



## **Parent & Visitor Code of Conduct**

**We are very proud and fortunate to have a dedicated and supportive wider community at our school. Staff, governors and parents all recognise that educating children is a process that involves partnership between home and school and understand the importance of a good working relationship to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood.**

**For these reasons we welcome and encourage parents to participate fully in the life of their child's school.**

### **Purpose and scope**

*The purpose of this code is to provide a reminder to all parents and visitors about expected conduct so that we can work together to ensure safe and positive environments for our children.*

We use the term 'parents' to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child (such as Special Guardian, grandparents or Foster Carers)

## **Respect and concern for others and their rights**

*We expect parents and visitors to show respect and concern for others by:*

- supporting the respectful ethos of our school by setting a good example in their own speech and behaviour towards all members of their school community;
- working together with teachers for the benefit of children. This includes approaching the school to resolve any issues of concern and to discuss and clarify specific events in order to bring about a positive solution. This can include seeking to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue;
- correcting their own child's behaviour, especially where it could lead to conflict
- avoiding using staff as threats to admonish children
- demonstrating in their own behaviour that all members of the school community should be treated with respect and understand that even if there is conflict due to a member of staff's oversight, parents must remain calm and respectful
- reinforcing the school's policy on Behaviour;
- keeping our children safe by adhering to the school's request to park safely outside the school gates during morning and afternoon collections as well as showing respect and consideration for our neighbours.

## **In order to support a calm and safe school environment Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School does not tolerate:**

- disruptive behaviour which interferes with the operation of a classroom, an office area or any other part of the school grounds (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches);
- using loud and/or offensive language or displaying temper;
- threatening harm or the use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them and physical punishment against your own child on school premises (some actions may constitute an assault with legal consequences);
- damaging or destroying school property;
- the filming or recording of any abusive, threatening or aggressive behaviour instigated towards a member of staff or child;
- abusive, threatening, malicious, or inflammatory emails, phone or social network messages to anyone within the school community;
- smoking/vaping and consumption of alcohol or other drugs or accessing the school site whilst intoxicated;
- dogs being brought on to the school premises (other than guide / assistance dogs).

The above behaviours on school premises will be reported to the appropriate authorities and a school may prohibit an offending adult from entering the school grounds to safeguard their school community.

## **Social Media**

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School considers the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community. Any concerns you may have must be raised with the Head Teacher at the earliest opportunity so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any pupil or parent of a child/ren being educated at Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School will also expect that any parent or pupil removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites.

Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by any member of Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School community to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying.

*Online activity which we consider inappropriate:*

- Identifying or posting images/videos of children, parents and staff members
- 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

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

### **If the Code of Conduct is broken:**

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

*If the School or an individual school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached the code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent about the incident. Depending on the nature of the incident Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School may then:*

- Send a warning letter to the parent. In cases where the code of conduct has been broken but the breach was not libellous, slanderous or criminal matter, we will send a formal warning letter to the parent with an invite to a meeting with a senior member of staff or the Headteacher.
- If the parent refuses to attend the meeting then the school will write to the parent and ask them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not, permission for them to enter the school premises may be withdrawn. If after this behaviour continues, the parent will again be written to and informed that permission has now been withdrawn.
- Withdrawing permission to enter the school premises can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above in more serious cases.
- Permission withdrawal will normally be limited in the first instance.
- The Headteacher will consult their chair of governors before withdrawing permission for a parent to enter the school premises.
- Contact the appropriate authorities in cases (in the first instance referral to the Police) where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter. 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.
- Seek advice from the Local Authority legal team regarding further action in cases of conduct where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander.

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the code of conduct rests with the Headteacher.

**What happens if a parent has a concern about their child in relation to the school?**

Contact the Headteacher prior to following the steps outlined in our Complaints Policy.

Policy implemented: March 2024

Chair of governors: Mrs C. Scott

Exec. Headteacher: Miss J. Jones