

BANSTEAD COMMUNITY JUNIOR SCHOOL



PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT 2024

School Resources Committee
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Reviewed/approved: May 2024
Date of next review: May 2027

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1. Purpose and scope

Banstead Community Junior School is a nurturing learning community. We believe pupils learn best in a safe and supportive environment based on respect and trust and underpinned by an effective partnership between parents, staff and the school community. High standards of behaviour are required of pupils, and staff are expected to act professionally at all times. The positive support of parents and carers is needed and highly valued by the school.

This 'Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors' has been adopted and agreed by the school's governing body. Although the vast majority of parents already adhere to these guidelines; this policy provides a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about the conduct expected of them. It sets out both what they should aim to do, and conduct which will not be tolerated. This is so we can continue to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

At Banstead Community Junior School, we believe it is important to:

- Involve parents to work in partnership with the school 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

Everyone within the school community should be able to teach, learn and grow in a safe and respectful environment so that they can fully participate in the wider community of life.

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), pupils (through our Behaviour Policy) and parents (through the Parent Code of Conduct 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)

2. Our expectations of parents and carers

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Treat all members of the school community with respect; setting a good example to others through positive inter-actions with the whole school community.
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils.

- 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 with others.
- Approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Reminder:
Parents do not have an automatic right to entry to a school. Any implied right can be withdrawn. If a parent/visitor continued to enter the school after they have had that right removed, they would be committing a criminal offence pursuant to, e.g. S.547 of the Education Act (1996).

3. Behaviour that will not be tolerated

Any behaviour which undermines a safe and calm environment anywhere on the school site. The below list is not exclusive and may include:

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches)
- Swearing, or using offensive language
- Violent or threatening behaviour towards members of staff or another member of the school community
- Any form of racism/homophobia/transphobia
- Abusive telephone calls, emails, letters or other forms of written communication
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff, or any member of its community on social media platforms including WhatsApp
- Use of physical punishment against a child whilst 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)
- Entering the school building, especially classrooms, without permission
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs)
- Bringing dogs onto the school premises, including The Base, without permission (other than guide dogs).
- Anti-Social Behaviour (persistently approaching the school in a negative and impolite manner, persistent, negative and malicious gossip (including on social media)
- Behaviours deemed passive-aggressive. (Passive-aggressive behaviour is defined as the repetitive expression of negative feelings indirectly rather than tackling it directly.)
- Unreasonable complaints and serial and persistent complaints (see p.10 Complaints Policy) which also includes excessive demands/frequency/abusive email communications over a period of time which has a detrimental impact on a staff member's health and well-being.
- Recording or filming staff or children without consent.

4. Breaching the Code of Conduct

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached this 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 (in no particular order):

- Invite the parent into school to discuss the incident
- Send a warning letter to the parent
- Contact the appropriate authorities, such as the police (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from the local authority's legal team regarding further action
- Ban the parent from the school site/limit their right of access
- Make referral to Social Services in event of safeguarding concerns.

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 with the Chair of Governors before banning a parent from the school site.

Appendix 1: model letters (Not for Policy to parents)

Initial warning letter from the Headteacher

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

(Not for Policy to parents)

Model letter banning a parent from the school site

Dear [parent name],

I am writing to inform you that, after consultation with the chair of governors, 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

Staff Guidelines

Context

Guidance for Dealing with Unreasonable Behaviour

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a reminder about the expected conduct from our parents, carers and visitors and what to do if their conduct is abusive or aggressive.

All members of our community have a right to expect the school to be a safe place in which to work and learn. Where the behaviour of parents or visitors falls below expected standards, the school will act in accordance with this guidance.

Abuse against staff (disorderly conduct/threatening behaviour) can be dealt with through the application of **the The Public Order Act 1986**.

It defines:

“disorderly conduct” as: verbal abuse, threatening abusive or insulting words or behaviour or any disorderly behaviour whereby a person is caused alarm, harassment or distress.

- is when a person **fears** that violence, or threat of violence, is likely to be provoked.

In a school context, this could mean someone shouting at a member of staff, either in person or on the phone; acting aggressively, including using intimidating body language, as well as actual violence. It also covers comments posted on social networking sites or situations where members of staff are approached off school premises.

Schools are not public and although parents and carers have rights to attend and enter school premises for legitimate proper purposes, *The Education Act of 1996* states that it is an offence for a trespasser on school premises to cause a nuisance or disturbance. The school is entitled to withdraw the implied right a parent or carer has to enter the school, if that parent or carer is violent or aggressive. If the parent or carer then enters the premises, they are in breach of the law, and they can be prosecuted in the criminal courts.

In order to keep staff safe, we will:

- Always have two members of staff on gate duty am/pm
- Never leave colleagues alone with parents in The Base
- Inform colleagues of all 1:1 meetings with parents (location, time, brief outline of topic)
- Leave doors open whilst meeting parents
- Hold Parent evenings together as a year group
- Report concerns at the earliest opportunity to SMT.

How should Staff deal with abusive conduct

Staff are advised to communicate with parents in the following manner:

- Speak calmly and without raising your voice
- Be assertive, but not aggressive
- Be polite, but firm
- Seek assistance if necessary
- Politely terminate the conversation if necessary, explaining your reasons

In the event of an emergency, staff should request assistance from a member of the Senior Leadership Team, if they are available otherwise, the nearest member(s) of staff. The member of the Senior Leadership Team will request that the person causing offence leave the premises. Should the person not leave the premises, then they should be informed that the police will be called. The incident should then be recorded.

Recording incidents

Any incident must be recorded by email to the Headteacher.

- Trespass
- Verbal abuse
- Sexual or racial abuse
- Threats
- Aggression
- Physical violence
- Intentional damage to personal property or the school's property
- Any racist, homophobic, disability or transphobic bullying comments
- Any injuries to staff or children

Should an incident be proven:

The school may deal with the abusive parents/visitors through one of the below procedures.

Verbal warning

The Headteacher or appropriate member of Senior Leadership Team will speak to the parents involved. It will be put to them that such behaviour is unacceptable and an assurance will be sought that such an incident will not be repeated. It will be stressed, on this occasion, that repetition of such an incident will result in further, more serious action being taken.

If the Headteacher has been subject to abuse, this will be done by the Chair of Governors (or other appointed independent governor, if the Chair is involved in the incident in any way).

- NB: Any incidents of violent conduct would immediately proceed to Step 5.

Written warning

If a second incident occurs involving the same person or persons, the Headteacher will write to the adult(s) informing them once again that this conduct is unacceptable. As for Step 1, if the Headteacher has been subject to abuse, this will be done by the Chair or other appointed governor.

At any stage, the school may report serious incidents of abusive and threatening behaviour to the Local Authority or the police. The school has a responsibility to ensure that any act actual or threatened violence is referred to the police immediately.

Final written warning

If a third incident occurs involving the same person or persons, the Chair or other appointed independent governor, will write to the adult(s) giving a final warning that this abusive and threatening behaviour is unacceptable, and that a repetition of this conduct will leave the governors no option but to take further action.

Governors' Letter

If such an incident recurs, or if an initial incident is considered serious enough by the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors (or other appointed governor) would be involved to enforce any action deemed necessary. This may result in a person or persons being excluded from school premises.

The Headteacher / Governing Body will contact the Local Authority and seek legal advice before issuing a letter banning an individual from the premises.

Involvement of the police

If following a decision to ban a person from the school premises, that person nevertheless persists in entering school premises and is displaying unreasonable behaviour, such a person may be removed from the school premises as a trespasser under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 and charged with an offence under the Public Order Act 1986.

All parents, even if excluded from school premises, have a right to seek an appointment to speak to school staff about their child's educational progress. **At the direction of the school, this may be delivered remotely (e.g. phone/Zoom).**

Harassment

Harassment may occur where any member of staff is subjected to a pattern of persistent and unreasonable behaviour from individual parents, which is not abusive or overtly aggressive, but you find offensive or which makes you feel intimidated or humiliated.

Staff may be faced with a barrage of constant demands or criticisms (on an almost daily basis) which, whilst not particularly taxing or serious when viewed in isolation, can have the cumulative effect over time of undermining their confidence, well-being and health.

In extreme cases, the behaviour of the parent may constitute an offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. If so, the school will take appropriate action, such as writing to or meeting the parents, involving the police if necessary.

Staff should report the matter initially to the SLT, formally, in writing with evidence. The SLT will then arrange a formal meeting with that member of staff to decide on the next steps. SLT could make a formal complaint to the Governing Body who would consider inviting the parent to a meeting to discuss such conduct, or writing to them to say that they are not welcome on the school premises.

If a parent's behaviour is unreasonable, the parent's implied permission to be on the school premises may be withdrawn and they will become a trespasser; any implied rights of access will be removed. Such a person may be removed from the school premises as a trespasser under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 and may be charged with an offence under the Public Order Act 1986.

