

Inspire ~ Nurture ~ Flourish

March 2024
Next review date: March 2025

Parental Code of Conduct

Statement of principles

Belmont 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.

To create a welcoming and safe learning environment, the school implements a specifically designed set of rules regarding behaviour and conduct which parents are expected to act in accordance with.

All staff members have the right to work without fear of violence or abuse; therefore, physical attacks, threatening behaviour, and abusive or insulting language towards staff members, governors, visitors, pupils or other parents may result in individuals being removed from the premises.

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.

We expect all staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations and attempt to defuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff.

This document has due regard to statutory and best practice guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education'

This document operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- E Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Our school expects parents to:

- Act in accordance with this code of conduct at all times.
- Support and reflect the school's ethos and values through their behaviour.
- Set a good example to pupils through their behaviour and the way they interact with staff, pupils and other adults.
- Work together with staff for the benefit of their child.
- Treat all governors, staff members, pupils, other parents and any other individuals connected to the school with dignity and respect.
- Work with staff members to resolve any issues of concern.
- Where appropriate, clarify their child's version of events with the school to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- Correct their child's behaviour appropriately, particularly on the school grounds where it could otherwise lead to conflict or aggressive or unsafe behaviour.

- Respect the school's property and environment by keeping it clean and tidy.
- Follow the school's parking rules and procedures for dropping-off and collecting pupils from school.

This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

Inappropriate behaviour

The school takes instances of inappropriate behaviour very seriously and will not tolerate any circumstances that may make pupils, staff members and other members of the school community feel threatened.

Parental behaviour that the school does not tolerate includes the following:

- Using foul, abusive or offensive language
- Raising voices inappropriately at another individual
- Making racist or sexual comments
- Using aggressive hand gestures, e.g. raising fists and fingers
- Discriminating against any member of the school community, including pupils, staff, governors and other parents
- Bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, verbal and sexual abuse offline and online of any member of the school community including pupils, staff, governors and other parents
- Sending abusive or threatening messages, email or other communications to any member of the school community
- Trespassing on school property without prior permission or "implied permission"
- Causing intentional damage to school property
- Breaching the school's security procedures
- Using physical violence on the school premises or on a member of the school community, e.g. hitting, slapping, punching, kicking and pushing
- Physically intimidating an individual
- Writing or posting abusive, offensive or defamatory comments about an individual or the school, including on social media
- Posting content on social media that is damaging to the school's reputation
- Sending staff aggressive emails or other communications
- Psychologically harassing any member of the school community, including displaying vexatious behaviour which is humiliating for the individual and is damaging to their self-esteem
- Displaying disruptive or other inappropriate behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's operations or activities
- Approaching another parent or pupil to discuss or reprimand them because of an issue between pupils
- Threatening any member of the school community in any way
- Smoking on the school premises
- Taking illegal or harmful drugs while on the school premises
- Drinking alcohol on the school premises, unless it is consumed during authorised events
- Taking photographs or videos on the school premises without permission from the school

Managing inappropriate behaviour

- If a parent is behaving inappropriately, a report will be made to the Head Teacher, or the most senior member of staff available in their absence, who will decide on the most appropriate course of action.
- Parents will raise concerns regarding another parent's behaviour or conduct directly with their child's class teacher or the Head Teacher and will not approach the parent themselves.
- Instances of parents displaying inappropriate behaviour will be managed in a variety of ways, depending on the severity of the situation.
- When a parent has behaved inappropriately, they will be invited to a meeting by the Head Teacher to discuss their behaviour and to attempt to resolve the issue.
- Where this initial meeting is not sufficient to resolve the issue, the Head Teacher, in collaboration with other staff and relevant agencies, will consider what further action may be required.

This action, depending on the situation, could include the following:

- Withdrawing “implied permission” to enter the school premises
- Contacting the police
- Seeking legal redress through the courts
- Restricting the parent’s channels of communication to the school, e.g. no longer allowing the parent to send emails to a staff member directly
- Reporting content the parent has posted online to the website’s administrator
- Referring the case to children’s social care, where the behaviour indicates that the parent poses a risk to children
- Any child protection and safeguarding concerns will be addressed in accordance with the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- The school reserves the right to escort anyone off the premises who is displaying aggressive or disruptive behaviour.
- The police may be contacted to provide advice on managing an incident or to assist in the removal of an individual from the premises, where necessary.
- The police will be contacted where a parent is being violent or has committed assault, or where the event has caused harm to an individual.
- If a parent has been previously barred from the premises, or has exceeded their implied access to the premises and is causing a disturbance, the police will be contacted to remove the individual from the premises.
- If concerns are raised in relation to a parent’s appearance or dress, personal factors will be taken into consideration, on a case-by-case basis, when addressing the concern.
- If a parent persistently displays unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour, this may result in them being barred from the school premises.

Barring from the school premises

The school has the right to withdraw the “implied permission” for a parent or visitor to enter or be on the school’s premises if their previous or current behaviour while on the school’s premises was or is unacceptable. The withdrawal of the “implied permission” will be effective as soon as the parent or other visitor has been told that they must leave.

Behaviour that could result in a parent being asked to leave the premises includes aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language that is a risk to staff or pupils, or behaviour that is making staff or pupils feel threatened. If a parent persistently or consistently behaves inappropriately on the school site, or there is a one-off incident of extremely inappropriate behaviour, the school reserves the right to bar this individual from the school site (i.e. withdraw their “implied permission”).

The school will either - Bar the parent temporarily, until the parent has had the opportunity to formally present their side. Or - Inform the parent that they intend to bar them and invite them to present their case.

The Head Teacher will send a letter to the parent, informing them of the following information:

- Why they have been temporarily barred or face a bar
- The nature of the bar, i.e. if they are temporarily barred pending their representation or if they must present their side before the decision to bar can be made
- That they have the right to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing to the Chair of Governors within 10 working days
- The Head Teacher’s decision to bar the parent will be reviewed by the Chair of Governors, who can delegate this task to a nominated governor.
- The Chair of Governors (or nominated governor) will take account of any representations made by the parent and decide whether to confirm or lift the bar.
- The parent will be notified in writing of the decision to uphold or lift the bar.
- If the decision is confirmed, the parent will be notified in writing, to explain how long the bar will be in place and when the decision will be reviewed.

Decisions to bar will be reviewed at the end of the agreed timescale, in line with the process outlined above.

Following a review, the bar may be lifted or, if there are grounds for continued concern regarding the parent's conduct, it may be extended. Once the appeal process has been completed, parents that remain barred may be able to apply to the Civil Courts. If a parent wishes to exercise this option, they should seek independent legal advice.

Where a parent has had their "implied permission" to enter and be on the school's premises withdrawn, the school will, in appropriate cases, work with families to make alternative arrangements for the parent's children to be collected from school.

Once the "implied permission" has been withdrawn, the school will ask the police to remove the parent or visitor if they appear on the school's premises. If the parent or visitor causes a nuisance or disturbance while they are on the school's premises, they may also be prosecuted in the criminal courts under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996, be liable to pay a fine of up to £500.00 and have a criminal conviction recorded against them.

Monitoring and review

This document will be reviewed every 2 years by the governing body and any changes made will be communicated to all parents and staff at the school.

Conclusion

The Local Authority itself may take action where behaviour is unacceptable. 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.

Last review: March 2024

Next review: March 2025

