

St James' Catholic Primary School



Parent / Carer Code of Conduct Policy

This document is the Parent and Carer Code of Conduct Policy for St James Catholic Primary School. It sets out the expectations for the conduct of all parents, carers, and visitors to our school community, both in person and online.

Date created to replace previous Policy: 09.03.2026

Next review date: March 2027

Policy Owner

The Headteacher, Mrs A Blacoe, is responsible for the maintenance, implementation, and review of this policy. Queries regarding the policy should be directed to the Headteacher.

Distribution and Accessibility

This policy is available to all parents, carers, staff, governors, and other stakeholders. It is published on the school website and hard copies are available upon request from the school office. The policy is also included in induction materials for new parents/carers.

Purpose and Scope

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Parent and Carer Code of Conduct is to promote a safe, respectful, and positive environment for all members of the St James Catholic Primary School community. The policy aims to ensure that all interactions between parents, carers, staff, pupils, and visitors are conducted with courtesy, understanding, and mutual respect. By setting clear expectations, the policy supports the school's commitment to safeguarding, inclusion, and the wellbeing of all pupils and staff.

Scope

This policy applies to all parents, carers, and visitors to St James Catholic Primary School, including those attending school events, meetings, and activities on or off the school premises. It also covers all forms of communication, including face-to-face, written, telephone, email, and online interactions (such as social media and messaging platforms) relating to the school, its staff, pupils, or other parents/carers. The Code applies at all times when parents/carers are representing the school or engaging with the school community.

School's Legal Duties

St James Catholic Primary School has a legal obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and staff, to prevent discrimination and harassment, and to maintain a safe and respectful environment for all. The school must take reasonable steps to protect staff and pupils from abusive,

threatening, or disruptive behaviour by parents, carers, or visitors, and to act in accordance with all relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

Policy Principles and Values

Core Values

At St James', we believe that education is most effective when there is a strong partnership between home and school, based on mutual respect, trust, and shared values. Our core values include:

- **Respect:** Treating everyone with dignity, courtesy, and understanding.
- **Inclusion:** Valuing diversity and ensuring all members of our community feel welcome and supported.
- **Partnership:** Working collaboratively with families to support every child's learning and wellbeing.
- **Integrity:** Acting honestly, fairly, and consistently in all interactions.
- **Safety:** Prioritising the physical and emotional safety of pupils, staff, and visitors at all times.

These values underpin all aspects of school life and guide our expectations for parent and carer conduct.

Expectations of Parent and Carer Conduct

Respectful Behaviour

Parents and carers are expected to treat all members of the school community—including staff, pupils, other parents, and visitors—with courtesy and respect at all times. This includes:

- Listening to and valuing the views of others, even when there are differences of opinion.
- Using polite and considerate language in all communications.
- Modelling positive behaviour for children, both on and off school premises.
- Avoiding any actions or words that could cause upset, distress, or offence.

Respectful behaviour is essential to creating a safe and supportive environment where all children can thrive.

Communication with the School

Effective communication between home and school is vital for supporting children's learning and wellbeing. Parents and carers are expected to:

- Communicate with staff in a constructive, timely, and appropriate manner.
- Use official school channels (such as the school office, email, or agreed messaging systems) to raise queries or concerns.
- Avoid raising issues in public areas or in front of children.
- Refrain from using abusive, aggressive, or threatening language or behaviour in any form, including face-to-face, written, or electronic communications.
- Allow staff reasonable time to respond to communications, recognising that teachers and leaders have many responsibilities during the school day.

The school will always seek to respond to parental concerns promptly and professionally, and expects the same courtesy in return.

Communication Between Parents/Carers

Parents and carers are expected to resolve disagreements with each other amicably and to avoid confrontational, disruptive, or aggressive behaviour on school premises or at school events. This includes:

- Speaking calmly and respectfully to other parents/carers, even when disagreements arise.
- Seeking support from school staff if unable to resolve issues independently.
- Avoiding gossip, rumour-spreading, or negative comments about other families, pupils, or staff, whether in person or online.
- Not engaging in any behaviour that could be perceived as harassment, intimidation, or bullying of other parents/carers.

The school encourages a culture of kindness, understanding, and support among all families.

Supervision of Children

Parents and carers are responsible for supervising their children before and after school hours, and during school events or activities outside of normal school times. This includes:

- Ensuring children are appropriately supervised on the school site before the start of the school day and after collection.
- Not leaving children unsupervised in playgrounds, car parks, or other areas before staff are on duty.
- Taking responsibility for siblings or other children brought onto the premises.
- Following all school procedures for drop-off, collection, and attendance at events.
- Ensuring children behave safely and respectfully while on school premises.

The school cannot accept responsibility for children outside of official supervision times.

Smoking and Substance Use

In accordance with the Health Act 2006 and school policy, smoking—including the use of e-cigarettes or vaping devices—is strictly prohibited on all areas of the school site, including playgrounds, car parks, entrances, and during school events. The use or possession of alcohol or illegal substances is also not permitted on school premises or at school-organised activities. Parents and carers are expected to comply fully with these requirements and to model healthy, responsible behaviour for children.

Online and Social Media Conduct

The school recognises the importance of digital communication and the potential risks associated with online behaviour. Parents and carers are expected to:

- Use social media and online platforms responsibly and respectfully when discussing school matters.
- Not post or share content that could be considered bullying, harassing, defamatory, or threatening towards staff, pupils, or other parents/carers.
- Avoid sharing confidential information, photographs, or videos of children (other than their own) without explicit consent.
- Raise concerns directly with the school rather than airing grievances publicly on social media.

- Support the school's efforts to educate children about safe and respectful online behaviour.

Online conduct is subject to the same expectations as face-to-face interactions and breaches may result in action under this policy.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Definition of Unacceptable Behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour by parents, carers, or visitors includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse, such as shouting, swearing, insults, or offensive language.
- Physical abuse or threats of violence towards staff, pupils, other parents, or visitors.
- Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, including repeated or targeted actions.
- Discrimination or harassment on the grounds of race, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or any protected characteristic.
- Disruptive conduct, such as refusing to follow school procedures, causing a disturbance at meetings or events, or impeding the work of staff.
- Refusal to comply with reasonable requests from staff, including health and safety instructions.
- Online abuse, including posting or sharing harmful, defamatory, or threatening content about the school or its community.
- Making malicious, false, or vexatious allegations against staff or other parents.
- Damaging or threatening to damage school property or the property of others.

This list is not exhaustive. The school will assess all incidents on a case-by-case basis, considering the context and impact.

Abuse of Staff

St James' operates a zero-tolerance approach to any form of abuse towards staff, whether verbal, physical, written, or online. Abuse of staff undermines the safety and wellbeing of the whole school community and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. The school will take robust action to protect staff, including restricting access to the premises, reporting incidents to the police, and seeking support from the Local Authority or other agencies as appropriate.

Consequences of Unacceptable Behaviour

Where a parent, carer, or visitor breaches this Code of Conduct, the school may take one or more of the following actions, depending on the nature and severity of the incident:

- Issue a verbal or written warning outlining the unacceptable behaviour and expected improvements.
- Arrange a meeting with the parent/carers to discuss the incident and agree next steps.
- Send a formal letter from the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.
- Impose restrictions on access to the school site, including partial or full bans (in accordance with DfE guidance).
- Refer the matter to external agencies, such as the police, social care, or the Local Authority, where appropriate.
- Initiate the school's complaints or disciplinary procedures if the behaviour constitutes a safeguarding or legal concern.

All actions will be proportionate, clearly communicated, and documented in line with school procedures.

Procedures for Addressing Breaches

Reporting Concerns

Any member of the school community—staff, parents, carers, or visitors—may report concerns about breaches of this Code of Conduct. Reports should be made as soon as possible to the Headteacher. Concerns relating to safeguarding should be reported in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Reports can be made in person, by telephone, or in writing (including email). The school will provide support to anyone who wishes to report a concern, including access to translation or advocacy services if needed.

Investigation and Documentation

All reported breaches will be investigated promptly, fairly, and sensitively. The Headteacher or designated leader will:

- Gather information from all parties involved, including witnesses where appropriate.

- Maintain accurate, confidential records of the incident, actions taken, and outcomes.
- Keep the reporting individual informed of progress and outcomes, within the bounds of confidentiality.
- Seek advice from the Local Authority, legal advisors, or other agencies as required.

The school is committed to ensuring that investigations are thorough, impartial, and respectful of all parties.

Restorative Approaches and Support

Where appropriate, the school will use restorative approaches to rebuild relationships and resolve conflicts. This may include:

- Facilitated meetings between parties to discuss the impact of behaviour and agree ways forward.
- Signposting to support services for parents/carers experiencing difficulties, mediation or conflict resolution support from trained staff or external agencies.
- Follow-up meetings to monitor progress and ensure a positive outcome.

Restorative approaches are designed to promote understanding, accountability, and reconciliation, rather than punishment.

Complaints and Appeals

Complaints Procedure

Parents and carers who wish to challenge actions taken under this Code of Conduct may do so through the school's Complaints Procedure, which is available on the school website and from the school office. The procedure sets out the steps for making a complaint, timescales for response, and how complaints will be investigated and resolved.

The school is committed to handling complaints fairly, transparently, and without prejudice.

Roles and Responsibilities

School Responsibilities

The school is responsible for:

- Providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all pupils, staff, parents, and visitors.
- Communicating the expectations of this Code of Conduct clearly and regularly to all stakeholders.
- Responding promptly and fairly to concerns or breaches of the Code.
- Taking proportionate action to address unacceptable behaviour and safeguard the school community.
- Ensuring that all staff are trained to implement the policy and manage parental behaviour effectively.
- Reviewing the policy regularly and updating it in line with statutory requirements and best practice.

Parent and Carer Responsibilities

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Support the school's policies, values, and ethos, including this Code of Conduct.
- Model respectful, positive behaviour for their children and the wider community.
- Communicate constructively with staff and other parents/carers.
- Address concerns or complaints through the appropriate school channels.
- Supervise their children before and after school and during school events.
- Comply with all school procedures, including those relating to health, safety, and safeguarding.
- Use social media and online platforms responsibly and respectfully.

Staff Responsibilities

Staff are responsible for:

- Modelling respectful, professional behaviour in all interactions with parents, carers, and visitors.
- Communicating clearly, honestly, and promptly with parents/carers.
- Responding to concerns or complaints in line with school procedures.
- Reporting incidents of unacceptable behaviour to the Headteacher or designated leader.
- Engaging in relevant training to manage challenging parental behaviour and implement restorative approaches.
- Maintaining accurate records of incidents and actions taken.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Commitment to Equality

We are committed to upholding the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and ensuring that this policy is applied fairly and consistently, without discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, or any other protected characteristic. The school seeks to create an inclusive environment where all parents, carers, and visitors feel welcome, valued, and supported.

Reasonable Adjustments

The school recognises that some parents/carers may have additional needs or face barriers to engagement. Reasonable adjustments will be made to support participation, including:

- Providing information in accessible formats.
- Offering meetings at flexible times or via alternative means (e.g., telephone).
- Taking account of individual circumstances when responding to breaches of the Code.

Parents/carers are encouraged to inform the school of any needs so that appropriate support can be provided.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

Handling of Information

All personal data and records relating to incidents under this policy will be managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Information will be:

- Collected and stored securely, with access restricted to authorised staff.
- Used only for the purposes of managing incidents, safeguarding, and policy implementation.
- Retained in line with the school's data retention schedule and statutory requirements.

Parents/carers have the right to access information held about them, subject to legal restrictions.

Confidentiality

The school is committed to maintaining confidentiality when handling reports, investigations, and outcomes under this policy. Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to safeguard pupils, staff, or the wider community, or as required by law. All parties are expected to respect the confidentiality of the process.