following Trust and/or school policies and procedures:

- Communications Policy
- Feedback, Concerns and Complaints Procedure

Appendix A

Visitor Notice

We strive to ensure that our school is a safe, healthy and pleasant environment for all members of the school community: staff, students and visitors.

We are very happy to deal with any concerns or queries which are presented in an acceptable way.

Please be aware, however, that conduct or communication which is interpreted as abusive, threatening, intimidating or which seeks to undermine staff will not be accepted.

Anyone behaving in this way is likely to be removed from the premises and formal action taken.