BATH & WELLS
Multi Academy Trust
'That they may have life, life in all its fullness' John 10:10

Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Schools who form part of The Bath & Wells Multi Academy Trust (hereafter referred to as the MAT) are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body. Our parents recognise that educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents, school staff and the school community. As a partnership, our parents understand the importance of a good working relationship to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons we continue to welcome and encourage parents/carers to participate fully in the life of our school.

1.2 The purpose of this document is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers, and visitors to our school about the expected conduct. This is so we can continue to flourish, progress, and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILTIES

2.1 Employees have the responsibility to:

- Observe procedures to ensure the health and safety of members of the public, fellow employees, and themselves at all times.
- Report all occurrences of disruptive, harassing, violent, aggressive, threatening behaviour and verbal abuse and near misses to their line manager, such as

2.2 Headteachers/Principals have the responsibility to take appropriate action in the event of the above happening at the school to ensure its reoccurrence is prevented as much as reasonably practical.

2.3 Parents, carers, and visitors have the responsibility to conduct themselves appropriately in line with this policy.

3. PRINCIPLES

3.1 All members of the school community have the right to expect that their school is a safe place in which they work and learn. There is no place for disruptive, harassing, violent, aggressive, threatening behaviour or verbal abuse in the MAT. Refer for further definitions in Appendix 2

3.2 To support a peaceful and safe school environment the school will not tolerate parents, carers or visitors exhibiting the following:

a) Behaviours which interfere or threaten to interfere with any of the school's operations.

b) Recognise that school staff have many competing duties during a typical day which may mean that they are not immediately available and that some requests for information counter GDPR compliance regulations or repeated requests for similar data exceeding the school's reasonable capacity to respond and process, for example, staff should not be expected to respond to a queries within an unrealistic time-frame e.g., staff may not be able to respond on the same day

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c) Any inappropriate behaviour on the school premises, including those which breaches of the Trust's policy on equal opportunities.
d) Threatening, in any way, a member of school staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or pupil.
e) Damaging or destroying school property.
f) Disrespecting the caring ethos of our schools.
g) Members of the school community not being treated with respect and setting a good example in their own speech and behaviour.
h) Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom or any other area of the school grounds, including team matches.
i) Using loud/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, disrespectful language or displaying bad temper.
j) The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on school premises.
k) Damaging or destroying school property or the property of another person
l) Abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication to any persons related to or with the school, including visitors.
m) Offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/parent/staff, at the school spoken, written or on social media (See Appendix 1 for reference to social media).
n) Approaching someone else's child 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. Parents should approach a school member of staff if they wish to discuss the actions of another child).
o) Smoking and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on school property or being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs whilst on school property.
p) Dogs being brought onto the site, unless express permission is sought from the school Headteacher/member of the school leadership.

3.3 In serious cases the school may also consider its legal options, thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

Should any of the above occur on school premises the school may feel it is necessary to act by contacting the appropriate authorities and/or sadly, consider banning the offending adult from entering the school premises or contacting the school via email or letter or telephone.

Thank you for abiding by this policy in our school. Together we create a positive and uplifting environment not only for the children but also all who work and visit our school.

Note: Can parents please ensure they make all persons responsible for collecting their children aware of this policy.

4. Actions to support the school's caring ethos

We positively encourage all parents and carers to:

4.1 Report to the school concerns the parent may have about the school through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the Headteacher/ member of the school leadership or the Chair of the Local Governing Committee, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately, and effectively for all concerned.

4.2 Correct their own child's behaviour appropriately whilst on the school premises.

4.3 Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern, to check a child's version of events with the school.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 Should any of the above behaviour occur the school may take possible action to deal with it.

5.2 Where possible the school will resolve or diffuse violent/aggressive situations through discussion with the individual/s involved. The Headteacher/member of the school leadership may feel it necessary to issue a warning letter to the individual stating that 'repeats of such behaviour may lead to a ban from the school'.

5.3 Where conflict cannot be resolved or diffused, or there is the possibility of imminent physical harm towards an individual or school property, the school reserves the right to call the local police station to intervene or in cases of extreme emergency by dialing 999, or to call the appropriate authorities.

5.4 If necessary, the school may ban the offending adult from entering the school grounds. If such a ban is felt necessary the school will arrange for someone to meet your child or children at the school gate, and to return them to the school gate at the end of the school day. The Headteacher/member of school leadership will discuss and agree with the Chair of the Governing Committee before a ban is put in place. Where a ban is decided necessary the Headteacher/member of school leadership will issue a letter to the individual stating that a ban has been put in place. The Headteacher/member of school leadership is responsible for determining the length of the ban. The letter to the individual will specify the length of the ban or in some instances may state that the ban is 'open ended' initially until an appropriate amount of time has elapsed for all concerned. The headteacher will draw up a reintegration plan to reinstate full access of the banned person/s to the school site. Headteachers/member of school leadership are responsible for writing follow up letters to individuals who have been banned to confirm the end of the ban or with an update to the length of the ban.

5.5 Parents who have been banned from school premises have a general right to receive from the school information in relation to their child's welfare and education progress.

5.6 Parents who feel they have been unreasonably banned should in the first instance discuss this with the school or alternatively may consider asking for the decision to be reviewed under the complaint's procedure.

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

6. What happens if someone ignores or breaches the code of conduct?

In the event of any parent/carer or visitor of the school breaking, this code then proportionate actions will be taken as follows:

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

- With the parent consider appropriate next steps.
- 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 our legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous 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.
In cases where the unacceptable behaviour is 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 post or any form of social media cyber bullying.

If the parent/carer refuses to attend the meeting, then the school will write to the parent/carer and ask them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not they may be banned from the school premises. If after this behaviour continues, the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place.

Note:
(1) a ban from the school can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above in more serious cases.
(2) Site bans will normally be limited in the first instance.
(3) Further explanation of the breach of the Code of Conduct Policy can be read in Appendix 3

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Appendix 1

Inappropriate use of Social Network Sites

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers/members of school leadership, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. The Trustees of the Bath and Wells Multi Academy Trust (the Trust) consider the use of social media websites being used in this way unacceptable and not in the interests of the children or the whole school community.

'Think before you post' We ask that social media, whether public or private, should not be used to fuel campaigns and voice complaints against the school, school staff, parents, or children.

We take very seriously inappropriate use of social media by a parent to publicly humiliate or criticise another parent, member of staff or child.

If parents have any concerns about their child in relation to the school as we have said above, they should:

1. Initially contact the class teacher.
2. If the concern remains, they should contact the Headteacher.
3. If still unresolved, the school governors through the complaints procedure, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

They should not use social media as a medium to air any concerns or grievances.

Online activity which we consider inappropriate:

- Identifying or posting images/videos of children
- Abusive or personal comments about staff, governors, children or other parents
- Bringing the school in disrepute
- Posting defamatory or libellous comments
- Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or children
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children or members of staff
- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
- Breaching school security procedures

At our school we take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents appropriately in line with the actions outlined above.

If any pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren is found to be posting libelous or defamatory comments on 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.

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Where members of staff receive complaints, insults or abusive comments via online sites they are responsible for reporting it to the appropriate 'report abuse' section on the website in order to get the comments removed, they are also responsible for informing Senior Management within the school as soon as possible, and if applicable taking the appropriate steps for getting the listing removed from Google.

In serious cases the school may also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Thankfully, such incidents are extremely rare.

Appendix 2

Definition of Harassment and Bullying

That bullying and harassment although first-time conduct which unintentionally causes offence will not usually be harassment. However, it will become harassment if the conduct continues after the recipient has made it clear, by words or in writing, that such behaviour is unacceptable to him/her.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

Appendix 3

Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors Breach Process

If a complaint made is about the service the school offers or an individual member of staff and it remains unresolved, the parent should follow the school's complaint procedure. If a parent's behaviour is deemed as unacceptable, offensive or in breach of the code of conduct it could lead to an individual being investigated. Please note that serious breaches of the Code of Conduct, such as allegations of criminal behaviour, may result in a report being made to the police.

Breach of the Code of Conduct Process
It is difficult to be precise about how all breaches of the code of conduct will be dealt with. It can depend on the nature of the breach and the context within which the breach occurred. However, the following should act as a guide.

Breach owing to behaviour on the school site/outside of a meeting refer to section 6 in this Code of Conduct Policy:

1. Attempt to resolve amicably when it occurs.
2. Relevant members investigate and informally meets the person.
3. Follow up as agreed in the meeting or according to the Code of Conduct Policy

Breach at a meeting:

1. Person asked to apologise and modify and commit to not repeating behaviour deemed as unacceptable.
2. If person refuses, they are asked to leave.
3. Person written to within one week, given the opportunity to apologise in writing within two weeks.
4. Further Breaches of the Code of Conduct Process
5. This will be explained to and discussed with the parent.