




# Latimer Primary School

## Parent, Carer, and Visitor Behaviour Expectations

<b>DATE APPROVED:</b> 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	<b>SIGNATURE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS:</b> 
<b>FREQUENCY OF REVIEW:</b> Three Years	
<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:</b> 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2025	

Latimer Primary School actively encourages close links with parents/carers and the community. We know that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one and we welcome visitors to our school and encourage parents to communicate with us by phone or via email.

Almost all parents, carers, and visitors to Latimer Primary School are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school. However, on very rare occasions the behaviour of a small number of parents falls short of what we expect. This sometimes manifests itself in aggression or abuse towards members of the school community.

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 the 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.

We will always act to ensure the school remains a safe place for pupils, staff, and all other members of our community; therefore, we will not tolerate abusive, threatening, or aggressive behaviour.

### **DEFINITIONS OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR**

Unacceptable behaviour, which will not be tolerated towards any member of our school community, include but are not limited to:

- Any kind of threat
- Any kind of insult as an attempt to demean, embarrass or undermine.
- Raising voice as to be intimidating
- Any use of foul or abusive language
- Telephone calls, emails, or in-person communication that is sarcastic, combative, or aggressive in tone and language
- Persistent emails and/or phone calls that amount to threat, harassment, and intimidation, despite the school's best efforts to address a situation
- Inappropriate electronic activity including publishing abusive or inappropriate content with regards to the school, teachers, or other members of the school community, on social

networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter or in online communication such as email or WhatsApp

- Any form of physical violence, such as pushing or hitting
- Physical intimidation, e.g. aggressive facial expressions, standing unnecessarily close to a person; the use of rude or aggressive hand gestures, including shaking or holding a fist towards another person;
- Allegations that turn out to be vexatious or malicious

## **PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN BEHAVIOUR IS UNACCEPTABLE**

### **Informal complaint**

- If a parent, carer, or visitor behaves unacceptably towards a member of the school community, the Head Teacher and/or appropriate senior staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. Risk assessments and records will be kept in line with Appendix 5.
- Such discussion will highlight how the behaviour of the parent/carer did not meet the school's expectations and a request will be made that future communications with the school be modified considering this.
- A letter will normally be sent to the parent/carer to confirm this request.

Taking informal concerns seriously at the earliest stage will reduce the numbers that develop into formal complaints. Concerns ought to be handled, if possible, without the need for formal procedures and in the spirit of shared respect and willingness to find a mutually acceptable resolution. The requirement to have a formal complaints procedure need not in any way undermine efforts to resolve the concern informally.

### **Formal complaint**

- Following any interaction with a parent/carer or visitor, a member of staff does retain the right to submit a formal complaint about the incident to the Head Teacher.
- Should such a formal complaint be made then the Head Teacher or designated member of the Leadership team will investigate the complaint, by speaking with the parent/carer and the member of staff. Records will be kept in line with Appendix 5.
- During the investigation, any contact with the school will be through a designated member of staff and by prior appointment only.
- The parent/carer will be informed of the outcome of the investigation by letter.
- The Head Teacher will determine any action to be taken in response to the findings of the investigation.

## **ACTIONS THAT COULD FOLLOW SUCH AN INVESTIGATION**

Following the completion of the investigation, the Head Teacher, or a member of the school's leadership team in their absence, will decide the level of action to be taken. Notwithstanding these general responses, the Head Teacher can use their discretion to act in the best interests of the school, its staff, and any affected children.

- A request to meet with the Head Teacher to discuss events
- A letter clarifying to the parent/carer what is considered acceptable behaviour by the school
- The designation of one member of staff to act as the conduit for communication between the parent/carer and the school.
- Imposing conditions on the parent's contact with the school and its staff.
- As a last resort, withdrawing permission for the parent/carer to enter the school site and/or buildings without a prior appointment

## **REMOVAL FROM SCHOOL**

Parents/Carers/visitors who have had permission to enter the school premises withdrawn 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 individual(s) may be removed from the school grounds.
- This may be carried out by a police officer or person authorised by the Governing Body. Legal proceedings may be brought against the individual(s) in this situation.

## **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

- Any parental complaint that arises from incidents of abusive behaviour will be dealt with under Latimer Primary School's Complaints Policy.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Acceptable Communication by Telephone**

Sometimes staff may have to deal with challenging, abusive, aggressive, or threatening telephone calls. It is unacceptable for any member of staff to be subjected to such abuse and this guidance has been produced to assist parents to understand conduct, which the school expects parents to follow during phone calls and to staff if they are faced with a difficult situation.

#### **Guidance for parents/carers**

- When you call Latimer Primary School you will speak initially to our Reception staff. They will do their very best to deal with your enquiry however, please be aware that the person you wish to may be teaching or engaged in teaching and learning or safeguarding activities, it is most likely that they will take a message or put you through to the voicemail of that member of staff
- Please do not become frustrated with the Reception staff if they cannot attain an answer to your concern or connect you to the person you wish to speak to straight away; this is not their fault and any frustrations vented at this time, will not serve to ensure your issue is dealt with any quicker
- At any time when speaking to a member of staff at Latimer Primary School, please do not raise your voice or use aggressive or threatening language.

#### **Guidance to staff**

- To reduce the likelihood of callers becoming abusive, staff should conduct themselves courteously and professionally and make every attempt to meet the needs of the caller.
- Staff should also have the confidence that it is acceptable to end an abusive telephone call. the likelihood of callers becoming abusive, staff should conduct themselves courteously and professionally and make every attempt to meet the needs of the caller.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Acceptable Communication by email**

Sometimes staff may have to deal with challenging, abusive, aggressive, or threatening emails. It is unacceptable for any member of staff to be subjected to such abuse and this guidance has been produced to assist parents in understanding the conduct which the school expects parents to follow when emailing the school and to staff if receive such messages.

#### **Guidance for parents/carers**

- Always use formal and courteous language in the message
- Do not use bold text or capitalisation to emphasise concerns
- Only expect a response from the member of staff to whom you have directly sent the email, not those whom you have included in the circulation
- Do not expect an instant response. Staff will aim to get back to you as quickly as possible and have up to 5 working days to do so.

#### **Guidance for staff**

- Send your email via the school office for record-keeping
- Raise any concerns regarding abusive or harassing emails to a member of SLT

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Abuse/bullying using cyber technology**

Staff may become targets of cyber abuse or bullying which can have a significant impact on health, well-being, and self-confidence.

Cyber abuse/bullying may consist of threats, harassment, embarrassment, humiliation, defamation, or impersonation. It may take the form of general insults, or prejudice-based abuse, e.g. homophobic, sexist, racist, or other forms of discrimination. It may involve a wide variety of technology.

Abuse using cyber technology can occur at any time and incidents can intrude into the victim's private life. The audience for such messages can be very large and messages can be spread rapidly. The content of electronically forwarded messages is hard to control and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for the victim to move on.

### **Cyberbullying and the law**

While there is not a specific criminal offence called cyberbullying, activities can be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including:

- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986
- The Defamation Acts 1952 and 1996

It is the duty of the school to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, to ensure the health, safety, and welfare at work of all employees. Incidents that are related to employment, even those taking place outside the hours or place of work may fall under the responsibility of the employer.

### **Responding to incidents**

- Staff should never retaliate i.e. personally engage with cyberbullying incidents.
- Keep any records of abuse – texts, emails, voice mails, or instant messages. Take screen prints of messages or web pages. Record the time, date, and address of the site.
- Inform the Head Teacher as soon as possible
- Where the perpetrator is known to be a current pupil or staff member, this should be dealt with through the school's own behaviour management / disciplinary procedures.
- A designated member of the leadership team should contact the police where it appears that a law has been broken – for example, where death threats, assault, or racially motivated criminal offences are involved.

Where a potential criminal offence has been identified, the school should ensure that any internal investigation does not interfere with police inquiries. School staff are of course able to report incidents directly to the police.

- If a potential criminal offence has been committed and the school is not able to identify the perpetrator, the police may issue a Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) request to a service provider, enabling them to disclose the data about a message or the person sending it. Abuse/bullying using cyber technology.

Where online content is upsetting/inappropriate and the person(s) responsible for posting is known, the quickest way to get material taken down is likely to be to ensure that the person who posted it understands why the material is unacceptable and to request that they remove it.

If the person responsible has not been identified, or will not take the material down, the school will contact the host (i.e. the social networking site) to request to get the content taken down. The material posted may breach the service provider's terms and conditions of use and can then be removed. It is important to be clear about where the content is – for example by taking a screen capture of the material that includes the URL or web address.

If the school requests they take down material that is not illegal, it will be clear how it contravenes the site's terms and conditions. In cases of actual/suspected illegal content, the school will contact the police.

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **Guidance for Parents on the Use of School Community WhatsApp Groups (or other similar technology)**

Class WhatsApp groups (or similar) are a very useful and efficient way for parents to each other. The aim of using WhatsApp is to send messages to an entire group, which are relevant to school.

The messages in the class WhatsApp groups come from parents in their personal capacity or are messages forwarded on behalf of the FOALS group. Latimer Primary School does not post directly, or have any representation on any WhatsApp parent/carer groups.

At Latimer 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) and pupils (through our behaviour policy).

This guidance aims to help the school work together with parents by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

#### **Guidance:**

Parents should adhere to the following guidelines when using class WhatsApp groups:

- The group should never be used as a platform to air views/grievances regarding a teacher, child or parent in the class or school
- The group is not a political platform for airing opinions on current affairs
- The group should not be used for private conversations with anyone else using the group
- The group should be used keeping in mind mutual respect and socio-economic and cultural sensitivity between all its members

#### **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 peaceful solution to all issues



- Correct their own or their child's behaviour (or those in their care), particularly in public, where it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct
- Approach the right member of the school staff to help resolve any issues of concern

Please note, that the school considers the following online activity inappropriate:

- Abusive or personal comments about staff, pupils' other parents or any member of the school's community
- Displays of anger
- Using foul or abusive language
- Bringing the school into disrepute
- Posting aggressive, defamatory, or libellous comments
- Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff, pupils, or any member of the school's community
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children
- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
- The school takes safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents appropriately.

### **Raising Concerns**

If you are concerned about inappropriate comments on a class WhatsApp group, in confidence, please contact our Senior Leadership Team by emailing the school office@latimer.leics.sch.uk

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached the guidance detailed above, 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 Head Teacher
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from our legal team/the local authority's 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 proportionally. The final decision on how to respond to breaches of the guidance rests with the Head Teacher.

## **APPENDIX 5:**

### **The School's Approach to Dealing with Incidents:**

If a parent/carer/visitor behaves unacceptably towards a member of the school community, the Headteacher or appropriate member of 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 will carry out a risk assessment to help decide about the level of response. In all cases, the response will be reasonable and proportionate. The Headteacher 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/pupils 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 school's action? (low, medium, high).
- 

#### **Recording of Incidents**

Staff/pupils subject to abuse and witnesses will make written statements about incident(s) which will be kept in a file with subsequent letters. This file will be kept by the Headteacher. Depending on an assessment of the risk of retaliation to witnesses or individuals, statements made by adults may be redacted if requested via a SARS request.

#### **The School'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:

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

In some instances, it may be appropriate simply to ensure that the parent is clear about behavioural standards expected by the school. This could be explained by a letter from the Headteacher. This letter may contain a warning about further action if there are further incidents. The parent will be invited to write to the Headteacher with their version of events within 10 working days. Depending on the parent's response a meeting may then be held to discuss the situation and how this can be avoided in future.

Level 2: Invite the parent to an informal meeting to discuss events

This could be helpful to discuss and diffuse 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 a follow-up letter or email sent to confirm the school's expectations and any agreed actions.

**Level 3:** Impose conditions on the parent's contact with the school and its staff

Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Parents of enrolled pupils 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 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 SLT
- restricting contact by telephone to named members of the senior leadership team
- restricting written communications 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 of the school
- any other restriction as deemed reasonable and proportionate by the Headteacher.

If conditions are imposed, a letter would be sent to them by the Headteacher explaining what the conditions are and how they will work.

The parent would be given 10 working days from the date of that letter to make representations in writing about the conditions to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of 4 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 Governing Board after approximately six months (and every six months after that, if appropriate). The parent will be invited to make written representation to the Governing Board. This and the evidence from the Headteacher will be considered at a meeting of the Governing Board. Governors may decide to maintain, extend or remove the conditions. The decision of the review will be communicated to the parent by the Clerk to the Governing Board 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 consider the extent of the parent's compliance with the conditions, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from them and any evidence of the parent's cooperation with the school in other respects.

**Model Warning Letter to Parents regarding initial conduct.**

Dear XXXX

We write to you regarding your unacceptable conduct on XXXXXX at approximately XXXX.

We have been informed that your conduct was unacceptable for the following reasons:

- XXXXXXX
- XXXXXXX

We must inform you that Latimer Primary School will not tolerate conduct of this nature on its premises and will act to defend its teachers, members of staff, pupils and their parents, and other members of the school community.

If we have any further concerns regarding your behaviour on school premises you will be asked to leave and we may look to instigate further measures to protect our staff's wellbeing.

If you have any concerns about the school which have led to your unacceptable conduct, you should raise these with the school through the school's Complaints Policy, a copy of which is available on our school website.

We trust that we will now be able to put this matter firmly behind us.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

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

Dear

I have received a report from the (name of staff) about your conduct on ..... at ..... . (add a summary of the incident and its effect on staff and pupils). 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 policy, will not tolerate conduct of this nature on the school premises and will act to defend school staff and pupils. I am therefore writing to inform you that I am imposing conditions on the contact you may have with the school. These are as follows:

(delete as appropriate)

- You must be accompanied to any meeting with a member of the school staff
- You may not contact by telephone or in writing any member of staff. You may contact the Headteacher.
- You may not attend any events for parents except those where you will be accompanied by a member of the senior leadership of the school.
- Other 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 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 to 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 governing body.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

cc: Chair of Governor

**Model Letter 3: Letter to confirm or overturn Head teacher's decision to impose conditions (sent by chair of governors)**

Dear

The Headteacher wrote to you on (date) to detail concerns about an incident when your behaviour towards (name) fell short of what we would expect as a school. You will be aware that she has 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 ....., the contents of which I have considered carefully.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Head teacher'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 HT's letter)

This decision will be reviewed by the governing body in approximately six months.

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 Head teacher'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 of inappropriate behaviour towards staff all of the above sanctions may be applied.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

cc: Head Teacher

**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 the (name of staff) about your conduct on ..... at ..... . (add a summary of the incident and its effect on staff and pupils) 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 policy, will not tolerate conduct of this nature on the school premises and will act to defend school staff and pupils. I am therefore writing to inform you that I am recommending imposing a ban on you from 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 e-mail. 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 Academic Review Day.

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 her confirmation.

The Chair of Governors will need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm or overturn this decision. Please send her, 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 to give assurances about your future good conduct. 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 this ban will be reviewed by the governing body.

Yours sincerely

Headteachers

cc: Chair of Governor

**Model Letter 5: Letter to confirm or overturn Head teacher's decision to impose a ban (sent by chair of governors) Recorded delivery**

Dear

The head teacher wrote to you on (date) to detail concerns about an incident when your behaviour towards (name) fell far short of what we would expect as a school. You will be aware that she has 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 ....., the contents of which I have considered carefully. In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Head teacher'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 e-mail. You do, however, have the right to attend one meeting per year to discuss your child's progress. This meeting will be with a member of the senior team.

This decision will be reviewed in six months by the governing body. The Clerk to the Governors will write to you in advance of the meeting of the governing body 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 Head teacher'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 of inappropriate behaviour towards staff all of the above sanctions may be applied.

Yours sincerely  
Chair of Governors  
cc: Headteachers