



## **Denefield School**

### **Code of Conduct for parents/carers and visitors**

Approved by Trust Board on	31 March 2021
Date of next review	March 2023
Review cycle	Biennial
Policy control sheet updated	Yes
Type of policy	Non statutory
Policy owner	Headteacher and Chair of Trustees
Location of policy	Website

## **1. Introduction**

Denefield School has a supportive parent body and local community. Our parents and carers understand that educating students involves a partnership between parents, class teachers and the school community. As a partnership, our parents and carers will understand the importance of a good working relationship to equip our students with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons, we welcome and encourage parents and carers to contribute to school life.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set out guidance for all parents, carers and visitors to our school about their expected conduct. We set clear expectations on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the staff Code of Conduct) and students (through our Behaviour Policy). This Code of Conduct for parents, carers and visitors aims to help the school work together with you by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

## **3. Guidance**

There are many reasons for parents, carers and other visitors to visit the school and the vast majority of such visits are positive experiences for the visitors and the school. On rare occasions visitors' behaviour is not appropriate for visiting our school and we therefore provide the following guidance.

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Respect the ethos and values of our school
- Work together with all staff in the best interests of our students
- Recognise 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 appropriate and respectful resolution to any issues
- Approach the correct member of staff to help resolve any concerns

The school understands there may be situations where parents/carers and visitors may be concerned and we take all complaints seriously. Minor issues may often be resolved informally. It is important that any concerns or complaints are shared in a way that is acceptable and enables the school to respond effectively. This policy should be read alongside our Parental Complaints Policy [and our Complaints policy for other members of the public] which must be followed in the event of a complaint or concern.

## **4. Unacceptable behaviour**

The school has a duty of care to all our staff and students. In order to support a safe school environment, it is not acceptable for parents, carers and visitors to act unreasonably or do or encourage anyone to do any of the following:

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations
- Abusive, insulting, malicious or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or written communication
- Using loud or offensive language, using profane language or displaying temper
- Damaging or destroying school property
- Defamatory or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the students/parents/staff at the school including on social network sites
- The use of aggressive behaviour (including physically, verbally or in writing)
- Posting anything likely to cause alarm and distress to another individual

- Behaviour which could be reasonably interpreted as bullying, intimidating or humiliating
- Disciplining another parent's child, you must bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention
- Smoking and consumption of alcohol or drugs whilst on school premises
- Bringing dogs onto school premises (other than recognised assistance dogs)
- Discriminatory behaviour based on a person's characteristics such as sex, race, disability, age, religion or belief, or gender re-assignment
- Taking photos or videos on our school site or taking any photos or videos of our staff, students or parents without permission
- Refusing to co-operate with reasonable instructions
- Acting contrary to our school policies
- Excessively demanding behaviour that impacts on school staff

If any of the above behaviours occur on school premises or via verbal or written communications, we may contact the appropriate authorities and, if necessary, put measures in place as set out in sections 4 and 5 below. We trust that parents, carers and visitors will assist us with the implementation of this policy.

## **5. Breaching the Code of Conduct**

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent, carer or visitor has breached the Code of Conduct, we will appoint an investigator to gather information from those involved and contact you about the incident.

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

- Invite you to meet with a senior member of staff
- Implement a limited communications strategy
- Advise that a third party acts on your behalf
- Seek legal advice regarding further action (such as in cases of conduct that may be libellous)
- Send a warning letter or restrict access to the school site
- Contact the appropriate authorities including the local authority or the police (in cases of criminal behaviour)

In the event, that any visitor or parent/carer is found to be posting unacceptable 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 rules about the content which can be posted on their site and they provide mechanisms to report activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or visitor removes such comments immediately.

The school will take appropriate action to protect our staff and students should an incident of criminal behaviour occur. Parents, carers and visitors should be aware that we will report potentially criminal behaviour to the police including in relation to the following: offences under the Malicious Communications Act 1988; Communications Act 2003; and Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

## **6. Restricting access to the school site**

People do not have an automatic right to enter the school site. Parents, carers and visitors have an 'implied licence' to come on to school premises at certain times, for instance: for appointments; to attend a school event; or to drop off or pick up children. We will consider barring you from the premises if you have breached this Code of Conduct and we feel that your aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or students. It is sufficient for a member of staff or a student to feel threatened.

We would write to inform you that you have been barred or we intend to bar you. The school may either: bar you temporarily, until you have had the opportunity to present your side; or tell you we intend to bar you and invite you to present your side by a set deadline. Any decision to bar you would be reviewed within a reasonable time.

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a person who is on school premises without legal permission to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance. If the school has reasonable grounds to suspect that someone has committed an offence, then you can be removed from the school by a police officer or a person authorised by the Trust Board.

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportionate way. The final decision on how to respond to breaches of the Code of Conduct rests with the Headteacher. The Headteacher will consult the Trust Board before putting measures in place to restrict parental access to the school site.