

WESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers & Visitors

November 2023

Review November 2024



Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors

This Code of Conduct is an unsigned agreement between Parents, Carers, Visitors and Westfield Primary School in line with Surrey County Council Guidance "Keeping schools safe from abuse, threats and violence" September 2019.

A. Access to school premises

We recognise and value our partnerships with parents/carers and members of the community, and we welcome visitors to our school.

We will act to ensure that our school remains a safe place for pupils, staff and all other members of our community. If a parent/carer/visitor has concerns we will always listen to them and seek to address them.

However, abusive, threatening or violent behaviour will not be tolerated. If such behaviour occurs the school may consider barring the person involved, in line with Department for Education guidance on Controlling Access to School Premises, November 2018. Any person who does not comply with these requirements would be trespassing and legal action may be taken.

No meeting at the school may be electronically recorded without the express permission of all parties. Information obtained without such permission will not be admissible in any proceedings.

B. The Code of Conduct

1. At Westfield Primary School 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.
2. We expect our school community to respect our school ethos, keep our school tidy, set a good example of their own behaviour both on school premises and when accompanying classes on school visits.
3. 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.

4. 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.
5. 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. This, in turn, supports our work to help children establish a respectful and tolerant attitude.
6. 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 member of the Senior Leadership Team, 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.
7. This code aims to clarify the types of behaviour that will not be tolerated and seeks parental agreement to these expectations.
8. The code of conduct also sets out the actions the school can take should this code be ignored or where breaches occur.
9. Behaviour that will not be tolerated:
 - Aggression, abuse (including swearing) or use of insults.
 - Prejudice based language/behaviour.
 - Behaviour or language which presents a risk to staff or pupils.
 - Abusive, aggressive or threatening telephone calls to members of staff.
 - 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 which undermines our values of respect, tolerance and thoughtfulness.
 - Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper.
 - Threatening in any way, a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent/carers 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 the internet eg, on Facebook or other social media or general media 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 your own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences.)
- 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 without prior consent from the Senior Leadership Team (Other than assistance dogs.)

10. 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.

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

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

C. Breaches of 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 will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent, carer or visitor about the incident if appropriate.

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

1. In cases where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter, the concerns will in the first instance be referred to the Police. 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.

2. In cases where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander, then the school will refer the matter to our Legal Team for further action.
3. In cases where the code of conduct has been broken but the breach was not libellous, slanderous or a criminal matter, the school may:
 - seek to restate the school behaviour standards with the parent/carer or visitor via phone, in person or in writing;
 - issue a formal written warning to the parent/carer or visitor; or
 - send out a formal letter to the parent/carer or visitor with an invite to a meeting.
4. If the parent/carer or visitor is invited to attend a meeting but refuses to attend, then the school will write to the parent/carer or visitor 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.
5. If after this, behaviour continues, the parent/carer or visitor 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 outlined above in more serious cases.
- (2) Site bans will normally be limited in the first instance.
- (3) examples of the letters which may be issued by the school to parents/ carers or visitors are set out in Appendix A.
- (4) Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to and collected from the school gate, will be made.

D. 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.

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, governors, parents/carers or children. We have established channels to deal with all concerns.

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

If parents/carers have any concerns about their child's schooling, they should:

1. Initially contact the class teacher.
2. If the concern remains they should contact the Senior Leadership Team through the School Office.
3. If still unresolved, contact the school governors through the complaints procedure.

They should not use social media as a medium to air any concerns or grievances.

Online activity which we consider inappropriate:

- Identifying or posting images/videos of children.
- Abusive, prejudice based or personal comments about staff, governors, children or other parents.
- Bringing the school into 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 school issues, individual children or members of staff.
- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language in online posts or emails .
- Breaching school online security procedures.

At our school we take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents robustly, in line with the actions outlined above.

Appendix A – Examples of letters which may be issued by the school to parents/carers or visitors.

Letter 1 Introduction of special arrangements

Dear

I understand that you have expressed concern about (summarise issue) and I am keen to work in partnership with you to resolve this. Therefore I would like to offer to meet with you (details)...

However, I have to advise you that your behaviour on the school site on (date) was unacceptable.

(Summary of incident and its effect on staff and pupils)

In order to avoid this situation arising again, I am putting the following measure(s) in place:

- You should not approach (named member of staff) directly but should instead....
- Pick up and drop off your child from a designated area as follows....

This measure(s) will be in place initially for (up to four weeks), and will then be reviewed.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Karyn Hing
Headteacher

Letter 2 Warning

Dear

I understand that you have expressed concern about (summarise issue) and I am keen to work in partnership with you to resolve this. Therefore I would like to offer to meet with you (details)...

However, I have to advise you that your behaviour on the school site on (date) was unacceptable.

(Summary of incident and its effect on staff and pupils)

For the future I must inform you that a repetition of such behaviour on the school site towards any member of the school community may be followed by arrangements to limit your access to certain staff/ areas of the school, or withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Karyn Hing
Headteacher

Letter 3 Barring letter

Dear

I am writing to advise you formally that your behaviour on the school site on (date) was unacceptable.

(Summary of incident and its effect on staff and pupils).

I am therefore instructing you that:

EITHER

a) You are barred immediately from the school site. If you do not comply with this instruction I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises you may be prosecuted under section 547 of the Education Act 1996; if convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of £500.

The bar will be in place temporarily in the first instance, to enable me to review all relevant evidence. If you wish to provide me with any information (e.g. to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, and/or to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct) please do so by (date - 5 school working days from date of letter).

Immediately following my review of all relevant information I will write to inform you whether the bar has been confirmed and the length of time it will be in place, or whether I have decided to lift the bar.

For the duration of the bar you must continue to bring your child(ren) to school and collect them at the end of the school day, but you must not go beyond the school gate. (For infant children - arrangements have been made for your child(ren) to be collected and returned to you at the school gate by a member of the school staff). Special arrangements can be made for you to meet with a member of staff, if necessary, but this may only be with my written permission.

OR

b) I am considering whether it is appropriate to bar you from the school site. In order for me to reach that decision I need to review all relevant evidence. If you wish to provide me with any information (e.g. to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, and/or to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct) please do so by (date - 5 school working days from date of letter).

Immediately following my review of all relevant information I will write to inform you whether I have decided that a bar is appropriate and the length of time it will be in place, or whether I have decided not to implement a bar.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Karyn Hing
Headteacher

Letter 3a Outcome of the review of evidence – confirming bar (or not)

Dear

On (date) I wrote to inform you that I had taken the decision to bar you from the school site whilst I considered all relevant information relating to the incident which occurred on (date).

You were given the opportunity to provide me with your written comments by (date). I have not received a written response from you OR I have received a letter from you (date), the contents of which I have carefully considered.

EITHER

Having considered all relevant information, I have determined that the decision to bar you from the school premises should be confirmed. I am therefore instructing that you are barred for a period of (length of bar). Therefore, the first date that you are able to return to the school site is (date).

If you do not comply with this instruction I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises of the school. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises, you may be prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996; if convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500.

Should significant new information become available, or there is a significant change in circumstances, you may request a review of the bar.

Even though I have taken this decision, myself and the staff at Westfield Primary School remain committed to the education of your child(ren), who must continue to attend school as normal (insert for primary age children) under the arrangements set out in my previous letter.

If you wish to pursue the matter further you have a right to complain to the Chair of Governors, who will consider the circumstances of the decision to withdraw permission for you to come on to the school site. You can make your complaint by writing to Mrs Alexandra Cooke, Chair of Governors (chair@westfield.surrey.sch.uk).

OR

Having considered all relevant information, I have determined that a bar is not appropriate on this occasion, however I would remind you that we expect all members of the school community to treat one another in a respectful manner.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Karyn Hing
Headteacher

Letter 3b Outcome of the review of evidence – imposing bar (or not)

Dear

On (date) I wrote to inform you that I was considering barring you from the school site following the incident which occurred on (date).

You were given the opportunity to provide me with your written comments by (date). I have not received a written response from you OR I have received a letter from you (date), the contents of which I have carefully considered.

EITHER

Having considered all relevant information, I have determined that it is appropriate to implement a bar for a period of (length of bar). Therefore, the bar will start from (date) and the first date that you are able to return to the school site is (date).

If you do not comply with this instruction I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises of the school. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises, you may be prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996; if convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500.

Should significant new information become available, or there is a significant change in circumstances, you may request a review of the bar.

Even though I have taken this decision, myself and the staff at Westfield Primary School remain committed to the education of your child(ren). For the duration of the bar you must continue to bring your child(ren) to school and collect them at the end of the school day, but you must not go beyond the school gate. (For infant children - arrangements have been made for your child(ren) to be collected and returned to you at the school gate by a member of the school staff). Special arrangements can be made for you to meet with a member of staff, if necessary, but this may only be with my written permission.

If you wish to pursue the matter further you have a right to complain to the Chair of Governors, who will consider the circumstances of the decision to withdraw permission for you to come on to the school site. You can make your complaint by writing to Mrs Alexandra Cooke, Chair of Governors (chair@westfield.surrey.sch.uk).

If you wish to pursue the matter further you have a right to complain to the
OR

Having considered all relevant information, I have determined that a bar is not appropriate on this occasion, however I would remind you that we expect all members of the school community to treat one another in a respectful manner.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Karyn Hing
Headteacher

Letter 4 Restore permission at end of bar period

Dear

Further to my letter (dated) I am writing to confirm that as of (date) you will be allowed to access the school site in the normal manner.

I must warn you, however, that if it should become necessary in the future I shall not hesitate to withdraw permission for you to come onto the school premises once again.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Karyn Hing
Headteacher

Appendix B: Adult Conduct in School Poster

Adult Conduct in School



We have an expectation that all adults and children in school are always respectful to each other. This includes parents and visitors.

Adults who use offensive language, shout, are aggressive, threaten or are violent towards staff...

- Will be asked to leave the school site.
- If they refuse, the police will be called.
- Adults may be banned from entry to the school site in the future.

Staff will not continue with the conversation and will walk away.

...whilst on the phone:

- The phone call will be terminated by the member of staff on the receiving end.
- The police may be notified.





We welcome visitors to our school.

We will act to ensure it remains a safe place for pupils, staff and all other members of our community.

If you have concerns we will always listen to them and seek to address them.

Please be aware, however, that abusive, threatening or violent behaviour will not be tolerated. Visitors behaving in this way may be subject to a bar from the school site.

No meeting at the school may be electronically recorded without the express permission of all parties. Information obtained without such permission will not be admissible in any proceedings.