



Newbridge Primary School

Parent Code of Conduct

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Introduction

We are incredibly fortunate to have such a supportive and collaborative parent/carers community. At Newbridge, we believe children thrive when learning is a shared journey, built on strong partnerships between families, school staff and the wider school community. Together, we nurture the Newbridge key behavior values; being responsible, respectful and safe, preparing children to become confident, creative and caring individuals. We warmly welcome and encourage all parents and carers to participate in school life, working with us to support our pupils' growth and success.

1. Purpose and scope

At Newbridge Primary School 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), pupils (through our behaviour policy) and governors (through governor code of conduct)

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 respectful solution to all issues
- Correct their own child's behaviour on the school site where it is not in line with school rules or it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct
- Only enter the building upon agreement with a member of staff
- Approach the correct member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern

3. Behaviour that will not be tolerated

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports 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 groups and platforms. In addition, using social media groups to instigate negative discussion about the school and its policies.
- 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 on school premises (including legal highs)
- Bringing dogs or other 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 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 into 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 local authority's legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libelous or slanderous)
- Ban the parent 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.

Persistent & Vexatious Complaints - Who is a persistent complainant?

For the purpose of this policy, a persistent complainant is a parent, carer or member of the public who complains about issues, either formally or informally, or frequently raises issues that the complainant considers to be within the remit of the school, and whose behaviour is unreasonable. Such behaviour may be characterised by:

- Actions which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious
- Prolific correspondence or excessive e-mail or telephone contact about a concern or complaint
- Uses Freedom of Information requests excessively and unreasonably
- An insistence upon pursuing unsubstantial complaints and/or unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes
- An insistence upon pursuing complaints in an unreasonable manner
- An insistence on only dealing with the Headteacher on all occasions irrespective of the issue and the level of delegation in the school to deal with such matters
- An insistence upon repeatedly pursuing a complaint when the outcome is not satisfactory to the complainant but cannot be changed, for example, if the desired outcome is beyond the remit of the school or because it is unlawful.

For the purpose of this policy, harassment is the unreasonable pursuit of such actions as in the points above, in such a way that they:

- Appear to be targeted over a significant period of time on one or more members of school staff and/or
- Cause ongoing distress to individual member(s) of school staff and/or
- Have a significant adverse effect on the whole/parts of the school community and/or
- Are pursued in a manner which can be perceived as intimidating and oppressive by the recipient. This could include situations where persistent demands and criticisms, whilst not particularly taxing or serious when viewed in isolation, have a cumulative effect over time of undermining confidence, well-being and health.

The school's actions in cases of persistent or vexatious complaints or harassment

In the first instance, the school will inform the complainant that the behaviour is considered to be becoming unreasonable/unacceptable and, if it is not modified, action may be taken in accordance with this policy.

- This will be confirmed in writing.
 - If the behaviour is not modified, the school will take some or all of the following actions as necessary, having regard to the nature of the complainant's behaviour and the effect of this on the school community.
- Inform the complainant in writing that the behaviour is now considered by the school to be unreasonable/unacceptable and therefore to fall under the terms of this policy.
- Inform the complainant that all meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and that notes of meetings may be taken in the interests of all parties.

- Inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, all routine communication with the complainant to the school should be by letter only.
- In the event of physical, or verbal aggression take advice from LA HR/Legal Services and consider warning the complainant about being banned from the school site; or straight to a temporary ban.
- Consider taking advice from the LA on pursuing a case under Anti-Harassment legislation.
- Consider taking advice from HR/Legal Services of the LA about putting in place a specific procedure for dealing with complaints from the complainant, i.e. the complainant will not be able to deal directly with the Headteacher but only with a third person to be identified by the Governing Body of the school, who will investigate, determine whether or not the concern/complaint is reasonable or vexatious and then advise the Headteacher accordingly.
- Thus, based on point above, legitimate new complaints may still be considered even if the person making them is, or has been, subject to the Policy for Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints and/or Harassment in Schools. However, the school will be advised by the HR/Legal Services of the LA.
- If a complainant's persistent complaining/harassing behaviour is modified and is then resumed at a later date within a reasonable period of time, the school may resume the process identified above at an appropriate level. In these circumstances advice may be sought from the HR/Legal Services of the LA.

Review

- The school will review as appropriate, and at a minimum once in a school year, any sanctions applied in this policy.

We trust that parents and carers will assist our school with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continued support of our school.

Appendix 1: model letters

Initial warning letter from the Headteacher

Dear [Parent name],

I have 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

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 procedure, which are available on our website.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher