

Parent/Carer & Visitor Code of Conduct Nottingham Free School



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1. Purpose and scope

At Nottingham Free School, we believe it's important to:

- Grow and nurture positive partnerships between parents/carers and our schools and colleges. A positive partnership is the key to securing the most positive opportunities and outcomes for all our young people.
- Create a warm welcome, and respectful partnership. Mutual respect underpins all relationships and creates a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents.
- Model appropriate, and respectful communication and behaviour for our pupils at all times. Young people benefit directly from seeing their parents/carers and wider family members engaging positively and productively with all members of their learning environment.

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 our behaviour policy).

This code of conduct aims to help the school work together with parents, and other visitors to our schools by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

We use the term 'parents' to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)

2. Our expectations of parents and carers

We expect parents, carers and other 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 to 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 school staff to help resolve any issues of concern

3. Behaviour that will not be tolerated

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches)
- Swearing, or using offensive language
- Displaying a temper, or shouting at members of staff, pupils or other parents
- Threatening another member of the school community, regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence
- Open display of disrespect to any member of staff or governor
- Sending abusive messages to another member of the school community, including via text, email or social media
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments in communications, either verbal or written (including emails, text/voicemail/phone messages or written communication) to a member of staff of the school community
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms. In the event that any community member is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on social media sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the social media network site. Where a pupil/student has posted comments, it is the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians to ensure this content is removed.
- Use of equipment to record conversations with members of staff and governors
- Use of physical punishment against your child while on school premises. Such behaviour is likely to put a child at risk of harm or constitute a safeguarding breach, which will lead to immediate action by the school.
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally or in writing) towards another child or adult. Such approaches may be seen as an assault and may have legal consequences.
- Disciplining another person's child – please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention
- Smoking or drinking alcohol on the school premises (unless alcohol has been allowed at a specific event)
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs)
- Bringing dogs onto the school premises (other than guide dogs)
- Damage or destruction of school property; and
- Dropping litter on school premises

4. Breaching the code of conduct

Whilst we recognise that behaviour is often driven by emotion, and whilst this may explain an incident/response/or reaction in the first instance, it will not excuse breaches of the policy. Therefore, if the 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, the school may then:

- Send a warning letter to the parent
- Invite the parent into school to meet with a senior member of staff or the headteacher
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from our legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)
- Ban the parent from the school site

- School staff will end any telephone call if they feel the caller is being aggressive, intimidating, abusive or offensive. The person taking the call is empowered to make this decision. The caller will be advised that their behaviour and/or language is unacceptable and the call will be ended if it continues. There may be rare occasions when the staff member is unable to give a warning that the call will be ended if the caller's unacceptable behaviour/language continues, in which case they are empowered to end the call immediately.
- The school will not process any correspondence (email/letter) that is abusive. If communications of this nature are received we will tell the correspondent that their communication is considered to be inappropriate and offensive. The correspondent will be asked to stop corresponding in this way and state that if they do not stop, the school will not respond to any further communication from them. The school may also consider requiring all future contact to be made through a designated third party.

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional way. The headteacher **will** consult their executive strategic lead before banning a parent from the school site. The executive strategic lead **will** report to Education Steering Board on all school banning orders, thus providing for an oversight, accountability and learning process.