

# Parent code of conduct Policy

*Wisdom for life*

<b>Level of Delegation:</b>	Trustees	<b>Approval date:</b>	[Publish Date]
<b>Last reviewed on:</b>	September 2022	<b>Next review due:</b>	[Publish Date]
<b>Based on:</b>	This policy is based on the model policy produced by 'The Key' and DfE guidance <a href="#">controlling-access-to-school-premises</a>		

Related Policies: Please refer to the trust/school's Health and Safety, Security and Complaints Policies

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## 1. Purpose and scope

At Bishop Otter Academy Trust, we believe it's important to:

- Work in partnership with parents and carers to support their child's learning.
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and other professionals, parents and carers, and all volunteers including governors and trustees.

- Model appropriate behaviour for our pupils at all times in line with our trust and individual school values.

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).

Where we use the term 'staff' this may include other professionals, students (e.g. trainee teachers) and service providers (e.g. external coaches running clubs, contractors etc).

## 2. Our expectations of parents and carers

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

Respect the ethos, vision and values of our schools and trust.

- Work together with staff and other professionals 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.
- Treat members of staff respectfully in their interactions in the way in which they would like to be treated.

Parents and carers are permitted to come onto the school site:

To visit the school office

- For appointments.
- To attend a school event (which may be subject to restrictions such as requiring a ticket).
- To volunteer (subject to agreement with the school and which may be subject to a DBS checks and induction).
- To drop off or pick up younger children.
- Anyone who breaks those rules would be trespassing.

## 3. 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.
- 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 or in writing) towards another child or adult.
- Disciplining another person's child – please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention.
- Smoking, vaping or drinking alcohol on the school premises (unless alcohol has been allowed at a specific event).
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs).
- Bringing dogs onto the school premises (other than assistance dogs) unless agreed otherwise in advance.

- Using public forums to make accusations or air personal grievances (instead they should make an appointment with the relevant member of staff or wider team if they have concerns which they wish to address).
- Treating members of staff disrespectfully in their interactions in the way in which they would like to be treated.

#### 4. 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 in to school to meet with a senior member of staff or the headteacher.
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour).
- Seek advice from the trust and their legal representatives regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous).
- Ban the parent from the school site or parts of the school site, which may be for specific times of the day and/or specific events, for either a specified period of time or permanently.

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 headteacher.

The headteacher will consult the CEO (or CFO in their absence) of the trust before banning a parent from the school site.

# Appendix 1: DfE Guidance

## Controlling access to school premises - Published 27 November 2018

### 1. Who can go onto school premises?

Schools are private property. People do not have an automatic right to enter. Parents have an 'implied licence' to come on to school premises at certain times, for instance:

- for appointments
- to attend a school event
- to drop off or pick up younger children

Schools should set out their rules for this and tell parents what they are. Anyone who breaks those rules would be trespassing.

### 2. Barring individuals from school premises

Trespassing is a civil offence. This means that schools can ask someone to leave and take civil action in the courts if someone trespasses regularly. The school may want to write to regular trespassers to tell them that they are potentially committing an offence.

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.

The school should tell an individual that they've been barred or they intend to bar them, in writing. Letters should usually be signed by the headteacher, though in some cases the local authority, academy trust or proprietor may wish to write instead. The individual must be allowed to present their side. A school can either:

- bar them temporarily, until the individual has had the opportunity to formally present their side
- tell them they intend to bar them and invite them to present their side by a set deadline

After the individual's side has been heard, the school can decide whether to continue with barring them. The decision should be reviewed within a reasonable time, decided by the school.

The Department for Education (DfE) does not get involved in individual cases.

### 3. Removing individuals from school premises

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a person who is on school premises without legal permission to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance. Trespassing itself does not constitute a criminal offence.

To have committed a criminal offence, an abusive individual must have been barred from the premises or have exceeded their 'implied licence', then also have caused a nuisance or disturbance.

If a school has reasonable grounds to suspect that someone has committed an offence, then they can be removed from the school by a police officer or a person authorised by the appropriate authority such as the:

- governing board
- local authority
- proprietor of that school

## Appendix 2: model letters

### Initial warning letter from the headteacher

Date

Dear [parent name],

I've received a report about your conduct on [time and date].

[Summary of incident, include location, its effect on staff, pupils and other parents.]

If the incident is minor, add:

This behaviour is not in keeping with our parent code of conduct. [Please find a copy attached to this letter.]

If the incident is more serious, add:

As written in our parent code of conduct, we do not tolerate this kind of behaviour in our school. [Please find a copy attached to this letter.]

We believe that all staff, pupils and parents are entitled to a safe, respectful and inclusive environment, and that parents are as responsible for creating this environment as school staff.

Continue with:

Further breaches of the code of conduct may result in a ban from the school premises.

If you want to invite the parent in for a meeting, add:

I'd like to invite you in to school to discuss this incident, and how we can work together to prevent similar issues in the future.

Please contact the school office on [phone number] to book an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

# Model letter banning a parent from the school site

Date

Dear [parent name],

I am writing to inform you that, after consultation with the CEO of the Bishop Otter Academy Trust, I am banning you from the school site\* until [date].

You can also choose to ban a parent permanently. In that case, amend the sentence above.

Despite previous correspondence and conversations about your conduct, there have been further breaches of our parent code of conduct.

[Include details of the incidents, including dates, locations and effects on staff/pupils/other parents for every relevant incident.]

If you do not comply with the ban, I will arrange for you to be removed from the grounds and you may be prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996.

If you would like to raise a complaint, you can do so using the school's complaints procedures, which are available on our website.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

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\*A parent could be banned:

- From a certain part of the site e.g. the car park, the playground, the school foyer.
- For certain times of the day e.g. drop off and pick up or all the time except drop off and pick up
- For certain events or activities e.g. sports day, parent consultations