



**Last ratified: October 2023**

**Next Review date: October 2025**

We are truly fortunate to have a committed and supportive school community where staff, governors and parents recognise that the education of our children is achieved through partnership between all of us. Accordingly, we welcome our parents' full participation in school life. We endeavour to maintain positive relationships with parents and visitors, and we are committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner through open, positive communication.

Our school values and ethos require that all members of our school community are treated reasonably and with respect. Oakmoor School has a duty of care to its employees and volunteers to protect them from behaviour which is rude, intimidating, abusive, aggressive, or threatening.

### **Staff responsibility**

Our staff will acknowledge your correspondence within 48 hours of your enquiry. Depending on the enquiry this may give an immediate answer to your query, but in some instances will require further investigation. This time period does not include weekends, holiday periods, if a member of staff is off ill or is a part-time member of staff who doesn't work on the day that you communicated on.

**Purpose:** This code is intended to ensure that we share a common understanding in relation to the behaviour of parents and visitors.

### **Code of Conduct**

We expect parents and visitors to:

1. Respect the inclusive, caring values and ethos of the school
2. Understand that the values and ethos of the school encompass relationships with staff and volunteers
3. Demonstrate that all members of the school community are to be treated with respect and dignity
4. Respect, and cooperate with, the school's policies, processes, and procedures
5. Recognise that school staff are endeavouring to act in the best interests of the child/ren involved in events
6. Approach the school in a proportionate and measured way in order to resolve any issues of specific concern

7. Recognise that school staff have many competing duties during a typical day which may mean that they are not immediately available. Staff should not be expected to respond to a query within an unrealistic timeframe e.g. staff may not be able to respond on the same day
8. Understand that requests for meetings without an appointment, or for an unspecified reason, cannot be accommodated
9. Allow time for staff to investigate and respond to a query/issue rather than seeking a meeting in the first instance
10. Respond calmly when any incident is reported by a child and contact us to clarify what has happened, so that issues can be resolved swiftly and positively
11. Use our Complaints Policy appropriately to raise concerns and complaints

We are committed to securing a safe and calm school environment, and to support the well-being of all members of our school community. We cannot accept, and will not tolerate, any of the following behaviours towards any child or adult:

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes with, or threatens to interfere with, the normal business of the school
- Violence or the threat of violence
- Shouting or raising of the voice
- Speaking in an aggressive or threatening tone
- Abusive or aggressive communications
- Physical intimidation e.g. standing close, blocking exit
- Physical contact
- Swearing
- Spitting
- Language or actions which breach our commitment to Equality and Diversity, for example, racist, sexist, LGBTQ-phobic
- Behaviour which causes staff or volunteers to feel uncomfortable or bullied
- Threats of non-violent action designed to intimidate staff or volunteers
- Defamatory, offensive, or derogatory comments (direct or implied) about any member of the school community, including unfounded and/or blanket comments about the professional competency or motivation of staff or volunteers
- Damaging of school property
- Approaching someone else's child in order to chastise them because of their actions towards their own child
- Smoking, vaping or consuming drugs or alcohol whilst on school property (alcohol may be consumed only during authorised events)
- Bringing animals onto school premises (other than assistance dogs)

This applies to personal interaction and all telephone, email, text, letter, or social media communications

Unacceptable behaviour may result in:

- A letter from the school requesting that the behaviour ceases

- An invitation to attend a meeting to discuss and address the behaviour
- Restrictions on the school's response to communications (any restrictions will be detailed in a letter to the parent/s or visitor concerned)
- A ban on entering school premises (usually for a limited period in the first instance)
- Complaints/communications being deemed vexatious
- Information being passed to the police
- Police being called to remove people from the premises
- The school taking legal or Local Authority advice

### **Complaints:**

This Code of Conduct does not prevent parents or visitors raising legitimate concerns or complaints.

Concerns and complaints can be resolved through constructive, open dialogue with members of staff, utilising our [Complaints Policy](#) as appropriate.

### **Appropriate use of social media**

Social media sites are increasingly being used to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, staff and, in some cases, other parents/carers or students. Oakmoor School considers such use of social media as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole community. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to your child's mentor or APL in the first instance, as per our Complaints Policy, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately, and effectively for all concerned.

If any student or parent/carer of a child/ren being educated in the school is found to be posting libelous or defamatory comments on any 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. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or student removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases the school will 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 one child or a parent/carer to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network comments. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of bullying.

### **Breaching the code of conduct**

If the school suspects that a parent/carer has breached the code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent/carer about the incident.

Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may then:

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

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