

Code of Conduct for Parents and Visitors

St Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy



Approved by: Headteacher

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1. Purpose and scope

At St Patrick’s Catholic Voluntary Academy 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)

2. 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
- › Remain calm and not raise their voices on site

3. Behaviour that will not be tolerated (this list is not exhaustive)

- › 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 (see appendix 1)
- 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 or drinking alcohol on the school premises (unless alcohol has been allowed at a specific event)
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs)
- Persistent and unnecessary complaints done to cause disruption (refer to complaints policy)
- Any behaviour deemed inappropriate by the Headteacher

Note: whilst parents/carers may not have meant something as a threat to a member of staff, it is enough for the member of staff to feel threatened for it to be deemed inappropriate.

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 schools legal advisors Brownejacobson LLP regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)
- Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if a serious safeguarding issue is concerned
- Ban the parent from the school site
- Any other action deemed appropriate by the Headteacher

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 chair of governors before banning a parent from the school site.

Appendix 1: Inappropriate use of Social Network Sites

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. The Governors of St Patrick's consider social or 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, the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren being educated in the St Patrick's is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network 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 contact or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites.

We will take very seriously the issue of cyber bullying and the use of social networks by children or parents to publicly humiliate another. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying.

Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

Staff and parents should note that

- no photographs other than of themselves or their children alone may be published online / on social networking sites*
- no information or photographs may be published online / on social networking sites that would reflect badly on themselves or the reputation of the school.*

We would expect that parents would make all persons responsible for collecting children aware of this policy.