



Bentfield Primary School

Parent, Carer and Visitor Code of Conduct

At Bentfield Primary School, we are very proud and fortunate to have a dedicated and supportive school community. The staff, governors, parents and carers alike all recognise that the education of our children is a partnership process between all these parties.

As a partnership, we are all aware of the importance of good working relationships to provide the best educational experience for our children and equip them all with the necessary skills for adulthood. 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 policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about the expectations of good conduct. We understand that everyday frustrations can cause misunderstandings and have a negative impact on our relationships. Establishing where this happens, and remaining committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner through open positive dialogue is, however, essential. In this way, we can continue to flourish and progress to achieve, in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

Our school already has a code of conduct for all our employees, but this parent, carer, visitor code is aimed at the wider school community so that all can see and understand the expectations on the behaviour of all visitors or those connected with the school. This policy aims to clarify the types of behaviour that will not be tolerated and seeks parental support for these expectations. It also sets out the actions the school can take should this code not be followed 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/carers or pupil.
- Damaging or destroying school property with intent.
- 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 social media.
- 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).
- 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, then the school may feel it is necessary to act by contacting the appropriate authorities and/or sadly, consider banning the offending adult from entering the school premises altogether.

What happens if someone does not follow 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 the concerns will in the first instance be referred to Essex Police. This will include any or all cases of threats or violence and actual violence to any child, parent, staff member 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 Essex County Council 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 to discuss the breach.

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 restricted or prohibited from entry to the school premises. If, after this, the behaviour continues, the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place. Copies of these letters will be kept on a child's record.

Note:

- (1) A ban from the school can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above, in cases that are more serious.
- (2) Site bans will normally be limited in the first instance.

Complaints

This code of conduct does not, in any way prevent parent/carers from raising a legitimate complaint through open dialogue or, where necessary, through the formal school complaints procedure. In most cases, we hope that all complaints and concerns can be resolved through open dialogue with class teachers or other members of staff as appropriate.

Where you are not satisfied with responses received, we request that you then follow the formal complaints procedure as laid out in our school complaints policy. This is available on our school's website.

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. There are various online school groups managed by parents for parents, such as class Facebook pages and WhatsApp groups and they can be a wonderful source of knowledge, support and advice. We encourage you to join in and positively participate if you wish. 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 or pupils. We take very seriously inappropriate use of social media by a parent to publicly humiliate or criticise another parent, pupil, member of staff or governor.

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 and discuss the concern with them.
2. If the concern remains, they should contact the head teacher or the deputy head teacher in their absence.
3. If still unresolved, contact the school governors via the complaints procedure

Parents/carers should not use social media as a medium to air any concerns or grievances.

Online activity which we consider inappropriate:

1. Identifying or posting images/videos of other pupils taken at school
2. Abusive or personal comments about staff, governors, pupils or other parents
3. Bringing the school into disrepute
4. Posting defamatory or libellous comments
5. Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or pupils
6. Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or decisions or to discuss issues about other individual children
7. Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
8. Breaching school security procedures

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

We trust that all parents and visitors to our school will respect and follow this code of conduct.

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