



St Peter at Gowts Church of England Primary School

Policy	Code of Conduct – guidelines for dealing with adult behaviour within the school perimeter
Date adopted	September 2019
Date reviewed	

Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors

Rationale

The objectives of this code of conduct are :

- To promote a positive ethos between all members of the school community so that all members feel safe and valued, holding true to our vision of being a 'community of hope'
- To ensure the safety and well being of all children, staff and parents
- To safeguard members of staff and avoid them going into hazardous confrontations with adults in dispute within the school grounds
- To establish a common practice for the school to respond incidents that are deemed unacceptable
- To safeguard the children from being involved accidentally when unacceptable language or behaviour is seen both within the grounds and online
- To enable the school to be able to deal with adults behaving in unacceptable actions both online and within the school grounds

This Code of Conduct is an unsigned agreement between the School, Parent, Carer and Visitors

At St Peter at Gowts Primary school we are a Values Based School. We have a strong focus on developing our children's values and citizenship, therefore we expect that our staff, governors, parents and visitors also adhere to being part of a Values based school community and act accordingly.

At St. Peter at Gowts we are very proud and fortunate to have a very dedicated and supportive school community. At our school the staff, governors, parents and carers all recognise that the education of our children is a partnership between us.

We expect our school community to respect our school ethos, setting a good example of their own behaviour both on school premises, when accompanying classes on school visits and when posting online.

In addition we also expect our parents, carers and visitors to keep our children safe by adhering to the school's request to park safely outside the school gates during morning and afternoon collections.

As a partnership we are all aware of the importance of good working relationships and all recognise the importance of these relationships to equip our children with the necessary skills for their education. For these reasons we will continue to welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our school.

The purpose of this code of conduct is to provide the expectations around the conduct of all parents, carers and visitors connected to our school.

We are committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner, through an open and positive dialogue. However we understand that everyday misunderstandings can cause frustrations and have a negative impact on our relationships. Where issues arise or misconceptions take place, please contact your child's teacher or the Headteacher, who will be available to meet with you and go through the issue and hopefully resolve it. Where issues remain unresolved, please follow the school's complaints procedure. This is available on the school website or a copy can be requested from the school office.

This code aims to clarify the types of behaviour that will not be tolerated and seeks parental agreement to these expectations.

The code of conduct also sets out the actions the school can take should this code be ignored or where breaches occur.

Behaviour that will not be tolerated:

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's normal operation or activities anywhere on the school premises.
- Any inappropriate behaviour on the school premises.
- Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper.
- Threatening in any way, a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or child.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Sending abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications (including social media) to anyone within the school community.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/parents/staff/governors at the school on Facebook or other sites
- The use of physical, verbal or written aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment of your own child on school premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences)
- Parking outside the school gates that is dangerous and illegal.
- Smoking, taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on school premises. (Alcohol may only be consumed during authorised events)
- Dogs being brought on to the school premises. (other than guide dogs)

Should **any** of the above occur on school premises or in connection with school the school may feel it is necessary to take action by contacting the appropriate authorities or consider banning the offending adult from entering the school premises.

It is important for parents and carers to make sure any persons collecting their children are aware of this policy.

What happens if someone ignores or breaks the code?

In the event of any parent/carer or visitor of the school breaking, this code then proportionate actions will be taken as follows:

In cases where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter within the school ground, the first priority is to ensure that all those present, whether adult or child, are moved to a safe distance from the dispute. That may mean a direction for everyone to move to a different exit gate. This decision should be reported to the office.

Once the dispute is isolated the people involved should be asked to leave the school premises. There should be no discussion but a simple order to leave. If those involved refuse to leave they should be left and all access to the building should be locked. The Office should decide whether to call the police to assist. No one should approach or try to negotiate with the protagonists. At any time staff should not approach individually.

When dealing with a physical or verbally abusive adult, there should be at least two members of staff both of whom should be briefed about the position and made aware that this policy is in use. They may refuse and this is acceptable. The staff used should have volunteered when the full position is known. It may be that staff who

know the people involved, and are known by them, may be best to make the contact. This will include any or all cases of threats or violence and actual violence to any child, staff or governor in the school, This will also include anything that could be seen as a sign of harassment of any member of the school community, such as any form of insulting social media post or any form of social media cyber bullying.

In cases where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander, then the school will refer the matter to the County Councils Legal Team for further action. In cases where the code of conduct has been broken but the breach was not libellous, slanderous or a criminal matter, then the school will send out a formal letter to the parent/carer with an invite to a meeting.

If the parent/carer refuses to attend the meeting then the school will write to the parent/carer and ask them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not they may be banned from the school premises. If after this behaviour continues, the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place.

Note: (1) a ban from the school can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above in more serious cases.

Site Bans

The school has the right to control the people who enter the school perimeter. It also has the right to ban individuals from the premises, including the school playgrounds. It is important that the school quickly reviews the incident and decides whether the individuals should serve a ban from entering the grounds and whether that ban should be temporary or permanent. It will be essential that the school Governors are involved in that decision and that the legal department of the LA is contacted because it is the LA that will issue the ban . The LA should receive a written description of the events as quickly as possible after the event to enable a decision to be made and implemented. If the protagonists have been identified and are known, they should receive a standard letter from the Head outlining the issue, how the school dealt with it and the potential repercussions that would come into force after legal advice from the LA had been taken. It should outline the fact that a ban could be a possible outcome and that they would receive notice from the County Education Solicitor that a ban, which could be a temporary or a permanent one, had been instituted and they should observe that ban in the terms described by the Solicitor. They should be told that, until a final decision had been made and communicated to them, they would not be allowed on to the school premises. If that caused problems with delivering their children to school, arrangements would be made for the children to be met at the school gate by a member of staff who would escort the children into school. The same arrangement would be put in place to return the children to them at the end of the school day. The school should emphasise that the children would not be penalised for the behaviour of their parents in any way.

Issues of conduct with the use of Social Media

Most people take part in online activities and social media. It's fun, interesting and keeps us connected.

The PTA has a Facebook page which allows parents to receive and respond to messages about school events. We encourage you to positively participate if you wish. All staff have Twitter accounts, it is actively encouraged for parents to follow the school on Twitter to keep in touch, find out about events and celebrate both the children's and the school's successes.

Within these spaces however we ask that you use common sense when discussing school life online.

'Think before you post' We ask that social media, whether public or private, should not be used to fuel campaigns and voice complaints against the school, school staff, parents or children.

We take very seriously inappropriate use of social media by a parent to publicly humiliate or criticise another parent, member of staff or child.

If parents have any concerns about their child in relation to the school as we have said above they should:

1. Initially contact the class teacher
2. If the concern remains they should contact the Headteacher
3. If still unresolved, the school governors through the complaints procedure

Parents should not use social media as a medium to air any concerns or grievances as there are formal procedures in place for managing any concerns or complaints.

Online activity which we consider inappropriate:

- Identifying or posting images/videos of children who are not their own
- Abusive or personal comments about staff, governors, children or other parents
- Bringing the school in disrepute
- Posting defamatory or libellous comments
- Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or children
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children or members of staff
- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
- Breaching school security procedures

Thank you for abiding by this code of conduct in our school. Together we aim to create a positive and uplifting environment not only for the children but also all who work and visit our school.

This code of conduct will be renewed bi-annually by the governing body.

Its contents will be shared with parents and staff on an annual basis and will be available on the school website.