



Durham Johnston

OF

PARENT CODE CONDUCT POLICY

1	SUMMARY	The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about the expected conduct.
2	RESPONSIBLE PERSON:	Deputy Headteacher
3	APPLIES TO:	Parents, Carers and Visitors
4	GROUPS/ INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE OVERSEEN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS POLICY:	Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team
5	RATIFYING COMMITTEE(S) & DATE OF FINAL APPROVAL:	FGP & HR Committee, 17 October 2024

6	VERSION:	V1			
7	AVAILABLE ON:	Staff Shared Drive	Yes	Website	Yes
8	RELATED DOCUMENTS:	Behaviour Policy Staff Code of Conduct			
12	DISSEMINATED TO:	All parents, carers and visitors			
13	DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:	October 2024			
14	DATE OF NEXT FORMAL REVIEW:	July 2027			

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Date	Version	Action	Amendments
October 2024	1.0	Policy first implemented	N/A
February 2026	1.2	Updated to include	





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1. Purpose and scope

We have 5 core values that accurately reflect the school's ethos. They are:

- 1. **Academic Excellence**; a belief in progress for all.
- 2. **Acquiring Knowledge**; the importance of being an educated person and knowing things.
- 3. **Social Justice**; providing opportunities for all, regardless of background.
- 4. **Public Service**; the importance of making a contribution to the school community and wider society.
- 5. **Diverse Opportunities**; a rounded education that 'opens doors' regardless of location or specialism.

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in supporting our school ethos and upholding our values. As public servants, we will seek to be trustworthy, wise, kind, optimistic and fair when working with other members of the school community. 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 and carers by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

At Durham Johnston Comprehensive School we believe it's important to:



- Work in partnership with parents and carers to support their child's learning and achieve academic excellence
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff, visitors and other external partners.
- Model appropriate behaviour for our pupils at all times

2. Our expectations of parents and carers

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school and to support us in upholding it.
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils
- Contact school only through official channels, via school email address or main switchboard.
- Appreciate that staff are very busy and will strive to respond to external queries within 3 working days wherever possible.
- 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

3. Behaviour that will not be tolerated, in person, via telephone or online.

- 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 a child while on school premises
- Any aggressive behaviour 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)
- Bringing animals onto the school premises (other than guide dogs)

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 those involved about the incident.

Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may then:

- Send a warning letter.
- End a communication with a clear warning.
- Arrange a meeting in school to meet with appropriate senior member of staff.
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour).
- Seek advice from the Local Authority regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous).
- Other appropriate action such as a ban from the school site.



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: ASCL Parent Guide to School Complaints





Parent guide to school complaints

Your checklist to resolving concerns quickly,
easily and positively with your school



Working together to resolve issues

Parents and schools share the same goal: supporting children's education. Sometimes questions or concerns arise. This guide gives you clear steps to share your views and resolve issues quickly and positively.

Why this matters

We know you value clear communication and want your feedback to make a difference.

When the process feels unclear or slow, it can be frustrating and leave you feeling unsure about what to do next. By giving you simple, transparent steps for raising issues, we aim to help you feel heard and supported.

How this guide helps

Most issues can be resolved quickly when you know who to speak to and what to expect.

This guide will support you to follow your school's complaint procedure. Our goal is to keep the focus on your child's education while building positive, supportive partnerships between you and the school.

Five steps to making a school complaint

Work with the child.

Relationships between parents and schools last for several years. Ensuring mutual trust and respect is essential to making them work in the best interests of your child.

Let's build parent and school partnerships based on our shared commitment to a great education for all. We know these matters are incredibly important to parents, but everything is founded on good intentions.

The best way to resolve concerns is through clear, respectful communication.



1

What kind of issue is it?

Complaints come in different shapes and sizes. The best first step is to identify what kind of issue it is, to make sure you can get the quickest action with your school.

Is it feedback? ***You need to be heard***

Sometimes you will want to share your voice with your school without needing them to respond, but you expect them to listen and take it on board. Feedback is often sought by schools who want to hear and adapt to parents' views.

Is it a concern? ***You need an answer***

Sometimes you have a worry or doubt over an important issue and you are looking for reassurance. Schools should take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Is it a complaint? ***You need action***

Sometimes you are dissatisfied with the school's actions or lack of action. Your school will have a formal complaints procedure that is available to you (likely published on their website) with the steps you need to take to complain.

2 Who in the school do I go to?

Often issues can be best resolved by the person closest to your child. Who is best to hear your view at your school? anything that directly wider than just

Discuss with their teacher/form tutor

Go to them first for

one lesson, issues, serious concerns, involves your child’s or if it can’t be resolved by or if earlier steps haven’t classroom experience. the teacher. Leaders worked. The

Raise to a middle or senior leader

Take it here if the issue is

Escalate it with the headteacher

Go here for whole-school



head is Teachers know your child have oversight across responsible for the school best and can usually sort classes and can and final decisions before things quickly. coordinate support. governors are involved.

Examples: homework, friendships, behaviour, concerns.

Examples: bullying, additional support, repeated behaviour issues.

Examples: safeguarding, school policies, day-to-day staff conduct, health and safety.

Remember - always check your school's complaint policy.



3

How do I raise my complaint?

How to make a school complaint
Follow these tips

Follow one level at a time

Start with a query aimed at resolving things quickly with those closest to your child, and only escalate if you truly need to.

Keep a record

Note when you've spoken to a teacher or leader, so you can show you have followed the right steps.

Suggest a clear outcome

Be clear on what you are looking for from the school and ensure it is realistic, so they can see if it is possible.

Start with the facts

Write down what happened, when, and who was involved. Be clear, relevant and avoid long stories.

Stay objective

Avoid accusations against individuals, direct your issue toward the processes or decisions that led to the issue.

Be positive

Make your complaint constructive, focused on solutions, and trust your school to listen.

4

When to expect a response?

Different schools have different policies for handling complaints. You can trust that they are following their policy as they look into your complaint.

Check the school's policy for timescales

Your school's complaints policy will be published on their website. Schools will normally outline how long they expect an outcome to take in that policy. Your school's policy should always be the best guidance to follow.

Ask for a written acknowledgement

If you have written a formal complaint to your school, they will usually acknowledge it quickly. Normally they will detail the timescales for investigating and responding to you and may ask for more details.

Complaint resolution times will vary

Complex complaints may take weeks of investigation. You may not always get updates, but trust that the school is following their policy, investigating and deciding the best action. You should always get a response to your complaint.

5 Where to escalate a complaint?

Once you have fully followed your school's complaint procedure, you may still feel you need action from your school and there are a few ways that may apply to you. It's best to check who it should be escalated with to get it resolved quickly: contacting several people at once could slow things down.

Is it for your school's governing body or trustees?

To be considered if you are unhappy with the school's response. Schools will normally have an escalation process that allows

parents to seek a further review of their complaint by a panel which may involve governors or trustees.

Is it for the Department for Education (DfE)?

To be considered if you are unhappy with the way your complaint has been handled or the school is preventing you from following the complaints process. In some circumstances, DfE can consider if the school has followed relevant

statutory guidance and education law.

**Is it
for Ofsted?**

Ofsted do not resolve disputes between parents and schools. They may keep your complaint

on file for their next inspection but don't always provide a response to parents.



How complaints go wrong

Tensions can run high when you're concerned about your child, but some approaches make matters worse.

Using social media

Sharing your complaint on social media can be harmful to those involved and will not lead to a quicker resolution.

Building a crowd

Other parents may share your views, but your complaint should be specific to you and your child.

Targeting people

Making it personal to individual school staff members can take things too far, keep it to challenging school policy.

Behaving aggressively

Abusive and aggressive behaviour will never be tolerated by a school and can lead to consequences for you.

Only use AI with caution

AI doesn't always get it right when citing laws and can make a complaint more complex than necessary.

Lacking partnership

Having a good relationship with your school is important and it benefits all to move on after complaints are resolved.

Where parents act unreasonably

In extreme circumstances, there can be consequences for parents where there is bullying and harassing behaviour towards the school. If parents use abusive language, are threatening or use intimidation, the school could:

Pause complaints

Typically the first step is for the school to pause the complaints process until the unacceptable behaviour stops, and the school can resume the process.

Issue a verbal or written warning

This sets clear expectations for future conduct and the school may issue a communications plan to reduce risk of confrontation.

Ban parents from school grounds

In persistent or extreme cases of abusive behaviour, a school may take action by placing a ban on parents. The ban is usually issued in writing by the headteacher, though in some cases the local authority, academy trust or governing body may write one instead. Parents will have the right to appeal.

Powering positive partnerships between families and schools

This guide has been created to further support parents. Built with wisdom, research and care by expert partners and members of the Improving Education Together board (IET), led by the Secretary of State for Education.

- Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- The Catholic Education Service
- The Confederation of School Trusts (CST)
- GMB Union
- The Local Government Association (LGA)
- The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
- The National Education Union (NEU)
- National Governance Association (NGA)
- The Sixth Form Colleges Association (SFCA)
- Unison
- Community Trade Union
- NASUWT
- The Department for Education
- Ofsted

Get more insights, resources and support

Parentkind is on a mission to enrich the educational experience for every child - both at home and at school. We empower anyone with parental or educational responsibility with the knowledge, ideas and resources to give young people the very best start in life. As one of the largest federated charities in the UK, Parentkind has a network of 23,500 Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), parent councils and schools, and mobilises more than 100,000 volunteers to raise vital funds for schools.

www.parentkind.org

This guide is not legal advice and is subject to future change.

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