



Coppice Academy Governing Body Code of Conduct for Parents and Carers

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Accordingly, it is important that visitors to Coppice Academy model behaviours that are conducive to this. For the purpose of this policy the term 'stakeholder' refers to staff, parents, children, governors.

Statement of Principles

The governing body of Coppice Academy encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. To ensure this, we set out the following guidance, in addition to that set out in our Home-School Agreement (in our school brochure). We expect parents, carers and visitors to:

- respect the caring ethos of our school;
- understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of the children;
- demonstrate that all members of the school community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and behaviour;
- seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue;
- correct own child's behaviour as appropriate, especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behaviour or unsafe behaviour;
- approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern;
- avoid using staff as threats to admonish children's behaviour;
- respect the privacy of staff and their right to a home and family life (i.e. avoid contacting them beyond their working day);

Overwhelmingly, the vast majority of parents, carers and others visiting our school are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school. However, on the rare occasions when a negative attitude towards the school is expressed, this can result in aggression, verbal and or physical abuse towards members of school staff or the wider school community. The Governing Body expects and requires its members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations and attempt to defuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement, as appropriate, of other colleagues. However, all members of staff have the right to work without fear of violence and/or abuse. Where parents have a concern, we actively encourage parents to communicate with the school, using the appropriate channels.

Any communication regarding a concern needs to always start with the class teacher. Then, if things are not resolved, the issue will be passed on to middle management (i.e. Phase Leader) and then a Senior Leader (which includes the Headteacher) if need be. Occasionally, some parents demand to see the Headteacher as their first port of call, which is often impractical, especially given the size of the school, and the fact that things often have to be referred back to the class teacher.

If, after reaching the Headteacher, the issue is still not resolved, then it can be directed to our Governing Body using our Complaints Policy, which is available on our website. Any meeting (whether formal or informal) related to concerns needs to be conducted in a respectful and reasonable way. Consideration needs to be given as to whether it would be appropriate to involve the child in such a meeting. We accept that sometimes criticism of the school can be appropriate, done in a measured, respectful and reasonable way that is constructive. However, parents and carers need to avoid fierce criticism of staff or the school, especially in front of a child. Parents and carers need to trust in the school to deal with things in a professional way. The school will not accept any attempt by parents or carers to impose conditions around the way things are dealt with in school (the law states that the school is in loco parentis).

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards all members of staff and other stakeholders. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable. Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

- smoking (including e-cigarettes) and consumption/under the influence of alcohol or other drugs whilst on school premises;
- physically intimidating a member of staff or other stakeholder, e.g. standing very close to her/him in a way calculated to upset;
- threatening behaviour (e.g. the use of aggressive hand gestures);
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child;
- antisocial behaviour (e.g. swearing);
- racist or sexist comments or behaviour;
- breaching the school's security procedures.
- damaging or destroying school property;
- abusive, offensive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication;
- shouting at a member of staff or other stakeholder, either in person or over the telephone;
- approaching someone else's child (or parent of the child) in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child in school;
- emotional abuse (e.g. where pressure is placed on a member of staff to break or bend the policies or persistent emotional outbursts);
- dogs on site (beyond the Coppice Road hedge-line);
- reckless behaviour on site (e.g. driving with undue care and attention);

- drawing school staff into conflict between separated/divorced parents;

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour. Parents, carers and visitors need to be aware that it is an offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1997 for any person (including a parent) to cause a nuisance or disturbance on school premises. Unacceptable behaviour may result in the police being informed of the incident.

Procedure to be followed If a parent/carer behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school staff or other stakeholder, the Headteacher or appropriate senior staff member will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school's complaints procedures should be followed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a parent or carer may be banned by the Headteacher from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review.

In imposing a ban the following steps will be taken:

Agreed by the Coppice Academy Governing Body

1. The parent, carer or visitor will be informed, in writing, that she/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, e.g. that police involvement or an injunction application may follow (parents/carers have the right of appeal).
2. Where a physical assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the police will be included.
3. Coppice Academy Governing Body will be informed of the ban.
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

In addition, parents, carers and visitors need to be aware that school premises are private property, which parents have been granted permission to use. However, in the case of abuse or threats to staff, pupils or other parents, the school have the legal right to withdraw this permission at any time.

Use of cameras and phones on site parents, carers and visitors are not allowed to use cameras or phones to capture images on site. However, parents and carers are welcome to take photographs or videos of school events that their child is part of; though any photograph or video taken should be for personal viewing only, and not be posted on social media. The reason being that there are sensitivities around some children in school, and we need to respect this. If we become aware of a breach in this school policy then we reserve the right to take legal action.

Conclusion: Coppice Academy will take action where behaviour is unacceptable (as described above). In implementing this policy, Coppice Academy will, as appropriate, seek advice from their health and safety and legal advisors, to ensure fairness and consistency. At Coppice, we will actively challenge parents, carers and visitors expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including 'extremist' views.

Appendix

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 Coppice Academy considers the use of social 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 need to be made through the appropriate channels by speaking, in the first instance, to the class teacher, then a senior member of staff, the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors accordingly, so things 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 at Coppice Academy 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. 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. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another (or member of staff) by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying.