Gorton
Primary School

Parent Code of Conduct

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Contents	
Overview of content	**Page number**
Aims of the policy	4
Key principles	4
The scope and application of this policy	4
Unacceptable Conduct	5
Covert Recordings	5
Inappropriate use of social media	6
Procedures	6
Records	7
Monitoring and Review	8

Aims of the Policy

1.1 Gorton Primary School is dedicated to ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential and will work in partnership with parents and other stakeholders to achieve this aim. Gorton Primary School also has a duty of care to both staff and pupils to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Gorton Primary School will not tolerate parent behaviour that is unacceptable and has a detrimental effect on the good order and safety of the school. This policy outlines the behaviours that are unacceptable and what sanctions are available to deal with such behaviour.

1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's complaints procedure. Where it is the complaint that is repetitious, vexatious or pursued in an otherwise unreasonable manner, this will be dealt with in line with the Complaints Procedure.

1.3 In this policy, 'parent' means a parent, carer, or anyone with legal responsibility for a child. The principles in this policy also apply to any other family members of pupils or other visitors to Gorton Primary School.

1.4 If a parent is acting in a voluntary capacity, for example as a governor or as part of the school's PTA, they are still subject to the scope of this policy as a parent.

2 Key principles

- The parent/school partnership is fundamental to securing the success and wellbeing of all our pupils.
- The education and wellbeing of the child of the parent involved will not be compromised in any way by the application of this policy.
- Any decisions will be fully communicated to the parent with clear reasons for the decision taken.
- Parents have the right to make representations about the action of Gorton Primary School.
- Any restrictions will be time limited and subject to a review.

3 The Scope and Application of this Policy

3.1 This policy covers unacceptable behaviour which is committed by a parent:

- in the school buildings or on the school site.
- by telephone to the school.
- by email to the school.
- on social media and any other public electronic media platforms (e.g. websites) referring to the school or a member of the school staff.
- in any other setting which, in the reasonable opinion of the Executive Headteacher, Head of School or Chair of Governors, should be regulated by this policy.

3.2 The following behaviours are considered unacceptable by Gorton Primary School:

Unacceptable conduct

3.2.1 Unacceptable conduct includes:

- verbal or written threats of violence or harm.
- swearing or the use of other abusive, offensive or threatening language.
- intimidation, coercion or humiliation.
- aggressive or disruptive behaviour.
- harassment, bullying or causing distress.
- physical violence, including damage to property or injury to individuals.
- discriminatory conduct or use of discriminatory language (sexist, racist, other).
- frequent, unwarranted and/or unnecessary correspondence which is hindering the proper running of Gorton Primary School.
- making deliberately false, malicious or vexatious accusations.
- consumption of alcohol or use of illegal drugs on the school's premises, or accessing the school's premises whilst intoxicated.
- any behaviour that violates the law or school policies.
- incitement of others to do any of the above.

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such conduct. It will ultimately be for Gorton Primary School to determine whether conduct is deemed to be unacceptable.

3.2.2 Any form of communication that threatens the safety or well-being of staff or pupils will be taken seriously and addressed immediately, with the goal of protecting the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.

Covert recordings

3.2.3 Unless explicitly agreed in writing, Gorton Primary School does not consent to parents making audio or video recordings of any member of staff, trustee/governor or school volunteer, including during in-person meetings, remote/virtual meetings or telephone conversations. Making covert recordings without the consent of members of staff is regarded as a breach of the relationship of mutual trust and confidence between the parent and the school.

3.2.4 If a parent is found to be recording a discussion, all members of staff have the right to terminate the meeting or telephone call on discovery.

3.2.5 A parent that records a member of staff, trustee/governor or school volunteer without consent may be issued with a restricted communication plan (see below).

3.2.6 If a parent is found to have recorded any audio or video footage on the school site without consent of any individual, this may result in the parent being immediately banned from the school's premises (see below) and the involvement of external agencies.

Inappropriate use of social media

3.2.7 Gorton Primary School encourages parents to approach staff with concerns and to make use of the Complaints Procedure to escalate matters where necessary. We urge parents to refrain from expressing concerns about the school or its staff on social media sites. Expressing concerns on social media may damage the reputation of the school and the integrity of its staff may be unnecessarily called into question. Negative comments posted on social media can cause upset and is often counter-productive to the overall aim of educating pupils. Furthermore, comments made about individual members of staff may be considered defamatory or amount to cyber-bullying.

3.2.8 It is a criminal offence to publish information which would likely lead to the identification of a teacher who is subject to an allegation of misconduct until such time as they are charged with an offence, or the Secretary of State for Education publishes information about the teacher in connection with a disciplinary case (Education Act 2011). All members of the community need to be aware of the importance of not publishing named allegations against teachers online as this can lead to prosecution and a fine.

3.2.9 Should Gorton Primary School become aware that a parent is using social media to target the school or its staff, it may:

- report the post(s) to the relevant social networking site.
- contact the parent or social media page owner to require the post to be edited or removed.
- issue the parent with a restricted communication plan (see below).
- where appropriate, inform the police or other relevant agencies.

4 Procedures

Gorton Primary School has a range of strategies to employ with any parent who engages in unacceptable behaviour. Whilst these sanctions are set out in the policy by way of a sequential process, they can be initiated at any stage if, in the reasonable judgement of the Executive Headteacher, Head of School or Chair of Governors, the severity of the behaviour warrants such a level of intervention.

Where the behaviour is so extreme that it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff or others, the matter will be referred immediately to the police and/or the school's legal team for action.

4.1 Verbal warning

A parent who displays any of the behaviour as described above will be asked to desist and offered the opportunity to discuss the matter in person.

4.2 Mediation meeting

Where appropriate, the parent may be asked to meet with the Executive Headteacher and / or Head of School (or a person authorised by them) to discuss the matter in person.

4.3 **Formal written warning(s)**

A formal written warning will be sent to the parent by letter to their home address. This letter will be signed by the Executive Headteacher, Head of School or Chair of Governors and circulated to relevant internal parties to ensure that an informed and consistent approach can be adopted. This letter will be retained for a period of twelve months and then in line with the Trust Data Retention Policy. Where appropriate, more than one formal written warning letter may be issued.

4.4 **Legal sanctions**

If a parent commits serious or repeated breaches of the expected standard of behaviour as set out in this policy, then Gorton Primary School may consider implementing one or more of the sanctions listed below.

A Restricted communication plan

The parent may be issued with a communication plan. This will restrict the manner in which the parent can communicate with school. This may include:

- Requiring contact in a particular form (e.g. in writing only)
- Limiting contact to one member of staff or a specific email address
- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times
- Restricting communication to in writing only

B Ban from the Academy premises

A parent's common licence to access the school's premises can be removed or restricted for a specified period. In such circumstances, parents may need to make alternative arrangements for bringing their child into school. Any entry onto the site in contravention of such a ban and where a nuisance is caused would be a criminal offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996. Any parent in breach of the ban will be removed from the premises by the police or an authorised member of staff.

C An injunction under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997

The school may seek an injunction requiring the parent to desist from behaving in the manner in question.

5 Records

A record will be kept of any correspondence, action or decisions for a period of at least twelve months and then in line with the Academy's Data Retention Policy. Correspondence, statements and records relating to individual matters will be kept confidential except where:

- access is requested by the Secretary of State
- disclosure is required in the course of an Academy inspection
- an individual has a legal right to access their own personal data contained within such documentation
- under other legal authority

6 Monitoring and Review

The Executive Headteacher and / or Head of School will report to staff from time to time and to the Local Advisory Board, termly or earlier if the Chair so determines, on the number and type of incidents involving unacceptable behaviour displayed by parents, how these matters were handled and their outcomes.