

Parent Code of Conduct

The Bishop of Winchester Academy



Sapere Aude

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1. Aims of the Policy

- 1.1 The vision of The Bishop of Winchester Academy is for all to *'live life to the full'* and work in partnership with parents and other stakeholders to achieve this aim. In line with this, the Academy also has a duty of care to both staff and students to ensure their safety and wellbeing. As such, the Academy will not tolerate unacceptable parent behaviour. This code of conduct outlines the behaviours that are deemed as unacceptable and the action, including any necessary restrictions, that will be taken in response to any such behaviour.
- 1.2 In this policy, 'parent' means a parent, carer, or anyone with legal responsibility for a child. The principles in this document also apply to any other family members of students or other visitors to the academy.
- 1.3 If a parent is acting in a voluntary capacity, for example as a governor, they are still subject to the scope of this code of conduct as a parent.

2. Key Principles

- The parent/school partnership is fundamental to securing the success and wellbeing of all our students.
- The education and wellbeing of the child of the parent involved will not be compromised in any way by the application of this code of conduct.
- Any decisions will be fully communicated to the parent with clear reasons for the decision taken.
- Parents have the right to raise concerns, where warranted, about the actions of the staff acting for the Academy.
- Any sanctions will be subject to a review.

3. The Scope and Application of this Code

- 3.1 This document covers unacceptable parental behaviour:
 - in any part of the school buildings or on the school site
 - by telephone to Academy staff
 - by email to Academy staff
 - on social media and any other public electronic media platforms (e.g. websites) referring to The Bishop of Winchester Academy, TBOWA, or a member of staff of the Academy
 - in any other setting which, in the reasonable opinion of the Principal, a member of academy's leadership team, or Chair of Trustees (or any person authorised by them), should be regulated by this code of conduct.

4. Unacceptable Conduct

- 4.1 It is sufficient for a member of staff or a student to feel threatened, but the behaviours listed are considered unacceptable by the Academy. This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such conduct. It will ultimately be for the Principal, a member of the leadership team, Chair of Trustees, or individual acting on their behalf, to determine whether conduct is

deemed to be unacceptable.

4.2 Unacceptable conduct includes:

- aggressive, disruptive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language directed at a member of our school community
- accessing the site whilst intoxicated or under the influence of abused substances including illegal drugs, consuming alcohol, using drugs on the Academy's premises
- verbal or written threats of violence or harm
- swearing or the use of other abusive, offensive or threatening language
- intimidation, coercion or humiliation
- harassment, bullying or causing distress
- physical violence, including damage to property or injury to individuals
- discriminatory conduct or use of discriminatory language (sexist, racist, or other)
- frequent, unwarranted and/or unnecessary correspondence which is hindering the proper running of the Academy
- making deliberately false, malicious or vexatious accusations
- any behaviour that violates the law or Academy's policies
- incitement of others to do any of the above

4.3 Any form of interaction that threatens the safety or wellbeing of staff or students will be taken seriously and addressed immediately, with the goal of protecting the safety and well-being of all in our school community.

5. Covert Recordings

- 5.1 Unless explicitly agreed in writing, the Academy does not consent to anyone making audio or video recordings of any member of staff, trustee (governor), school volunteer or students, including during in-person meetings, remote/virtual meetings or telephone conversations. Making covert recordings without the consent of all parties is regarded as a breach of the relationship of mutual trust and confidence between the parent and the Academy.
- 5.2 If an individual is found to be recording a meeting or conversation, affected staff have the right to terminate the meeting or telephone call on discovery.
- 5.3 If a parent is found to have recorded any audio or video footage on the school site without consent of the Principal or member of the senior leadership team, this may result in the parent being immediately banned from a school's premises (see Legal Sanctions) and the involvement of external agencies.

6. Inappropriate Use of Social Media

- 6.1 The academy encourages parents to approach staff with concerns in the first instance and resolve them using the mechanisms in place. If issues remain unresolved, parents can make use of the Academy's Complaints Policy to escalate matters where necessary. We urge parents to refrain from expressing concerns about the Academy or its staff or trustees (governors) on social media sites. Expressing

concerns on social media may damage the reputation of the Academy 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 students. Furthermore, comments made about individual members of staff may be considered defamatory or amount to cyber-bullying.

- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 Should the Academy become aware that a parent is using social media to target the Academy, or any of its staff, or trustees 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

7. Academy Strategies

- 7.1 The academy has a range of strategies to employ with any parent who engages in unacceptable behaviour. They can be initiated at any stage if, in the reasonable judgement of the Principal or members of the senior leadership team or Chair of Governors, or any person authorised by them, if the severity of the behaviour warrants such a level of intervention.
- 7.2 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 Academy's legal team for action and/or legal sanctions, such as recourse to the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

Strategies employed by the Academy may include, some or all of:

Verbal Warning

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

Mediation Meeting

- 7.4 Where appropriate, the parent may be asked to meet with the Principal, or members of the senior leadership team to discuss the matter in person.
- 7.5 A formal written warning will be sent to the parent, signed by the Principal or member of the senior leadership team or the Chair of Trustees (or any person authorised by one or more of them), and circulated to relevant internal parties to ensure that an informed and consistent approach can be adopted. This letter will be retained while the parent has children at the Academy. Where appropriate, more than one formal written warning letter may be issued.

Restricted Communication Plan

- 7.6 The parent may be issued with a communication plan. This will restrict the manner in which the parent can communicate with the Academy. 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

Ban From the Academy's Premises

- 7.7 A parent's common licence to access a school's premises can be removed or restricted for a specified period, which may be 6 weeks initially. A ban will be followed by a reintegration meeting, where conduct assurances will be sought by the Principal or members of the senior leadership team. Any entry onto the site in contravention of such a ban and where a nuisance or disturbance 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.

Legal Resolution: Injunction Under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997

- 7.8 Ultimately, if the other restrictions fail, or individual circumstances merit implementation, legal resolution may be sought. The Academy may seek an injunction requiring the parent to desist from behaving in the manner in question.

8. Monitoring and Review

- 8.1 The Principal will report to staff and the Trust Board as necessary, 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.

9. Records

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 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.