

Policy Document for : Parent, Carer and Visitor Code of Conduct

Approved on: T4 2023

Due for Review on : February 2026

Statement of principles

The Trustees of Bourne Alliance MAT (BA MAT) encourage close links with parents and the community. We believe 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.

In our Trust schools, we believe it's important to:

- Work in partnership with parents to support their child's learning
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents
- Model appropriate behaviour for our pupils at all times

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 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)

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
- Reinforcing the school's policy on behaviour;
- Respecting the learning environment appropriately (both in school and off site);
- Treat all members of the local community with respect - parking with consideration and respect for others when delivering and collecting children from school.
- 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;

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 – in writing or face to face
- Displaying a temper, or shouting at members of staff, pupils or other parents
- Threatening another member of the school community

- Sending abusive messages to another member of the school community, including via text, email or social media
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms
- Use of physical punishment against your child while on school premises
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally, physically or written) towards another child or adult whilst on school premises
- Disciplining another person's child whilst on the school premises – please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention
- Smoking (including vaping and e-cigarettes) or drinking alcohol on the school premises (unless alcohol has been allowed at a specific event)
- Damaging or destroying school property;
- Coming into the school site whilst intoxicated
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs)
- Bringing dogs onto the school premises (other than guide dogs)

The schools encourage parents not to approach, chastise or threaten other children or their parents when they have left the school grounds, either in person or via personal social media. This could result in another parent deciding to take Police action. If an incident has occurred between children at school, parents are encouraged to report this to the school so that it can be investigated and actioned in school appropriately.

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

We trust that parents, carers and visitors will fully support this Code of Conduct.

Breaching the code of conduct

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 Head of School/Head teacher
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from the Trust legal representative regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)
- Ban the parent from the school site

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 Head of School/Head Teacher.

Procedure to be followed

If a parent/carer behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Head of School or appropriate senior staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. Staff will not continue discussions when a parent/carer is behaving in an unacceptable manner, and this will politely be made clear to the parent/carer. If necessary, the school's complaints procedures should be followed.

Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence or abuse (including racism), a parent or carer may be banned by the Head Teacher/Head of School from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review.

Following an incident of unacceptable behaviour, the following steps will be taken:

- The parent/carer will be informed, in writing, that he/she is required to arrange any future meetings with staff in advance via the office, and meetings will be attended by a senior member of staff. Further incidents of unacceptable behaviour may result in a ban from the premises. Each case will be reviewed;

the time frame is dependent on the length of the ban

Following a further incident, or after an initial extreme act of violence or abuse (including racism):

- 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
- 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
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees will be informed of the ban
- Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

Aggressive behaviour towards staff

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 Trustees expect and require its members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations and attempt to defuse 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 an 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 may 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;
- shaking or holding a fist towards another person;
- swearing at staff, either in person or over the telephone;;
- pushing;
- physically grabbing hold of a member of staff;
- hitting, eg slapping, punching and kicking;
- spitting;
- Discriminatory or derogatory comments (including racist or sexist);
- breaching the school's security procedures.

The school will use guidance from Health & Safety Executive on RIDDOR reporting for a physical act of violence where a member of staff sustains a specific injury. See the first aid policy held on the school websites.

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour. **Unacceptable behaviour may result in the police being informed of the incident.**

Social Media Use by Parents and Carers

For the purposes of this policy, social media refers to any interactive platform including but not limited to social networks, internet forums and blogs.

Social media is widely used, however in some instances it is being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. BA MAT 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 made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the Class Teacher in the first instance.

The Trust considers the following examples to be inappropriate uses of social media, however this is not an exhaustive list:

- Making allegations about staff or pupils or cyberbullying
- Making complaints about the school or its staff
- Making defamatory statements about the school or its staff
- Putting negative / offensive comments about specific pupils / staff at the school
- Posting racist or derogatory comments against any protected group (such as LGBTQ+, ethnic minorities etc)
- Posting comments which threaten violence

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren being educated at any BA MAT school is found to be inappropriate comments on Facebook or other social media, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the 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 content or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately. The police may be contacted where the school feels it appropriate, for example if it considers a crime has been committed.

In serious cases the 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 the 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.

This is further clarified in the Safely using digital devices, technology and social media for Parents & Pupils guide which is on the school websites.

Conclusion

The police may themselves take action where behaviour is unacceptable or there are serious breaches of our home-school agreement or health and safety legislation.

In implementing this policy, the Trust will, as appropriate, seek advice from our legal advisers and the Local Authority's education and health and safety departments, to ensure fairness and consistency.