



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS/CARERS/VISITORS

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Author: M. Manderson
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Introduction

This policy replaces any previous policy and follows the DfE regulations.

As part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, we have carefully considered the impact of this policy on equality. The School will ensure that this policy is applied fairly to all employees and does not have a negative impact on students or staff with protected characteristics, race, sex, religion and belief, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

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As a school community, we are committed to build a positive relationship with all our parents and carers. We work hard to ensure that all children are learning, safe and happy whilst they are in school. We are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body which recognises that educating children is a process that involves critical partnership between parents, teachers and the school community as demonstrated when we all sign the Home School Agreement.

The majority of parents, carers and other visitors to our schools are supportive of its teachers, other members of staff, its students, their parents and other visitors, and act in a reasonable way. As part of our staff code of conduct, it is every staff members' responsibility to speak to children and parents and carers with respect, dignity, kindness and integrity. There has to be mutual respect and a level of professionalism, which we expect from our parents and carers also. Staff are entitled to come to work without fear of harassment, violence, intimidation, or abuse. Any communication, whether via email, telephone, written correspondence, social media or face-to-face contact, must remain polite and respectful. We continue to welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our school.

In order to mitigate any difficult circumstances, this policy outlines the steps that will be taken where the behaviour displayed falls below the standard the school expects and will not be tolerated.

1. Purpose and scope

At Rooks Heath School, we believe it is important to:

- Work in partnership with parents and carers to support students' learning and wellbeing.
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for students, staff, parents, carers and visitors.
- Model appropriate behaviour for our students at all times.

To support 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 students (through the Behaviour Policy).

This Code of Conduct aims to support a positive working relationship between the school and parents/carers by setting out expectations of appropriate behaviour.

We use the term "parents" to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a student.
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents, relatives or child-minders).

This code applies to behaviour:

- On the school site.
- During school events and activities (including trips, fixtures and performances).

- In communication with staff (including email, phone calls and social media).
- When representing the school community in public.

2. Our expectations of parents, carers and visitors

We expect parents, carers and visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of the school.
- Work together with staff in the best interests of students.
- Uphold the minimum expectations of Rooks Heath School and follow the Code of Conduct and ethos.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect and courtesy.
- Model appropriate speech and behaviour at all times.
- Correct their own child's behaviour (or those in their care), particularly in public, where it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct.
- Seek a peaceful resolution to all issues.
- Raise day-to-day queries or concerns with the appropriate member of staff in the first instance.
- Follow the Complaints Policy if they are not satisfied with the school's response.
- Show respect and professionalism to all staff, including Office, Reception, Site and Support Staff.

Parents, carers and visitors should also ensure communication with staff remains reasonable in tone, frequency and content.

3. Behaviour that will not be tolerated

The school will not tolerate any behaviour that threatens the wellbeing, safety or dignity of staff, students or other members of the community.

Unacceptable behaviour includes (but is not limited to), whether in person, online, in writing or via telephone:

General unacceptable behaviour:

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on school grounds, trips or sports fixtures).
- Swearing or using offensive language.
- Shouting, aggressive tone or intimidating behaviour.
- Displaying unreasonable anger or hostility.
- Threatening another member of the school community.
- Harassment, stalking or repeated unwanted contact.
- Physical aggression or threatening physical behaviour.
- Damage to school property or vandalism.

Discriminatory or abusive behaviour:

- Racist language, abuse or behaviour.
- Homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language, abuse or behaviour.
- Sexist or misogynistic language or behaviour.
- Disability-related abuse.
- Religious intolerance or hate-related comments.
- Any other discriminatory language or behaviour linked to protected characteristics.

Online / communication-related behaviour:

- Sending abusive, threatening or inappropriate messages by email, text, phone or social media.
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff, students or members of the school community online.
- Sharing private/confidential information relating to staff, students or school matters.
- Misuse of social media to intimidate, harass or encourage hostility towards staff or students.

Filming, photographing or recording:

- Recording staff, students or other parents/carers (audio or video) without permission.
- Posting photographs or videos taken on the school site or at school events online without consent.
- Using recordings in a way that is intimidating, defamatory or breaches privacy.

Safeguarding and student-related behaviour:

- Use of physical punishment against a child while on school premises.
- Disciplining another person's child – parents/carers should report concerns to staff instead.
- Bringing dogs onto the premises (other than registered assistance dogs).
- Smoking or vaping on school premises.
- Drinking alcohol on school premises (unless permitted at an authorised event).
- Possessing or using drugs, including legal highs.
- Bringing weapons or dangerous items onto the premises.

Malicious allegations:

The school will not tolerate knowingly false, malicious or vexatious allegations against staff or members of the school community.

This does not prevent parents/carers from raising genuine concerns or complaints. The school remains committed to investigating all legitimate concerns appropriately.

This list is not exhaustive.

4. 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 will gather information from those involved and speak to the individual(s) concerned.

The school will respond in a proportionate manner depending on the seriousness and frequency of the incident.

Actions may include:

- A verbal warning from a member of staff.
- A written warning letter.
- A request for communication to be restricted to email or to a named senior member of staff.
- A meeting with a senior member of staff or the Headteacher.
- Contacting appropriate authorities (including police) where criminal behaviour is suspected.
- Seeking legal advice where conduct may be libellous, slanderous or threatening.
- Withdrawal of implied permission to enter the school premises (temporary or permanent ban).

Where a ban is put in place, the school will ensure appropriate arrangements remain in place so that the parent/carers can continue to engage in matters relating to their child's education, welfare and safeguarding, for example through email communication or pre-arranged meetings.

5. Permission to enter and be on the school premises

Parents have “implied permission” to enter and be on the school premises for reasons relating to their child’s education. This includes drop off/collection, meetings, parents’ evenings and school events.

Parents do not have an automatic legal right to enter or remain on the school site without a valid reason.

Other visitors also have “implied permission” to enter the premises if they have a legitimate reason, such as deliveries, appointments or official visits.

Anyone on site without permission or a valid reason may be considered trespassing.

The final decision regarding withdrawal of permission to enter the premises rests with the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will consult the Chair of Governors/Trustees before banning a parent, carer or visitor from the school site, unless immediate action is required for safeguarding or safety reasons.

Where a ban is applied, the school will confirm:

- The reason for the ban.
- The length of the ban (where appropriate).
- The arrangements for communication relating to the student.
- The date by which the ban will be reviewed.

The parent, carer or visitor may write a response to acknowledge, apologise or provide further context. This will be considered as part of the review process.

6. Monitoring and review

The school will keep an electronic log of unacceptable behaviour incidents and the actions taken.

The Headteacher will report incidents and actions taken to the Chair of Governors/Trustees on a termly basis. Any serious incidents will be reported immediately.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if changes in guidance or school circumstances require it.