The Rutland Learning Trust

Providing outstanding education for all pupils – today and tomorrow!

First-class education and care that allows every child to achieve their potential, regardless of location, prior attainment or background.

By…
Working Together
Sustaining Excellence
Transforming Lives

Parent/Carer Code of Conduct

WHY IS THIS POLICY REQUIRED?

We believe that educating children is a process that involves a partnership between parents, class teachers and the school community. As a partnership, our parents will understand the importance of a good working relationship to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons we continue to welcome and encourage parents/carers to participate fully in the life of our school. The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear framework for all parents, carers and school visitors about expected conduct. This is so we can continue to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

This policy is designed to complement the policies that govern equivalent expectations of school staff and volunteers

WHAT CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE?

New Policy

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THIS POLICY?

Close working relationships with families

DATE: Term 6 2025

REVIEW DATE: Term 6 2027

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Glossary

1. Statement of intent

At The Rutland Learning Trust we strive to build a strong relationship with parents to help create a stimulating learning environment that continues from school to home, providing all pupils with the opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability.

To create a welcoming and safe learning environment, our schools implement a specifically designed set of rules regarding behaviour and conduct which parents are expected to act in accordance with.

All staff members have the right to work without fear of violence or abuse; therefore, physical attacks, threatening behaviour, and abusive or insulting language towards staff members, governors, visitors, pupils or other parents may result in individuals being removed or banned from the premises.

This document outlines the manner in which parents are expected to act, as well as detailing the type of behaviour that will not be tolerated.

2. Legal framework

This document has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2011
- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 2004
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Controlling access to school premises'

This document operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

3. Expectations

Our school expects parents to:

- Act in accordance with this code of conduct at all times.
- Support and reflect the school's ethos and values 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 members for the benefit of their child and to resolve any issues of concern.
- Treat all governors, staff members, pupils, other parents and any members of the school community with dignity and respect.
- Where appropriate, clarify their child's version of events with the school to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.

- Correct their child's behaviour appropriately, particularly on the school grounds where it could otherwise lead to conflict or aggressive or unsafe behaviour.
- Respect the school's property and environment by keeping it safe, clean and tidy.
- Follow the school's parking rules and procedures for dropping-off and collecting pupils from school.
- Dress in an appropriate manner when on the school premises and attending school events, and ensure their dress and appearance reflects that they are role models for pupils, e.g. clothes with offensive words or slogans.

Parents are required to act in accordance with all relevant school policies and procedures at all times.

Parents can request copies of all relevant policies and procedures from the school office.

4. Driving pupils to school

Vehicles should be driven in a calm manner which causes least disturbance to residents and ensures the safety of pupils, staff and families moving around the area near the school site.

Parking should be respectful of the Highway Code. This includes not blocking residents' drives, or parking on yellow zigzags and zebra crossings under any circumstances, even during short periods of waiting where the car is in use.

Engines should be turned off when a vehicle is stationary and not in traffic as vehicle exhaust emissions contribute significantly to air pollution and are particularly harmful to children.

Parents are to use their discretion in severe weather and drive with extra caution as appropriate.

Pupils should not be collected late. If a parent is delayed in picking up their child for any reason it is the parents responsibility to call an authorised adult to collect the pupil from school on their behalf.

Parents that are going to be late picking their child up from school and cannot arrange for an authorised adult to collect the pupil from school on their behalf should inform the school as soon as possible.

5. Inappropriate behaviour

The school takes instances of inappropriate behaviour very seriously and will not tolerate any circumstances that may make pupils, staff members or other members of the school community feel threatened.

Parental behaviour that the school does not tolerate includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Using foul, abusive or offensive language
- Raising voices inappropriately at another individual
- Making racist or sexual comments
- Using aggressive hand gestures, e.g. raising fists and fingers
- Discriminating against any member of the school community, including pupils, staff, governors and other parents

- Bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, verbal and sexual abuse offline and online
- Sending abusive, aggressive or threatening messages, emails or other communications to any member of the school community
- Inappropriate use of social network and/or media sites (see Appendix 2)
- Trespassing on school property without prior permission or implied licence
- Causing intentional damage to school property
- Breaching the school's security procedures
- Using physical violence on the school premises or on a member of the school community, e.g. hitting, slapping, punching, kicking and pushing
- Physically intimidating an individual
- Partaking in unnecessary physical contact with an individual
- Writing or posting abusive, offensive or defamatory comments about an individual or the school, including on social media
- Psychologically harassing any member of the school community, including displaying vexatious behaviour which is humiliating for the individual and is damaging to their self-esteem
- Displaying disruptive or other inappropriate behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's operations or activities
- Approaching another parent or pupil to discuss or reprimand them because of an issue between pupils
- Threatening any member of the school community in any way
- Arriving on the school premises inappropriately dressed
- Smoking/vaping on the school premises
- Taking illegal or harmful drugs while on the school premises
- Being under or suspected of being under the influence of alcohol/drugs while on school premises
- Drinking alcohol on the school premises, unless it has been authorised and supplied by the school
- Taking photographs or videos or other recordings on the school premises without permission from the school
- Driving and parking within the vicinity of the school, without care and attention

The school has a zero-tolerance policy for the breach of confidentiality, particularly when it involves information shared in trust during discussions with school staff. This includes:

- Sharing confidential information on social media that was obtained through meetings, conversations, or communications with staff, whether in person, via phone, email, or other means.
- Discussing individual staff members, students, or families on public or private social media platforms, in a way that could damage reputations, spread misinformation, or violate privacy.
- Posting or commenting in a way that undermines the school's values, staff professionalism, or the dignity of other members of the school community.

We expect all parents and carers to respect the confidentiality of sensitive matters and to raise concerns directly with the school through the appropriate channels, rather than via social media or other public forums.

6. Managing inappropriate behaviour

If a parent is behaving inappropriately, a report will be made to the headteacher or the most senior member of staff available in their absence, who will decide on the most appropriate course of action.

Parents will raise concerns regarding another parent's behaviour or conduct directly with their child's class teacher or the headteacher and will not approach the parent themselves.

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 invited to a meeting by the headteacher to discuss their behaviour and to attempt to resolve the issue. Where this initial meeting is not appropriate or sufficient to resolve the issue, the headteacher, 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 school premises
- Contacting the police
- Seeking legal redress through the courts
- Restricting the parent's channels of communication to the school, e.g. no longer allowing the parent to send emails to a staff member directly
- Reporting content the parent has posted online to the website's admin
- 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 Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The school reserves the right to escort anyone off the premises who is displaying aggressive or disruptive behaviour. The police may be contacted to provide advice on managing an incident or to assist in the removal of an individual from the premises, where necessary. The police will be contacted where a parent is being violent or has committed assault, or where the event has caused harm to an individual.

If a parent has been previously barred from the premises or is causing a disturbance, the police will be contacted to remove the individual from the premises.

If concerns are raised in relation to a parent's appearance or dress, personal factors will be taken into consideration, on a case-by-case basis, when addressing the concern.

If a parent persistently displays unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour, this may result in them being barred from the school premises, in line with the Barring from the school premises section of this policy.

7. Barring from the school premises

Our schools have the right to bar a parent from the premises to keep the school community safe. If a parent is displaying inappropriate or concerning behaviour, they will be asked to leave the school premises. Behaviour that could result in a parent being asked to leave the premises includes aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language that is a risk to staff or pupils, or behaviour that is making staff or pupils feel threatened or intimidated.

If a parent persistently or consistently behaves inappropriately on the school site, or there is a one-off incident of extremely inappropriate behaviour, the school reserves the right to bar this individual from the school site.

The school 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 headteacher 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 governors within 5 working days

The headteacher's decision to bar the parent will be reviewed by the Chair of Governors or Chief Executive Officer.

The Chair of Governors or CEO 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 will be advised to seek independent legal advice.

If a parent does not adhere to the decisions made by the school, and breaches the bar, the police will be contacted and asked to remove the individual concerned.

8. Persistent and Vexatious Complaints

WHO IS A PERSISTENT COMPLAINANT?

For the purpose of this policy, a persistent complainant is a parent / carer or member of the public who complains about issues, either formally or informally, or frequently raises issues that the complainant considers to be within the remit of the school, and whose behaviour is unreasonable.

Examples of unreasonable behaviour:

a) actions which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious;
b) prolific correspondence or excessive e-mail or telephone contact about a concern or complaint;
c) under General Data Protection Regulation, use of Information requests excessively and unreasonably
d) insistence upon pursuing unsubstantiated complaints and/or unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes;
e) insistence upon pursuing complaints in an unreasonable manner;
f) insistence on only dealing with the Headteacher on all occasions irrespective of the issue and the level of delegation in the school to deal with such matters;
g) insistence upon repeatedly pursuing a complaint when the outcome is not satisfactory to the complainant but cannot be changed, for example, if the desired outcome is beyond the remit of the school because it is unlawful.

For the purpose of this policy, harassment is the unreasonable pursuit of such actions as in (a) to (g) above in such a way that they:

a) appear to be targeted on one or more members of school staff and/or
b) cause ongoing distress to individual member(s) of school staff and/or
c) have a significant adverse effect on the whole/parts of the school community and/or
d) are pursued in a manner which can be perceived as intimidating and oppressive by the recipient. This could include situations where persistent demands and criticisms, whilst not particularly taxing or serious when viewed in isolation, have a cumulative effect over time of undermining professionalism, confidence, professional and/or personal well-being and health.

ACTIONS IN CASES OF PERSISTENT OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS OR HARASSMENT

In the first instance the school will inform the complainant that and how his / her behaviour is considered to be becoming unreasonable or unacceptable.

The school will advise that if it is not modified, action may be taken in accordance with this policy.

1. This communication will be confirmed in writing (Model Letter 1).

THEN:

2. If the behaviour is not adequately modified the school will:

a) inform the complainant in writing that his/her behaviour is now considered by the school to be unreasonable or unacceptable and, therefore, to fall under the terms of this policy (see Model Letter 2);

b) inform the complainant that all meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and that notes of meetings may be taken in the interests of all parties (see Model Letter 2);

c) inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, all routine communication with the complainant to the school should be by letter only (see Model Letter 2);

d) in the case of physical, or verbal aggression, take advice from Rutland Learning Trust (RLT) Legal Services and consider warning the complainant about being banned from the school site; or proceed straight to a temporary ban;

e) consider taking legal advice on pursuing a case under Anti-Harassment legislation;

f) consider taking legal advice about putting in place a specific procedure for dealing with complaints from the complainant, i.e. the complainant will not be able to deal directly with the Headteacher but only with a third person to be identified by RLT Trustees, who will investigate, determine whether or not the concern / complaint is reasonable or vexatious and then advise the Headteacher accordingly.

3. Based on point 2f above, legitimate new complaints may still be considered even if the person making them is, or has been, subject to the Policy for Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints and/or Harassment in Schools. However, the school will be advised by an RLT legal advisor.

4. If a complainant's persistent complaining / harassing behaviour is modified and is then resumed at a later date within a reasonable period of time, the school may resume the process identified above at an appropriate level. In these circumstances advice may be sought from the RLT Legal Service.

9. Monitoring and review

This document will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Board of Trustees and any changes made will be communicated to all parents and staff at the school.

All parents will be provided with a copy of this code of conduct upon their child's attendance at the school, and are required to familiarise themselves with the procedures and guidelines outlined.

Appendix 1

Template Parent Code of Conduct Agreement

I _____ (name), parent of _____ (name of child), declare that I have received, read and understood the terms and conditions of this code of conduct.

I understand my obligations under this code of conduct and agree to comply fully with them. I will ensure that my conduct does not breach this code in any way, including not:

- Being abusive or threatening to any member of the school community.
- Dressing in an inappropriate manner.
- Behaving inappropriately or aggressively in any way.
- Being discriminatory towards any member of the school community.
- Trespassing on the school property.
- Smoking, drinking alcohol or taking any illegal or harmful substances on the school premises.
- Sending inappropriate, abusive or aggressive messages to school staff.
- Requesting to 'follow' or 'friend' school staff on social media.

Please return this slip to the school office as soon as possible.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2

Inappropriate use of social network and/or media sites

Inappropriate use of Social Network and/or media sites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. The Trustees of Rutland Learning Trust considers the use of social network/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, the Headteacher, Governors or the Trustees, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren being educated at a RLT Primary School is found to be posting libelous 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. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil, requested to, removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites and take the best course of action it considers appropriate at the time.

Cyber bullying and the use of social media used by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another will be viewed as a serious incident and dealt with accordingly.

We expect that parents/carers will make all persons responsible for their children aware of this policy.

Appendix 3

Model letters

MODEL LETTER 1:

INITIAL LETTER INFORMING A COMPLAINANT THAT HIS/HER BEHAVIOUR IS CONSIDERED TO FALL BELOW A REASONABLE/ ACCEPTABLE STANDARD RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear

This letter is to inform you that the school considers your actions in [describe actions, dates, behaviour] on ..... when you ..... to be unreasonable/unacceptable [delete as appropriate].

We would ask you to bear in mind the fact that such behaviour on a school site can be disruptive and distressing to pupils, staff and parents/carers [delete if behaviour complained of did not occur on school site e.g. persistent use of e-mail, verbally abusive telephone calls]. (Wording may be modified as required for particular situation that occurs)

We are aware that you have raised some concerns, and would advise you that these are usually dealt with most effectively through the school's complaints procedure. At the moment we are dealing with these issues by [describe actions being taken to resolve concern].

Please note that the school's Code of Conduct for Parents Policy under Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints/Harassment sets out standards of behaviour expected of all people in their dealings with the School.

These include:

- behaving reasonably;
- treating others with courtesy and respect;
- resolving complaints using the School's Complaints Procedure;
- avoiding physical and verbal aggression at all times.

The Policy also indicates the steps that we may take if these standards are breached.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

MODEL LETTER 2:

INFORMING A COMPLAINANT THAT HIS/HER BEHAVIOUR IS NOW CONSIDERED TO FALL UNDER THE TERMS OF THE POLICY FOR DEALING WITH PERSISTENT OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS/ HARASSMENT RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear

You will recall that I wrote to you on [insert date] telling you that I felt your behaviour was unreasonable.

I am now writing to inform you that in view of your behaviour on [date], when you [describe actions/behaviour] it has been decided that the School's Parent Code of Conduct Policy under Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints/Harassment will apply from the date of this letter.

In the circumstances I have made the following arrangements for your future contact with the school:

[*Delete A or B as applicable]

*A For the foreseeable future, should you wish to meet with any member of staff, I would ask you to note:

(a) all routine communication, including any request for a meeting between you and the school, will be by letter only. Letters from you need to be addressed to ..... at the school address; email correspondence will not be responded to; (b) an appointment will be arranged and confirmed in writing as soon as possible. A third party from the school will be present;

(c) in the interests of all parties, formal notes of this meeting may be made.

*B For the foreseeable future, all meetings arising from any written communication with the school will not be conducted by a member of staff, but will be conducted by ..... representing the school.

I would ask you to note:

(a) all routine communication, including any request for a meeting between you and the school, will be by letter only. Letters from you need to be addressed to ..... at the school address; email correspondence will not be responded to; (b) an appointment will be arranged and confirmed in writing as soon as possible. A third party will be present;

(c) in the interests of all parties, formal notes of this meeting may be made.

Exceptionally, these arrangements do not apply to any emergency involving [insert name of pupil] – in which case you should contact the school in the usual way. While these arrangements are in place, with respect to normal access to information available on parents' evenings, this will be provided in a summary written report.

These arrangements take effect straightaway. If you wish to make a representation about the contents of this letter, which may include any expressions of regret on your part and any assurances that you are prepared to give about your future good conduct, you can do so by writing to me at the school by [state ten working days from the date of the letter]. If on receipt of your comments I consider that the arrangements outlined above should continue, you will be supplied with details of how to review a circumstance of your case.

I do hope that the difficulties we are currently experiencing can soon be resolved.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher / Chair of Governors