

# Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct

We are very proud and fortunate to have very dedicated and supportive wider community at Sycamore Academy. Staff, governors and parents all recognise that educating children is a process that involves partnership between home and school and understand the importance of a good working relationship to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood.

For these reasons we welcome and encourage parents to participate fully in the life of their child's school.

## Purpose and scope

The purpose of this code is to provide a reminder to all parents and visitors about expected conduct so that we can work together to ensure safe and positive environments for our children.

We use the term 'parents' to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a pupil
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)

## We expect parents, carers and visitors to:

- Support the respectful ethos of our school by setting a good example in their own speech and behaviour towards all members of our school community;
- Work with teachers for the benefit of children. This includes approaching the school to resolve any issues of concern and to discuss and clarify specific events in order to bring about a positive solution;
- Reinforce the school's behaviour policy and school rules.

## In order to have a peaceful, safe and happy school environment, Sycamore Academy does not tolerate:

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes with the operation of a classroom, office area or any other part of the school grounds;
- The use of loud and/or offensive language or display of temper;
- Threatening harm or use of physical aggression towards another adult (parent / staff) or child. This includes approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them;
- Damaging or destroying of school property;
- The filming or recording of any abusive, threatening or aggressive behaviour towards any adult or child;
- The sending of any abusive or threatening emails, phone calls or social media messages to a member of staff or child;
- Smoking/vaping or drinking alcohol or taking other drugs whilst on school premises or accessing the site whilst intoxicated;
- Dogs being brought on the school premises (other than guide dogs).

## Social Media

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. Sycamore Academy considers the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the Class Teacher in the first instance so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any pupil or parent of a child/ren being educated at Sycamore Academy is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. Sycamore Academy will also expect that any parent or pupil removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases Sycamore Academy will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites.

Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by any member of a Lumen school community to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying.

### **Online activity which we consider inappropriate:**

- Identifying or posting images/videos of children
- Abusive or personal comments about staff, governors, children or other parents
- Bringing the school in disrepute
- Posting defamatory or libellous comments
- Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or children
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children or members of staff
- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
- Breaching school security procedures

At our school we take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents appropriately in line with the actions outlined below.

### **What happens if someone ignores or breaks the code?**

In the event of any parent or visitor of the school breaking this code then proportionate actions will be taken as follows:

If, as an academy, we become aware that a parent has breached the code of conduct, we will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent about the incident.

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

- Send a warning letter to the parent. In cases where the code of conduct has been broken but the breach was not libellous, slanderous or criminal matter, the relevant school will send a formal warning letter to the parent with an invite to a meeting with a senior member of staff or the Headteacher.
- If the parent refuses to attend the meeting then the school will write to the parent and ask them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not they may be banned from the school premises. If after this behaviour continues, the parent will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place.
- A ban from the school can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above in more serious cases.
- Site bans will normally be limited in the first instance.
- Contact the appropriate authorities in cases (in the first instance referral to the Police) where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter. This will include any or all cases of threats or violence and actual violence to any child, staff or governor in the school. This will also include anything that could be seen as a sign of harassment of any member of the school community, such as any form of insulting social media post or any form of social media cyber bullying.
- Seek advice from L.E.A.D. Academy Trust's legal team regarding further action in cases of conduct where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander.

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the code of conduct rests with the Headteacher.