

## A Place to Flourish

*“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10)*



# Parent/Carer Code of Conduct

<b>Date of review/adoption</b>	Autumn 2022
<b>Date of next review</b>	Autumn 2023
<b>Notes</b>	To be shared with parents/carers annually (or when their child joins the school) Written using “Controlling access to school premises” (DfE, 27 November 2018)

## 1. Introduction

At Blundeston CEVC Primary School, our vision is to create “*A place to flourish*”, as God intended. We are very fortunate to have good relationships with our parents and carers and value the contribution that they play in the life of the school and in their children’s education. We recognise that working within a mutually supportive partnership between parents/carers, staff and the wider community, will enable our pupils to flourish.

For these reasons, we continue to welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our school.

## 2. Aims

We believe that staff, parents/carers and pupils are entitled to a safe, nurturing and protective school environment. Behaviour that causes harassment, alarm or distress undermines the vision, aims, Christian ethos and values of our school.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about their expected conduct. This is so the school community can continue to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

It also sets out the actions the school will take if parents/carers do not follow this policy, and their conduct falls below the expectations set out below.

## 3. Expectations

We expect parents, carers and visitors to:

- Respect the caring ethos and Christian values of our school
- Understand that both staff and parents/carers need to work together for the benefit of their children
- Approach school staff for help to resolve an issue in an appropriate manner
- Remember that all members of the school community should be treated with respect, by using appropriate language and behaviour
- Seek to clarify a child’s version of events in order to bring about an appropriate solution to an issue
- Correct their own child’s behaviour and actions, where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour, both on and off the school premises, including when online
- Avoid using staff as threats to admonish their children’s behaviour.

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, the school **will not** tolerate parents, carers and visitors exhibiting the following:

- Aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language that the school feels is a risk to staff or pupils. It’s enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened.
- Disruptive behaviour which interferes, or threatens to interfere, with any of the school’s operation or activities, anywhere on the school premises
- Any inappropriate behaviour on the school premises

- Using loud, discriminatory, inflammatory or offensive language, either in person, or over the telephone
- Swearing, cursing, shouting or displaying temper, or speaking in an aggressive or threatening tone
- Threatening, in any way, a member of school staff, volunteer, governor, visitor, parent, carer or pupil
- Physically intimidating a member of the school community, i.e. by standing very close to them
- The use of aggressive hand gestures or exaggerated movements, such as pointing or shaking/holding a fist towards another person
- Physical aggression and/or violence towards another person, including pushing, hitting, punching, kicking, slapping, spitting
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic comments, including sexual innuendo
- Damaging or destroying school property
- Sending abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/telephone messages, or other written communications, to anyone within the school community
- Sharing private messages and conversations that have taken place with the school on social media or group chats, e.g. WhatsApp. These messages and conversations should always be treated as confidential
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school, or any of the pupils/parents/carers/staff at the school, on Facebook or other social media sites (see below). This includes any comments which bring the school's name, or anyone in the school community, into disrepute
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against their own child/ren on school premises
- Approaching someone else's child/ren in order to discuss or chastise them because of their actions towards their own child/ren. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences)
- Smoking and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on school premises
- Dogs being brought on to school premises (other than guide dogs).

**This list is not exhaustive.**

#### **4. Persons causing nuisance/disturbance on school premises**

Schools are private property. People do not have an automatic right to enter. Parents/carers have an 'implied licence' to come on to school premises at certain times, for instance:

- for appointments
- to attend a school event
- to drop off or pick up children.

This Code of Conduct sets out the school's rules for this. Anyone who breaks these rules would be trespassing.

Trespassing is a civil offence. This means that schools can ask someone to leave and take civil action in the courts if someone trespasses regularly. The school will write to regular trespassers to tell them that they are potentially committing an offence.

## **5. Consequences**

Should **any** of the above behaviour occur on school premises, the school may feel it is necessary to write to the person, explaining the inappropriateness of their conduct and will make it very clear that it will not be tolerated and is not to be repeated. The school may also contact the appropriate authorities and/or consider banning the offending adult from entering the school grounds.

## **6. Barring individuals from school premises**

Schools can bar someone from the premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or pupils. It's enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened.

The school will tell a parent/carer that they've been barred or they intend to bar them, in writing. Letters will be signed by the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. The parent/carer will be allowed to present their side. The school will bar the parent/carer temporarily, until the parent/carer has had the opportunity to formally present their side.

After the parent's/carer's side has been heard, the school can decide whether to continue with barring them. The decision will be reviewed within a reasonable time, decided by the school.

The Department for Education (DfE) does not get involved in individual parental barring cases.

## **7. Removing parents/carers from the school premises**

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a person who is on school premises without legal permission to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance. Trespassing itself does not constitute a criminal offence.

To have committed a criminal offence, an abusive individual must have been barred from the premises or have exceeded their 'implied licence', then also have caused a nuisance or disturbance.

If a school has reasonable grounds to suspect that someone has committed an offence, then they can be removed from the school by a police officer or a person authorised by the appropriate authority, such as the governing board or local authority.

## **8. Inappropriate use of social media sites**

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases, other parents/carers or pupils.

The Governors at Blundeston CEVC Primary School consider the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the pupils

or the whole school community. Any concerns parents/carers have must be made through the appropriate channels, in the appropriate way, so that they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned. This includes parents/carers following the school's Complaints Policy and Procedure.

## **9. Libellous or defamatory posts**

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child being educated in the school is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social media sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the 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 breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases, the school may also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social media and other sites.

## **10. Use of Class Dojo**

As a school, we value the use of Class Dojo as an effective way for parents/carers and school staff to communicate with each other about day-to-day matters.

In order to safeguard our staff's wellbeing, mental health and time, we ask that parents/carers respect and adhere to the following points:

- Parents/carers and staff will only send Dojo messages between the hours of 8am and 5pm, weekdays during term-time. Staff will respond to messages during these times only.
- Parents/carers will only send Dojo messages during term-time and not at weekends or during the school holidays. Staff will respond to messages during term-time only.
- Parents/carers will not use Class Dojo to inform staff about attendance matters, a child's absence or about changes of arrangements for pick-up and drop-off etc. This is because staff are not always able to check messages during the school day and may miss these important messages. These messages need to be given to the school office, either by telephone or email.

The same procedures and expectations apply to parents/carers using Tapestry for Reception children.

## **11. Cyberbullying**

We take very seriously the issue of cyberbullying and the use by one pupil or a parent/carer to publicly humiliate, discriminate against, or bully another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying.

## **12. Rude, derogatory or abusive conduct - telephone calls/meetings/messages/emails**

Calls may be terminated if a parent/carer shouts or is abusive over the telephone. Calls may also be terminated if a parent/carer speaks in an aggressive, threatening or

intimidating tone over the telephone. The Headteacher, with the approval of the Governors, may consider insisting the parent/carer communicates via email instead, if necessary.

If a parent/carer is abusive or threatening in a meeting, the member of staff may terminate the meeting by asking the parent/carer to leave the room, and maybe the school premises, in order for them to calm down. The Headteacher, with the approval of the Governors, may consider insisting the parent/carer communicates via telephone or email instead, if necessary.

If a parent/carer sends a rude, derogatory, disparaging or abusive message (via Class Dojo/Tapestry) or email, this will be brought to the attention of the Headteacher. The member of staff will not reply in full and, instead, will ask the parent/carer to make an appointment to discuss the matter via a telephone call or in person, in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy and Procedure. In our experience, this is a much swifter and more satisfactory way to resolve any issues.

***The school reserves the right to take any necessary actions to ensure that members of our school community are not subjected to abuse.***

***We expect that parents/carers make all persons responsible for collecting their child/ren aware of this policy.***

***We trust that our parents/carers will assist our school with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continuing support.***

## **Appendix A: Model letters**

Dear *[Parent/Carer's name]*,

I have received a report about your conduct on *[enter date and time]*.

*[Add summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, pupils, other parents/carers etc.]*

We believe staff, parents/carers and pupils are entitled to a safe, nurturing and protective school environment. Behaviour that causes harassment, alarm or distress to users of the premises undermines the vision, aims, Christian ethos and values of our school.

I must inform you that the school will not tolerate conduct of this nature on its premises and will act to defend and safeguard its staff and pupils, in accordance with the Parent/Carer Code of Conduct.

I am, therefore, informing you that should the school staff have any further concerns about your behaviour, formal procedures may be followed.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Dear *[Parent/Carer's name]*,

I have received a report about your conduct on *[enter date and time]*.

*[Add summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, pupils, other parents/carers etc.]*

We believe staff, parents/carers and pupils are entitled to a safe, nurturing and protective school environment. Behaviour that causes harassment, alarm or distress to users of the premises undermines the vision, aims, Christian ethos and values of our school.

I must inform you that the school will not tolerate conduct of this nature on its premises and will act to defend and safeguard its staff and pupils, in accordance with the Parent/Carer Code of Conduct.

The Headteacher has already contacted you on *[enter date of last letter]*. I am, therefore, informing you that should the school staff have any further concerns about your behaviour we will consider barring you from the school premises.

Yours sincerely,

Chair of Governors



Dear *[Parent/Carer's name]*,

I have received a report from the Headteacher about your conduct on *[enter date and time]*.

*[Add summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, pupils, other parents/carers etc.]*

The Department for Education (DfE) state that schools are private property. People do not have an automatic right to enter. Parents/carers have an 'implied licence' to come on to school premises at certain times.

The DfE also state that schools can bar someone from the premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or pupils. It's enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened.

I must inform you that the school will not tolerate conduct of this nature on its premises and will act to defend and safeguard its staff and pupils, in accordance with the Parent/Carer Code of Conduct.

**I am, therefore, writing to inform you that, with immediate effect from *[enter date]*, you are barred from entering the school site and school building.**

I would like to make you aware that Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a person who is on school premises without legal permission to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance. To have committed a criminal offence, an abusive individual must have been barred from the premises or have exceeded their 'implied licence', then also have caused a nuisance or disturbance. If the school has reasonable grounds to suspect that someone has committed an offence, then they can be removed from the school by a police officer or a person authorised by the appropriate authority.

This measure is temporary until you have had the opportunity to provide me with any representations or comments you wish to make, in writing, in relation to the incident detailed in this letter. These representations should be sent to me via the school office within 5 days of the date of this letter.

After your written representations have been considered, the school will decide whether to continue with barring you. The decision will be reviewed within a reasonable time, decided by the school. The school will still make this decision in the absence of any written representations from you.

I can confirm that the Department for Education does not get involved in individual parental barring cases.

Yours sincerely,

Chair of Governors