

Ballymoney High School



Parent Code of Conduct

Ratified by the Board of Governors

Signed: _____

(Chairman of the Board of Governors)

Parent Code of Conduct

Introduction

We are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body. Our parents recognise that educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents, class teachers and the school community. As a partnership, our parents/carers 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.

Purpose and scope

At Ballymoney High School, we believe it is important to:

- Work in partnership with parents to support their child's learning;
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for students, staff and parents;
- Model appropriate behaviour for our students at all times.

To help us do this, we set clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the Staff Code of Conduct) and students (through our Positive Behaviour Management Policy).

This code of conduct aims to help the school work together with parents by managing expectations and setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

We use the term 'parents' to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a student
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)
- Anyone representing the parent of a child.

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 requires schools to know the names of those who have parental responsibility for each pupil. The names and contact details of those with parental responsibility must be included in the school's registration form when a child joins the school. Information regarding pupils will only be shared with those named on the school's registration form.

Our expectations of parents and carers are

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our students
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with speech and behaviour
- Seek a realistic and reasonable solution to all issues, taking into consideration everyone's point of view
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue
- Correct their own child's behaviour (or those in their care), particularly in public, where it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct
- Approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern, following up if an appropriate response has not been received. **Please refer to our School Communication Guide for guidance on where to direct your query**
- Maintain reasonable expectations for staff response to general communications. Owing to the fact that staff operate with a timetable of taught lessons, it may not be possible for staff to get back to you on the same day as contact has been made. Where an issue is deemed as urgent, we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible. In all other cases, please allow up to 48 hours for a return communication.

We expect parents and carers NOT to:

- Disrupt, or threaten to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches)
- Swear, or use offensive language
- Threaten to do actual bodily harm to a member of school staff, Governor, visitor, fellow parent or student, regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence
- Present in an aggressive manner to members of staff, students or other parents - whether in person or electronically
- Damage or destroy school property
- Send abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication
- Make unreasonable demands upon school staff to respond to a parental query, or expectations for staff to communicate outside of normal working hours
- The school does not permit electronic recordings of meetings or telephone calls by parents or staff without the explicit prior permission of all involved, and in agreement with senior managers
- Make serial and unreasonable complaints (please see Complaints Policy)
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms (Please see Appendix A)
- Use of physical punishment against your child while on school premises
- Disciplining another person's child – please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention
- Smoke (this includes the use of E-cigarettes and vaping devices) or drink alcohol on the school premises
- Possess or take drugs (including legal highs) whilst on the school premises.

Should any of the above behaviour occur on school premises, the school may take any of the following actions:

- Ending a meeting if this behaviour is displayed
- Not reply to communications that are offensive, abusive or derogatory
- Insist that the adult communicates with the school through one member of staff only
- Contact the appropriate authorities
- Consider banning the offending adult from entering the school grounds

We trust that parents will assist our school with the implementation of this policy, and we thank you for your continuing support of the school.

Breaching the code of conduct

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached the code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent about the incident.

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

- Send a warning letter to the parent
- Limit contact by allocating one key staff member to communicate with
- Invite the parent into school to meet with a senior member of staff or the headteacher
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from the local authority's legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)
- Ban the parent from the school site

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 Principal.

The Principal will consult the Chair of Governors before banning a parent from the school site.

Appendix A

Inappropriate use of social media

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Principals, school staff, and in some cases other parents/students. The Governors considers the use of social media websites or apps being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the students or the whole school community.

Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the appropriate member of staff, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

'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 school, school staff, parents or children.