



West Craven High School Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers and Visitors

This Code of Conduct is an unsigned agreement between the Parent, Carer, Visitor and West Craven High School.

The purpose of this code of conduct is to provide the expectations around the conduct of all parents, carers and visitors connected to our academy.

Introduction

At **West Craven High School** we are very proud and fortunate to have a very dedicated and supportive academy community. At our academy the staff, governors, parents and carers all recognise that the education of our children is a partnership between us.

We expect our academy community to respect our academy ethos, keep our academy tidy, set a good example of their own behaviour both on academy premises and when accompanying classes on academy visits.

In addition we also expect our parents, carers and visitors to keep our children safe by adhering to the academy's request to park safely outside the academy gates during morning and afternoon collections.

As a partnership we are all aware of the importance of good working relationships and all recognise the importance of these relationships to equip our children with the necessary skills for their education. For these reasons we continue to welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our academy.

All staff members have the right to work without fear of violence or abuse; physical attacks or threatening behaviour.

We are committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner, through an open and positive dialogue. However we understand that everyday misunderstandings can cause frustrations and have a negative impact on our relationships. Where issues arise or misconceptions take place, please contact your child's teacher or senior leader, who will be available to meet with you and go through the issue and hopefully resolve it. Where issues remain unresolved, please follow the Trust's complaints procedure. This is available on the academy website or a copy can be requested from the academy office.

This code aims to clarify the types of behaviour that will not be tolerated and seeks parental agreement to these expectations.

The code of conduct also sets out the actions the academy can take should this code be ignored or where breaches occur.

Expectations

Our academy expects parents, carers and visitors to:

- Act in accordance with this code of conduct at all times.
- Support and reflect the academy rules through their behaviour
- Set a good example to pupils through their behaviour and the way they interact with staff, pupils, and other adults
- Work together with staff for the benefit of their child
- Treat all governors, staff members, pupils, other parents and any other individuals connected to the academy with dignity and respect
- Work with staff members to resolve any issues of concern and where appropriate, clarify their child's version of events with the academy to bring about a positive solution to any issue
- Support the academy by addressing inappropriate behaviour displayed by their child and collaborating with this to support their child in improving that behaviour.
- Organise meetings for a mutually convenient time rather than arriving at academy without an appointment.
- Accept that unless it is an emergency, academy staff will not respond to emails and telephone calls immediately. It may be a few days before a teacher is able to respond to specific questions raised.

Behaviour that will not be tolerated:

The academy takes instances of inappropriate behaviour whether in person or on the telephone very seriously and will not tolerate any circumstances that may make pupils, staff members and other members of the academy community feel threatened. Parental behaviour that the academy does not tolerate includes the following:

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the academy's normal operation or activities anywhere on the academy premises.
- Any inappropriate behaviour on the academy premises.
- Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper.
- Making racist or sexual comments
- Threatening in any way, a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent/carers or child.
- Damaging or destroying academy property.
- Sending abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications (including social media) to anyone within the academy community.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the academy or any of the pupils/parents/staff/governors at the academy on Facebook or other sites
- The use of physical, verbal or written aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment of their own child on academy premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child (such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- Smoking/vaping, taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on academy premises.
- Dogs being brought on to the academy premises (other than guide dogs).

Managing inappropriate behaviour

Instances of parents displaying inappropriate behaviour will be managed in a variety of ways, depending on the severity of the situation. When a parent has behaved inappropriately, they will be contacted by the principal to discuss their behaviour and to attempt to resolve the issue.

Where this initial contact or a meeting is not sufficient to resolve the issue, the principal, in collaboration with other staff and relevant agencies, will consider what further action may be required. This action, depending on the situation, could include the following:

- Barring the parent from the academy premises
- Contacting the police
- Seeking legal redress through the courts
- Restricting the parent's channels of communication to the academy, e.g. no longer allowing the parent to send emails to a staff member directly or contact staff by telephone
- Reporting content the parent has posted online to the website's administrator
- Referring the case to children's social care, where the behaviour indicates that the parent poses a risk to children

Any child protection and safeguarding concerns will be addressed in accordance with the academy's Child Protection Policy.

It is important for parents and carers to make sure any persons collecting their children are aware of this policy.

In cases where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter, the concerns will in the first instance be referred to the police. This will include any or all cases of threats or violence and actual violence to any child, staff or governor in the academy. This will also include anything that could be seen as a sign of harassment of any member of the academy community, such as any form of insulting social media post or any form of social media cyber bullying.

In cases where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander, then the academy will refer the matter to the Trust's Legal Team for further action. In cases where the code of conduct has been broken but the breach was not libellous, slanderous or criminal matter, then the academy will send out a formal letter to the parent/carer with an invite to a meeting.

If the parent/carer refuses to attend the meeting then the academy will write to the parent/carer and ask them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not they may be banned from the academy premises. If after this behaviour continues, the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place.

Note:

- a ban from the academy 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.

The academy has the right to bar a parent from the premises to keep the academy community safe. If a parent is displaying inappropriate or concerning behaviour, they will be asked to leave the academy premises.

The academy will either:

- Bar the parent temporarily, until the parent has had the opportunity to formally present their side.
- Inform the parent that they intend to bar them and invite them to present their side.

The principal will send a letter to the parent, informing them of the following information:

- Why they have been temporarily barred or face a bar
- The nature of the bar, i.e. if they are temporarily barred pending their representation or if they must present their side before the decision to bar can be made
- That they have the right to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing to the chair of the local governing committee within 10 working days

The principal's decision to bar the parent will be reviewed by the chair of the local governing committee. The chair of the local governing committee will take account of any representations made by the parent and decide whether to confirm or lift the bar. The parent will be notified in writing of the decision to uphold or lift the bar. If the decision is confirmed, the parent will be notified in writing, explaining:

- How long the bar will be in place.
- When the decision will be reviewed.

Decisions to bar will be reviewed at the end of the agreed timescale, in line with the process outlined above. Following a review, the bar may be lifted or, if there are grounds for continued concern regarding the parent's conduct, it may be extended. Once the appeal process has been completed, parents that remain barred may be able to apply to the Civil Courts. If a parent wishes to exercise this option, they should seek independent legal advice.

Issues of conduct with the use of Social Media

Most people take part in online activities and social media. It's fun, interesting and keeps us connected.

The academy has a Facebook and Twitter page which allows parents to receive and respond to messages about academy events. We encourage you to positively participate if you wish.

Within these spaces however we ask that you use common sense when discussing academy life online.

'Think before you post' We ask that social media, whether public or private, should not be used to fuel campaigns and voice complaints against the academy, academy staff, parents or children.

We take very seriously inappropriate use of social media by a parent to publicly humiliate or criticise another parent, member of staff or child.

If parents have any concerns about their child in relation to the academy, as we have said above they should:

1. Initially contact the class teacher/head of year
2. If the concern remains they should contact the principal
3. If still unresolved, the academy governors through the complaints procedure

Parents should not use social media as a medium to air any concerns or grievances.

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 academy into 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 academy policies or discuss issues about individual children or members of staff
- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language
- Breaching academy security procedures

Thank you for abiding by this code in our academy. Together we create a positive and uplifting environment not only for the children but also all who work at, and visit, our academy.