

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Chiswick

"Living and learning, inspired by our faith"

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS AND CARERS



February 2023

DHR Sanku
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Chair of Governors

Next Review Date: January 2025

Note: For the purposes of this Code, social media means all social networking and messaging websites and apps

1. This Code of Conduct forms an integral part of the School's Home School Agreement. Guidance for the Code of Conduct has been taken from Hounslow Council.

- 1.1. At St Mary's School we are very proud and fortunate to have a very dedicated and supportive school community. At our school, the staff, governors, parents and carers all recognise that the education of our children is a partnership between us.
- 1.2. We expect our whole school community to respect our school ethos, keep our school tidy, set a good example of their own behaviour both on school premises and when accompanying classes on school visits.
- 1.3. In addition, we expect our parents and carers to keep our children safe by adhering to the Local Authority's parking regulations. This request also takes account of the effort that parents and carers are making with us to 'green' the school and its environment.
- 1.4. As a partnership we are all aware of the importance of good working relationships and all recognise the importance of these relationships to equip our children with the necessary skills for their education. For these reasons we will continue to welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our school.
- 1.5. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to set the expectations around the conduct of all parents and carers connected to our school. This Code also applies when a parent or carer volunteers at the school; either on school premises or on outings – such as school trips or sports events.
- 1.6. We are committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner, through an open and positive dialogue. However, we understand that everyday misunderstandings can cause frustrations and have a negative impact on our relationships. Where issues arise or misunderstandings take place, please contact your child's teacher or the Head Teacher, who will be available to meet with you and go through the issue and hopefully resolve it. Where issues remain unresolved, please follow the school's complaints procedure. This is available on the school website or a copy can be requested from the school office.
- 1.7. This Code aims to clarify the types of behaviour that will not be tolerated and seeks parental agreement to these expectations.
- 1.8. The Code also sets out the actions the school can take should this Code be ignored or where breaches occur.
- 1.9. Parents are expected to ensure that all adult carers for their children are aware of and understand the contents of the Code and that said carers understand that they are subject to the expectations and consequences set out in the Code.

2. Behaviour that will not be tolerated on school premises and surrounding areas:

- 2.1. Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's normal operation or activities anywhere on the school premises.
- 2.2. Any inappropriate behaviour on the school premises.
- 2.3. Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper.

- 2.4. Threatening in any way a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or child.
- 2.5. Damaging or destroying school property.
- 2.6. Sending abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications (including social media) to anyone within the school community.
- 2.7. Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/parents/staff/governors at the school on social media sites (See Appendix A).
- 2.8. The use of physical, verbal or written aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment of your own child on school premises.
- 2.9. 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.
- 2.10. Smoking, taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on school premises. Alcohol may only be consumed during authorised events.
- 2.11. Dogs being brought on to the school premises; other than guide dogs.
- 2.12. Should **any** of the above occur on school premises and surrounding areas - or in connection with school - the school may feel it is necessary to take action by contacting the appropriate authorities or consider banning the offending adult from entering the school premises or joining school activities.

3. What happens if someone ignores or breaks the Code?

- 3.1. In the first instance it will be for the Head Teacher to determine if a parent or carer has broken the Code, having firstly carried out an investigation into the reported incident.
- 3.2. If it is found that any parent or carer has broken 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 the Police. This will include any or all cases of threats or violence and actual violence to any child, staff or governor in the school. This will also include anything that could be seen as a sign of harassment of any member of the school community, such as any form of insulting social media posts or any form of social media cyber bullying.
 - In cases where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander, then the school will refer the matter to the Council's Legal Team for further action.
 - In cases where the Code has been broken but the breach was not libellous, slanderous or criminal matter, then the school will send out a formal letter to the parent or carer with an invitation to a meeting.
 - If the parent or carer refuses to attend the meeting, then the school will write to them again, asking them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not, they may be banned from the school premises and activities. If after this warning the behaviour continues, the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place. Normally such a ban will be time-limited.

- A ban from the school can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above in more serious cases.

4. Agreement to the Code of Conduct

- 4.1. As mentioned, this Code forms an integral part of the School's Home School Agreement. In signing the Home School Agreement both the parent or carer and child confirm that they have read this Code and agree to honour it.

1. Issues of conduct with the use of Social Media

- 1.1. Most people take part in online activities and use social media. It's fun, interesting and keeps us connected. However, ***please think before you post.***
- 1.2. We require that social media whether public or private are not used to fuel campaigns and voice complaints against the school, school staff, parents, carers or children.
- 1.3. We take very seriously inappropriate use of social media by a parent/carer to criticise publicly or denigrate another parent, member of staff or child. Any social media use by a parent or carer deemed to be detrimental to any pupil or the school (Including any member of staff or the school's reputation) for whatever reason and whatever subject will result in that adult being called to a meeting in school. Failure to attend or to comply with the school's request to desist in social media posts about a pupil will then be referred to the Council's Legal Team and/or the Police. It would likely result in that adult being banned from the school site and activities.
- 1.4. Any person seeking to establish a social media group is expressly forbidden to have the St Mary's name or logo referencing any class without the express written permission of the Head Teacher; said permission is most likely to be refused.
- 1.5. We do understand that parents and carers find class-based social media groups, such as WhatsApp, useful. However, the principles that we have set out in relation to any use of social media apply to such groups as well. Class social media groups should be used to share information that is related to the smooth running of the school and the class. Such groups should not be used as a forum to berate the school, staff or any child in the class.
- 1.6. If parents/carers have any concerns about their child in relation to the school as we have said above, they should:
 - I. Initially contact the class teacher
 - II. If the concern remains, they should contact the Head Teacher
 - III. If still unresolved, the school governors through the complaints' procedure
- 1.7. They should not use social media as a medium to air any concerns or grievances

2. Online activity which we consider inappropriate:

- 2.1. Identifying or posting images/videos of children
- 2.2. Abusive or personal comments about staff, governors, children or other parent/carer
- 2.3. Bringing the school in disrepute
- 2.4. Posting defamatory or libellous comments

- 2.5. Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or children
- 2.6. Using social media to challenge publicly school policies or discuss issues about individual children or members of staff
- 2.7. Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
- 2.8. Breaching school security procedures
- 2.9. Posting images or videos of our children without the permission of their parents or carers
- 2.10. At our school we take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents appropriately in line with the actions outlined above.

3. Parental Involvement

- 3.1. We believe that it is essential for parents and carers to be fully involved with promoting e-Safety both in and outside of school and to be aware of their responsibilities. We regularly consult and discuss e-Safety with parents; seeking to promote a wide understanding of the benefits of new technologies, together with the associated risks.
- 3.2. Parents and carers - and pupils - are actively encouraged to contribute to adjustments or reviews of the school e-Safety policy by consultation with Parent Governors.
- 3.3. The school disseminates information to parents and carers relating to e-Safety where appropriate in the form of school website information and newsletter items.