

Sample Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors

Please note this policy is a template and should be adapted for the specific needs of the setting. You can't require parents to sign and abide by a code of conduct, but you can request them to do so. (PLEASE DELETE this paragraph for your final policy)

At (Name of Setting) we are very proud and fortunate to have a very dedicated and supportive setting community. The parent and carers, staff, committee members/trustees, parents and carers alike all recognise that the education of our children is a partnership process between all these parties. As a partnership we are all aware of the importance of good working relationships. For these reasons we will continue to welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our setting.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our setting about the expectations around the conduct of all parents and visitors connected to our setting.

We understand that everyday frustrations can cause misunderstandings and have a negative impact on our relationships. However, should this arise we remain committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner through open positive dialogue. By doing this, together we can continue to flourish and progress to achieve, in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

Our setting has a code of conduct for all our employees, but this code is aimed at the wider setting community so that all can see and understand the expectations on the behaviour of all visitors or those connected with the setting. The policy aims to clarify the types of behaviour that will not be tolerated and seeks parental sign up to these expectations. The policy also sets out the actions the setting can take should this code be ignored or where breaches occur.

Behaviour that will not be tolerated:

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the setting's normal operation or activities anywhere on the setting premises.
- Any inappropriate behaviour on the setting premises.
- Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper.
- Threatening in any way, a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent/carers or pupil.
- Damaging or destroying setting property.
- Sending abusive or threatening emails/text/voicemail/Direct Messages or phone messages or other written communications (including social media) to anyone within the setting community.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the setting or any of the pupils/parents/staff/governors at the setting on Facebook or other social media sites
- The use of physical, verbal or written aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment of your own child on setting premises.

- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences)
- Smoking, taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on setting premises. (Alcohol may only be consumed during authorised events)
- Dogs being brought on to the setting premises. (other than guide dogs)

Should any of the above occur on setting premises (or in connection with setting) the setting may feel it is necessary to take action by contacting the appropriate authorities and/or sadly, consider banning the offending adult from entering the setting premises altogether. Thank you for abiding by this policy in our setting. Together we create a positive and uplifting environment not only for the children but also all who work and visit our setting.

Please note: can parents/carers please make sure all persons collecting their children are aware of this policy.

What happens if someone ignores or breaks the code?

In the event of any parent/carer or visitor of the setting breaking this code then proportionate actions will be taken as follows; In cases where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter the concerns will in the first instance be referred to Thames Valley Police. This will include any or all cases of threats or violence and actual violence to any child staff or governor in the setting. This will also include anything that could be seen as a sign of harassment of any member of the setting community, such as any form of insulting social media post or any form of social media cyber bullying.

In cases where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander then the setting will seek further legal advice. In cases where the code of conduct has been broken but the breach was not libellous, slanderous or criminal matter, then the setting will send out a formal letter to the parent/carer with an invite to a meeting. If the parent/carer refuses to attend the meeting, then the setting will write to the parent/carer and ask them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not they may be banned from the setting premises. If after this behaviour continues the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place.

Please note: (1) a ban from the setting can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above in more serious cases.
(2) Site bans will normally be limited in the first instance.

Complaints

This code of conduct does not prevent parent/carers from raising a legitimate complaint in an appropriate fashion. In most cases we hope that all complaints and concerns can be resolved through open dialogue with members of staff as appropriate. Where you are not satisfied with responses received however, we would ask that you then follow the complaints procedure as laid out in our setting complaints policy. This is available on the settings website but if you would prefer

please contact the setting office and we can arrange for a hard copy to be made available.

Issues of conduct with the use of Social Media

Most people take part in online activities and social media. It's fun, interesting and keeps us connected. There are various online setting groups managed by parents for parents, such as class Facebook pages, and they can be a wonderful source of knowledge, support and advice. We encourage you to positively participate if you wish. Within these spaces however we ask that you use common sense when discussing setting life online.

Think before you post.

We ask that social media, whether public or private, should not be used to fuel campaigns and voice complaints against the setting, setting staff, parents or pupils. We take very seriously inappropriate use of social media by a parent to publicly humiliate or criticise another parent, pupil or member of staff.

If parents have any concerns about their child in relation to the setting as we have said above, they should:

1. Initially contact the manager (if the complaint is about the manager you should contact...e.g. the chairperson)
2. If unresolved follow the complaints procedure
3. If still unresolved contact Ofsted

They should not use social media as a medium to air any concerns or grievances.

Online activity which we consider inappropriate:

- Identifying or posting images/videos of pupils
- Abusive or personal comments about staff, pupils or other parents
- Bringing the setting in disrepute
- Posting defamatory or libellous comments
- Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or pupils
- Using social media to publicly challenge setting policies or discuss issues about individual children
- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
- Breaching setting security procedures

At our setting we take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents appropriately in line with the actions outlined above.

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