



## Code of Conduct for Parents/Carers and Visitors

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## **Aims**

APSOL encourages close links with parents and the community and believes that pupils benefit when the **relationship between home and school is a positive one**.

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 the School Behaviour Policy).

The vast majority of parents, carers and others visiting our school are keen to work with us and are supportive to the school. However, on 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.

APSOL expects and requires all 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-defense.

We expect parents, carers and visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of our school staff. The Code of Conduct aims to help the school work together with parents and visitors by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour. It also sets out the actions the school can take should this code be ignored or these breaches occur.

This policy is published on the school's website and can also be made available in large print or another accessible format if required.

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

## **Expectations**

We expect parents, carers and visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with speech and behaviour
- Seek a peaceful solution for 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 staff to help and resolve any issues of concern
- Be an example to their own child/ren by the way they speak and behave in the school and with the school community

## **Unacceptable behaviour**

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches)
- Shouting at members of school staff, either in person or telephone
- Physically intimidating a member of staff
- The use of aggressive gestures
- Threatening behaviour
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or transphobic comments

- Insults or swearing
- Verbally disrespecting members of staff in front of school children and other members of the school community
- Not complying with school safeguarding procedures or systems
- Damage to personal/school property
- Hitting: pushing, slapping, punching and kicking
- Spitting
- Breaching the school's security procedures
- Aggressive and threatening behaviour towards staff or families via social media
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their child. (such approach to a child may be seen as assault on that child and have legal consequences)
- Smoking, taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on the school premises (unless alcohol has been allowed for a specific event)

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

Unacceptable behaviour may result in the police being informed of the incident.

### **Breaching the code of conduct**

If the school suspects or becomes aware that a parent/carer or visitor has breached the code of conduct, the school may gather information from those involved and speak to the parent/ carer or visitor about the incident. If necessary, the Concerns and Complaints procedures will be followed.

Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may then take one or more of the following steps (not necessarily in the order below):

- Invite the parent/carer or visitor to the school to meet with a senior member of the staff or headteacher
- Issue a verbal warning of breach of this code of conduct
- Issue a written warning of breach of this code of conduct
- Contact the appropriate authorities
- Seek advice from Talent Education Trust Head of Legal regarding further action
- Ban the parent, carer or visitor from the school site

Schools can ban someone from the school's premises if that person's 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.

**In imposing a ban, the following steps will be taken:**

- The parent/carer or visitor will be informed, in writing from the Headteacher, that any further unacceptable behaviour may lead to a ban from the school premises for a set period.
- If the negative behaviour continues, the parent, carer, visitor will be informed, in writing, that she/he has been banned from the school premises for a set period. Letters will be signed by the Headteacher, though in some cases, Talent Education legal department may wish to write instead.
- The individual can appeal the ban by writing to the chair of governors who may then wish to recommend the ban to be lifted or continued.

**Other notes**

- The Headteacher's decision should be reviewed towards the end of the set period.
- Where an assault or serious incident has led to a ban, a statement indicating that matter has been reported to the police and will be included.
- Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils to be delivered to and collected from the school entrance/gate will be clarified.

**Removing individuals from school premises**

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes 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 a criminal offence, then they can be removed from the school or a police officer or by a person authorised by appropriate authority such as:

- Headteacher
- Local governing board
- Local authority
- Senior member of staff
- Proprietor

## **Inappropriate use of social media**

We expect all parents/ carers to act appropriately online as well as in person. The use of social media to fuel campaigns and complaints against our school or to share inappropriate information or to cyberbully another person, e.g. naming children involved in incidences, sharing confidential regarding an aspect of school life, making allegations or accusations or sharing false news, will be taken very seriously. We consider the use of social media websites or Apps in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or whole school community. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the leadership team or the Headteacher, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned, in line with the school's policies.

In the event that any parent/ carer of a child/ren being educated in this school is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on any social media group/or network site, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content that can be posted on the site and provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. In some cases, the appropriate authorities may be contacted.

### **Monitoring and Review**

All situations which may or do lead to a ban from the school site, will be reported by Headteacher to the Chair of Governors, Chair of Talent Education Trust and Head of Legal. These bodies will monitor the school's use of banning from the site over the course of each year.

This policy will be reviewed on a 2-year cycle.



