

# **Westgate Primary School**

## **Visitor Code of Conduct**

Signed: Acting Head: Jane Henderson

Signed: Chair of Governors: Vanessa Rigby

Date: December 2023

## **Westgate Primary School**

### **Visitors' Code of Conduct**

#### **Statement of principles**

The governing body of Westgate Primary School encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. The vast majority of parents, carers and others visiting our school are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school. However, on the rare occasions when a negative attitude towards the school is expressed, this can result in aggression, verbal and/or physical abuse towards members of school staff or the wider school community. The governing body expects and requires its members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations and attempt to diffuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. However, all members of staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse, and the right, in extreme case, of appropriate self defence. We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable. Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated include:

- shouting at members of the school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- physically intimidating a member of staff, e.g. standing very close to her/him
- the use of aggressive hand gestures
- threatening behaviour and/or language
- shaking or holding a fist or finger towards another person
- swearing
- pushing
- hitting, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking
- spitting
- racist or sexist comments
- breaching the school's security procedures
- aggressive or threatening behaviour towards staff or their families via social media

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour.

Unacceptable behaviour may result in the local authority and the police being informed of the incident.

These behaviours and attitudes will not be tolerated. All members of the school community have a right to expect that their school is a safe place.

If the parent's behaviour is unreasonable, permission for them to be on the school premises may be withdrawn and they will become a trespasser.

### **Procedures**

If a parent/carer behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the head teacher or appropriate senior member of staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school's complaints procedures should be followed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continues, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a parent or carer may be banned by the head teacher from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review.

This policy is informed by the guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/controlling-access-to-school-premises/controlling-access-to-school-premises#:~:text=Schools%20can%20bar%20someone%20from,to%20bar%20them%2C%20in%20writing.>

*Schools can bar someone from the premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or pupils. It's enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened.*

In imposing a ban the following steps will be taken:

1. The parent/carer will be informed, in writing, that she/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, e.g. that police involvement or an injunction application may follow.
2. Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the local authority and the police will be included
3. The chair of governors/LA will be informed of the ban
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

The local authority itself may take action where behaviour is unacceptable or there are serious breaches of our home-school code of conduct or health and safety legislation. In implementing this policy, the school will, as appropriate, seek advice from the Local Authority's Education, Health and Safety and Legal departments, to ensure fairness and consistency.

### **After an Incident**

The Head will:

- Ask the people who witnessed the incident to make witness reports in writing as soon as possible after the incident. (See attached Incident Report Form). **Reports must be signed and dated.**
- Make it clear that the reports may be disclosed to the perpetrator and the witness should say whether or not they are prepared for this to happen.
- Consider whether the person should be banned or given a warning letter.
- The Head will discuss this with the Chair of Governors and keep her/him informed.
- If a letter is thought appropriate, a letter will be sent to him or her.
- If a ban is appropriate, the Head Teacher will give the parent an opportunity to make representations about this before finalising the ban. If the Head Teacher considers it unwise to allow the parent back on the premises at this time he/she will impose a temporary ban for a week, to give the parent an opportunity to make representations in writing. As soon as this happens, the Head will write to the parent informing him/her of the decision to extend the ban or not to renew if after the initial week has elapsed.
- If a ban is renewed after the initial week, the Head will impose any further ban for a fixed period of time and will explain that he/she will review the ban at the end of that period.

### **LA Role**

If the incident is of a serious and/or violent nature, the Head and the Local Authority may agree that correspondence should be sent directly from the LA. In such circumstances the Head will contact the Education Helpline Coordinator and the procedures followed as stated in the last section.

### **Police Assistance**

In the event of a parent (or other person) becoming aggressive or violent, schools **should not hesitate to contact the police using 999**. When the situation does not require immediate police response, but there is a prior knowledge of likely trouble, the Head Teacher may contact the local Police Station or the school's Police Liaison Officer for advice.

**INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

This includes trespass, nuisance or disturbance on school premises, verbal abuse, sexual or racial abuse, threats, aggression, physical violence and intentional damage to personal property.

This form should be completed as fully as possible (please use a continuation sheet if necessary). For an incident involving or witnessed by a child, a member of staff should complete the form on their behalf. However, any discussion between one witness and another should not precede completion of the form, as this might lead to allegations of collusion.

Date of incident.....

Day of week .....

Time .....

**1. Member of staff reporting incident**

Name.....

Work address (if different from school address).

.....

Position .....

**2. Personal details of person assaulted/verbally abused (if appropriate)**

Name.....

Work address (if different from school address)/home address (if pupil)

.....

Job/Position (if member of staff) .....

Dept/Section/Class .....

Age ..... Sex .....

**3. Details of trespasser/assailant(s) (if known)**

.....

**4. Witness(es) if any**

Name.....

Address.....

Age ..... Sex .....

**Other information**

Relationship between member of staff/pupil and trespasser/assailant, if any.

.....

**5. Details of Incident**

a) **Type of incident** (eg if trespass, was the trespasser causing a nuisance or disturbance and how; if assault, give details of any injury suffered, treatment received etc).

.....

b) **Location of Incident (attach sketch if appropriate).**

.....

c) **Other details:** describe incident, including, where relevant, events leading up to it; relevant details of trespasser/assailant not given above; if a weapon was involved, who else was present?

**6.Outcome:**(eg Whether police called; whether trespasser was removed from premises under section 547; whether parents contacted; what happened after the incident; any legal action?).

.....

**7. Other information (to be completed as appropriate)**

a) Possible contributory factors.

.....

b) Is trespasser/assailant known to have been involved in any previous incidents  
YES/NO?

c) Give dates and brief details of (b) if known.

.....

d) Had any measures been taken to try to prevent an incident of this type occurring? If  
so, what? Could they be improved?

.....

e) If no measures had been taken beforehand, could action now be taken? If so, what?

.....

f) Name and contact details of police officer involved, and incident number or crime  
reference number, as appropriate.

g) Any other relevant information.

.....

Signed .....

Date .....

## **Model Letter 1 - warning from Head Teacher**

Dear

### **Re: Your conduct on school premises on (insert date)**

I refer to the incident that took place on school premises today (or insert relevant day) when you (insert details of the incident).

[If the Head Teacher did not witness the incident they may wish to use the following text:]

I have considered the witness accounts of the incident, (if relevant: including your own), and it would appear (insert details of incident).

Your behaviour fall short of the standard of conduct expected of those visiting the school. I must therefore warn you that if you are involved in a similar incident again, you will leave me no alternative other than to ban you from coming onto the school site without my written permission.

I do hope that this will not be necessary and that I can rely on your cooperation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher



**Model letter 2 - Ban from school premises for one week (or so) whilst obtaining the parent's account and views from the Head Teacher**

Dear

**Re: Your conduct on school premises on (insert date)**

I refer to the incident that took place on school premises today (or insert relevant day) when you (insert details of the incident).

If the Head Teacher did not witness the incident, the following text may be used: I have considered the witness accounts of the incident, (if relevant: including your own), and it would appear (insert details of incident).

Your behaviour falls short of the standard of conduct expected of those visiting the school. (Omit if this is a first incident - As you will remember, I have previously warned you about your behaviour when I wrote to you on (date). I have considered the matter very carefully and have decided that you should not be allowed on to the school premises from now until (insert date). during that time I will review the situation. Before I make a final decision you may, if you wish, write to me to give me any further information you want me to take into consideration. You have until (insert date) to write to me.

If you need to speak to me or a member of staff about any matter, please telephone and I will make the necessary arrangements and confirm them to you in writing. You will not be allowed to come onto the school site unless you have a letter from me giving you authorisation.

If you do not comply with this ban, you will be guilty of causing a nuisance or disturbance on educational premises. This is a criminal offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996. If you were to commit this offence, you would be liable to prosecution in the magistrates' court. If you were to be convicted, you would be liable to a fine and a criminal conviction.

I regret that I have had to take this action and hope that I can rely on your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

### **Model Letter 3 - Ban from school premises for specified period from Head Teacher**

Dear

**Re: Your conduct on school premises on (insert date)**

I refer to the incident that took place on school premises on (insert relevant day) when you (insert details of the incident). In my letter dated (insert date), I referred to my intention to ban you from the premises and I invited you to make representations to me about this.

I have considered the points you have made to me and I have decided to proceed with the ban for a period of (insert number of weeks or an indefinite period), until (insert date), after which the ban will be reviewed by the Chair of Governors and myself. I will write to you again when this review is going to take place so that you may make written representations, which we will take into account. When we have made our decision, I shall write to you to inform you of it together with our reasons.

If you need to speak to me or a member of staff about any matter, please telephone and I will make the necessary arrangements and confirm them to you in writing. You will not be allowed to come onto the school site unless you have a letter from me giving you authorisation.

If you do not comply with this ban, you will be guilty of causing a nuisance or disturbance on educational premises. This is a criminal offence, you would be liable to prosecution in the magistrates' court. If you were to be convicted, you would be liable to a fine and a criminal conviction.

I regret that I have had to take this action and hope that I can rely on your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

## **Model letter 4 - Unban from school premises from Head Teacher**

Dear

**Re: Your conduct on school premises on (insert date)**

On (insert date) I wrote to you informing you that I had temporarily withdrawn permission for you to come onto the school premises. To enable me to determine whether to confirm this decision for a longer period. I gave you the opportunity to let me have your written comments on this incident by (insert date).

I have not received a written response from you/I have now received a letter from you dated (insert date), the contents of which I have noted. (delete either sentence as appropriate).

(However) in the circumstances (insert detail) I have decided to restore to you the permission to come onto the school premises, with immediate effect.

Nevertheless I remain very concerned at the incident which occurred on (insert date), and I must warn you that if there is any repetition of your behaviour on that occasion, I shall not hesitate to withdraw permission for you to come onto the premises again.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher