



Pebworth First and Blackminster Middle Schools  
Federation



# Parent and Carer Code of Conduct

*Non-statutory*

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Aspiration | Respect | Community | Excellence

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## Statement of principles

This code of conduct has been written taking into account the DfE Guidance 'Advice on school security: Access to, and barring individuals from school premises' December 2012 as well as NAHT guidance on dealing with abusive parents.

In sending their child to Blackminster Middle School or Pebworth First School, parents and carers are deemed to have accepted this code of conduct.

At Blackminster Middle School and Pebworth First School, we value the positive relationships forged with parents and visitors to the schools. We encourage close links with the parents and the community and believe that students benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. We also strive to make our schools places where as adults we model for students the behaviour we teach and expect. In general, we place a high importance on good manners, positive communication and mutual respect.

Almost without exception, parents, carers and visitors to Blackminster Middle School and Pebworth First School are keen to work with us and are supportive of the schools. However, on very rare occasions the behaviour of a small number of parents fall short of what we expect. This sometimes manifests itself in aggression or abuse towards members of the school community. This can be in written communication (including social media), on the telephone or in face-to-face incidents.

In these situations we expect members of staff to behave professionally, attempting to defuse the situation where possible and seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. Staff who face these situations have license to end any conversation (face-to-face or on the telephone). They should then refer the incident to a senior leader who will take appropriate action or invoke the provisions of this policy.

The overriding principle is, however, that all members of the school community have the right to work or be in the school without fear of aggression or abuse from parents. The Governing Body has a requirement to protect staff and students from such aggression.

The progress and well-being of the parent's or carer's child(ren) will be fully considered. Actions taken against the parent or carer will be reasonable and proportionate. The parent or carer will have the opportunity to put their views forward at every stage. In the case of the imposition of conditions or a ban from either school, robust review processes involving the Chair of Governors are in place to ensure fairness.

## Definition of unacceptable behaviour

We consider that aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language from a parent or carer presents a risk to staff or students. Unacceptable behaviour is such that makes a member of staff or student feel threatened. This can be through face-to-face contact, on the telephone or in written communication (including social media). The following is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviours:

- any kind of insult as an attempt to demean, embarrass or undermine
- any kind of threat
- raising of voice so as to be intimidating
- physical intimidation, eg by standing very close to him/her or the use of aggressive hand gestures
- use of foul or abusive language
- any kind of physical abuse
- allegations which turn out to be vexatious or malicious.

## The federations approach to dealing with incidents

If a parent/carer/visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the federation community, the headteacher or appropriate senior staff will assess the level of risk before deciding on a future course of action. The course of action will be reasonable and commensurate with the assessed level of risk.

## Risk Assessment

The Headteacher or School Leader will carry out a risk assessment in order to help make a decision about the level of response. In all cases the response will be reasonable and proportionate. The Headteacher or School Leader will consider the following questions:

- What form did the abuse take?
- What evidence is there?
- What do witnesses say happened?
- Are there previous incidents to take into consideration?
- Do members of staff/students feel intimidated by the parent's behaviour?
- Is there any evidence of provocation?
- How high is the assessed risk that this will be repeated or there will be retaliation at the federation's action? (low, medium, high).

## Recording of Incidents

Staff/students subject to abuse and witnesses will make written statements about the incident(s) which will be kept in a file with subsequent letters. This file will be kept by the Business Manager. Depending on an assessment of the risk of retaliation to witnesses or individuals, statements made by adults may be available to the parent or carer if they request it.

## The Federation's Response

Following the completion of the risk assessment, the Headteacher will decide the level of action to be taken. Actions will include the following

### *1. Clarify to the parent what is considered acceptable behaviour by the school*

In some instances, it may be appropriate simply to ensure the parent or carer is clear about behaviour standards expected by the school. This could be explained by letter from the Headteacher or School Leader. This letter may contain a warning about further action if there are further incidents.

### *2. Invite the parent to an informal meeting to discuss events*

This could be helpful to discuss and defuse the situation.

The safety and well-being of those attending such a meeting must be carefully considered. Members of school staff will always be accompanied by at least one other colleague at any such meeting.

Consideration should be given to the seating arrangements, and care taken to ensure exits cannot be blocked by a parent who could potentially become aggressive.

The main points of discussion and any agreed actions should be noted, and follow-up letter or email sent to confirm the federation's expectations and any agreed actions.

### *3. Impose conditions on the parent's or carer's contact with the federation and its staff*

Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Parents of enrolled students have an 'implied licence' to come onto school premises at certain stated times. It is for schools to define and set out the extent of such access. Parents exceeding this would be trespassing.

Depending on the type, level or frequency of the unacceptable behaviour, the school may consider imposing conditions on the parent's or carer's contact with the school. These conditions may include (but are not exclusively):

- being accompanied to any meeting with a member of school staff by a member of the senior leadership team
- restricting contact by telephone to named members of the senior leadership team
- restricting written communication to named members of the senior leadership team
- restricting attendance at school events to those where the parent will be accompanied by a member of the senior leadership team of the federation
- any other restriction as deemed reasonable and proportionate by the Headteacher.

In this case the parent will be informed by letter from the Headteacher the details of the conditions that are being imposed. The parent would then be given 10 working days from the date of the letter to make representations in writing about the conditions to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors would then decide whether to confirm or remove the conditions. This would be communicated to the parent in writing within 10 working days of the date of the parent's letter.

If the decision is to confirm the conditions imposed, this decision will be reviewed by the Board of Governors after approximately six months (and every six months after that, if appropriate). The parent will be invited to make written representation to the Governors. This and evidence from the Headteacher will be considered at a meeting of the full Board of Governors. Governors may decide to maintain, extend or remove the conditions. The decision will be communicated to the parent by the clerk to the Governors within 10 days of the date of the meeting.

When deciding whether it will be necessary to maintain, extend or remove the conditions, Governors will give consideration to the extent of the parent's compliance with the conditions, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from him/her and any evidence of the parent's co-operation with the school in other respects.

### *4. Imposing a ban*

Where other procedures have been exhausted and aggression or intimidation continues OR where there is an extreme act of violence then the federation may consider banning the individual from federation premises. This will include banning a parent from accessing school staff by written communication or telephone.

In these circumstances, the individual would be advised in writing by the Headteacher that a provisional ban is being imposed. The parent would then be given 10 working days from the date of that letter to make representations about the ban in writing to the Chair of Governors.

The Chair of Governors would then decide whether to confirm or remove the ban. This would be communicated to the parent in writing within 10 working days of the receipt of their letter.

If the Chair's decision is to confirm the ban, parents in these circumstances will be offered an annual meeting about their child's progress, usually with a member of senior staff.

A decision to impose a ban will be reviewed by the Board of Governors after approximately six months (and every six months after that, if appropriate). The parent will be invited to make written representation to the Governors; this and evidence from the Headteacher will be considered at a meeting of the full Board of Governors. Governors may decide to remove the ban, extend the ban or impose restrictions on parents' access to the school. The decision of the review will be communicated to the parent by the clerk to the Governors within 10 days of the date of the meeting.

In deciding whether to remove or extend the ban or impose conditions, Governors will give consideration to the extent of the parent's compliance with the ban, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from him/her and any evidence of the parents' co-operation with the school in other respects.

#### *5. Removal from school*

Parents who have been banned from either of the school premises and continue to cause a nuisance will be deemed to have committed a section 547 offence. They will be considered as trespassers. In these circumstances the offender may be removed from their school. This may be carried out by a police officer or person authorised by the Board of Governors. Legal proceedings may be brought against the parent.

#### *6. Complaints policy*

Any parental complaint that arises from incidents of abusive behaviour will be dealt with under the complaints policy.

#### *7. Monitoring by the Board of Governors*

This policy is reviewed by the federation's Board of Governors every two years.

All actions taken under this policy are also monitored by the Board of Governors. Details of incidents are reported to the Governors as part of the Headteacher's report to Governors meetings, which take place five times per year. Parents' names and details are not identified to the board.

## Appendices – Model Letters

### *Warning*

Model letter 1: This is an example of an initial letter from the Headteacher to ensure the parent is clear about behaviour standards expected by the school. This letter contains a warning about further action if there are other incidents. The letter invites a written response and suggests a meeting.

### *Imposing conditions on the parent's attendance at school events*

Model letter 2: This is a letter from the Headteacher informing parents of the school's decision to impose conditions on the parent's attendance at school events, pending review by the Chair of Governors.

Model letter 3: Letter from the Chair of Governors informing a parent of their decision to confirm or remove the conditions.

### *Imposing a ban*

Model letter 4: Letter from Headteacher informing parents of the federation's intention to impose a ban on their attendance at school premises, pending review by the Chair of Governors.

Model letter 5: Letter from the Chair of Governors informing parent of their decision to confirm or remove ban.

### *Reviewing the decision to impose conditions or impose a ban*

Model letter 6: Letter from clerk to the Governors requesting statement from parents to Board of Governors for review of decision.

Model letter 7: Letter from clerk to the Governors to confirm the outcome of further reviews of decisions where the imposition of conditions/ban has been extended or removed.

*Model Letter 1: Warning (sent by Headteacher)*

Recorded Delivery

Dear

I have received a report about your conduct at the school on (enter date and time or details). This appears to fall short of that we would expect of a parent or carer of a student at Pebworth First School or Blackminster Middle School.

(Add factual summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, pupils and other parents).

I must inform you that the Board of Governors will not tolerate aggression towards members of the federation community and will act to protect its staff and students from any form of abuse or intimidation. I should warn you that any future conduct of this nature could result in the federation imposing conditions restricting your access to the school or banning you from contacting or attending the school altogether.

I wish to give you an opportunity to give me in writing any comments or observations of your own in relation to the report which I have received about your conduct. Please do so within 10 working days of the date of this letter. These comments may include any assurances you are prepared to give about your future good conduct. There is an option for us to meet to discuss the situation and how it can be avoided in the future.

Details of our code of conduct for parents and carers can be found on our website.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Cc: Chair of Governors



*Model Letter 2: Imposing conditions on the parent's attendance at school events, pending review (sent by Headteacher)*

Recorded Delivery

Dear

I have received a report from (name of staff) about your conduct on (enter date and time).

(Add factual summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, pupils and other parents).

You will recollect that I have already written to you about a previous incident on (date) warning you of the consequence of any further insulting or aggressive behaviour on your part.

I must inform you that the Governors, in line with our code of conduct, will not tolerate conduct of this nature on the school premises and will act to defend federation staff and pupils.

I am therefore writing to inform you that I am imposing conditions on the contact you may have with the federation. These are as follows: (delete as appropriate)

- You must be accompanied to any meeting with a member of school staff.
- You may not contact by telephone or in writing any member of staff. You may contact myself directly.
- You may not attend any events for parents except those where you will be accompanied by a member of the senior leadership team.
- Others as are reasonable and proportionate.

The restrictions above are provisional until they have been reviewed by the Chair of Governors. Please consider them to be in force until you receive their confirmation.

The Chair of Governors will need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm or overturn this decision. You may, if you wish, send them in writing any comments or observations of your own within 10 working days of the date of this letter. These comments may be to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct. They will then write to you with the outcome of their decision.

If on receipt of your comments, the Chair of Governors considers that my decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of how the conditions will be reviewed by the Board of Governors.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

cc. Chair of Governors

*Model Letter 3: Letter to confirm or overturn Headteacher's decision to impose conditions  
(sent by Chair of Governors)*

Recorded delivery

Dear

(Headteacher) wrote to you on (date) to detail concerns about an incident when your behaviour towards (name) fell short of what we would expect at school. You will be aware that they have written to you previously about your behaviour towards staff.

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated (date), the contents of which I have considered carefully.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose conditions on your contact with the school should be confirmed. The conditions are as follows:

- (copy conditions from Headteacher's letter)

The decision will be reviewed by the Board of Governors in approximately six months' time. The clerk to the Governors will write to you in advance of the meeting to ask you to provide a written statement for their consideration. When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the application of conditions to attend school premises, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you; and any evidence of your co-operation with the school in other respects.

OR

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose conditions on you should be overturned. You may hence attend school events as normal. However, should there be a repeat or inappropriate behaviour towards staff all of the above sanctions may be applied.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

cc. Headteacher

*Model Letter 4: Imposition of a ban on contacting or attending the school, pending review  
(sent by Headteacher)*

Recorded delivery

Dear

I have received a report from (name of staff) about your conduct on (enter date and time).

(Add factual summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, pupils and other parents).

You will recollect that I have already written to you about a previous incident on (date) warning you of the consequence of any further insulting or aggressive behaviour on your part.

I must inform you that the Governors, in line with our code of conduct, will not tolerate conduct of this nature on the school premises and will act to defend federation staff and pupils.

I am therefore writing to inform you that I am recommending imposing a ban on you attending or contacting the school. This means you may not attend school for any reason whatsoever. You must not make contact with any member of staff by telephone or email. You do, however, have the right to attend one meeting per year to discuss your child's progress. This meeting will be with me. I will contact you to arrange this at the time of the next parents evening.

The restrictions above are provisional until they have been reviewed by the Chair of Governors. Please consider them to be in force until you receive their confirmation.

The Chair of Governors will need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm or overturn this decision. You may, if you wish, send them in writing any comments or observations of your own within 10 working days of the date of this letter. These comments may be to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct. They will then write to you with the outcome of their decision.

If on receipt of your comments, the Chair of Governors considers that my decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of how the conditions will be reviewed by the Board of Governors.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

cc. Chair of Governors

*Model Letter 5: Letter to confirm or overturn Headteacher's decision to impose a ban (sent by Chair of Governors)*

Recorded delivery

Dear

(Headteacher) wrote to you on (date) to detail concerns about an incident when your behaviour towards (name) fell short of what we would expect at school. You will be aware that they have written to you previously about your behaviour towards staff.

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated (date), the contents of which I have considered carefully.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose a ban on you should be confirmed. This means you may not attend school for any reason whatsoever. You must not make contact with any member of staff by telephone or email. You do, however, have the right to attend one meeting per year to discuss your child's progress. This meeting will be with (Headteacher) or a member of the senior team.

The decision will be reviewed by the Board of Governors in approximately six months' time. The clerk to the Governors will write to you in advance of the meeting to ask you to provide a written statement for their consideration. When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the application of conditions to attend school premises, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you; and any evidence of your co-operation with the school in other respects.

OR

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose a ban should be overturned. You may hence attend school events as normal. However, should there be a repeat or inappropriate behaviour towards staff all of the above sanctions may be applied.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

cc. Headteacher

*Model Letter 6: Letter from clerk to the Governors requesting parents' statement for review by Full Governing Body (sent by clerk to Governors)*

Recorded delivery

Dear

(Headteacher) wrote to you on (date) to detail concerns about your behaviour towards school staff/students fell short of what we would expect as a school. As a result of this incident, conditions were imposed on you/a ban was imposed.

This decision will be reviewed by the Board of Governors at their next meeting on (date).

I am writing to ask whether you would like to make a written statement to Governors for their consideration in making the decision whether to remove the restriction or extend it.

If you should wish to make a written statement, please can you email it to me at (address) by (date – parents should be given 10 days to respond).

Yours sincerely

Clerk to Governors

cc. Headteacher

*Model Letter 7: Letter detailing outcome of Board of Governors review (sent by clerk of Governors)*

Dear

I wrote to you on (date) to request a statement to enable the Governors to review the federation's decision to impose conditions/ban from you attending school premises.

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated (date), the contents of which were considered carefully by the Governors at their meeting on (date).

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, the Governors have determined that the decision to impose conditions/ban you from attending or contacting school should be confirmed. The conditions of your attendance on site are as follows:

- (copy conditions from Headteacher's letter)

OR

- You must not attend any event in school except for an annual meeting about your child's progress. This meeting will be conducted by (Headteacher).
- You may not contact by telephone or in writing any member of staff.

The decision will be reviewed by the Board of Governors in approximately six months' time. When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the application of conditions to attend school premises, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you; and any evidence of your co-operation with the school in other respects.

OR

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose conditions on you should be overturned. You may hence attend school events as normal. However, should there be a repeat or inappropriate behaviour towards staff this decision may be revoked.

Yours sincerely

Clerk to Governors

cc. Headteacher