



Chiltern Way Academy Trust

Turning Futures Around

Parent, Carer and Visitor Code of Conduct Policy

Responsibility for this policy: Heads of Campus

Responsibility for its review: CEO

Approved: 24/05/2023

Next Review Date: Summer 2025

Introduction

At Chiltern Way Academy Trust, we believe that educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents/carers, class teachers and the Academy community. We have always worked very hard to establish good communication with parents and believe that our success is due in no small part to the strong relationships we enjoy with our parents and carers.

In a very small minority of cases, however, we can experience incidences of poor behaviour by parents/carers. The aim of this policy is therefore to clarify what we expect of our parents/carers in terms of their relationship with us, and what actions we may take when we encounter unacceptable behaviours.

Aims of this policy

- a) To outline the Academy's expectations of how it will work together with parents/carers and the behaviours parents/carers are expected to meet;
- b) To outline the action that the Academy will take if the conduct of parents/carers does not meet its expectations; and
- c) To support the purpose, values and vision of Chiltern Way Academy Trust

Expectations of parents/carers

In addition to following the guidance set out in our Home-School Agreement, we expect parents/carers to:

- a) always let the Academy know if there are any concerns or issues that may be affecting their child's learning or behaviour so that any issues can be resolved quickly
- b) understand that both staff and parents/carers need to work positively together for the benefit of their children
- c) understand that all members of the Academy community should be treated with respect and therefore model good behaviour
- d) correct their child's actions, especially where it could lead to conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour
- e) follow the process outlined in the Academy's Complaints Policy if they are looking to make a complaint against the Academy

Unacceptable behaviour

In order to support a safe environment, the following behaviours / actions will not be tolerated by parents/carers:

- a) using offensive or profane language, swearing, cursing or displaying temper anywhere on Academy premises, during a phone call or via email and social media
- b) causing a nuisance on the Academy premises in contravention of s.547 Education Act 1996
- c) making disparaging, libellous or slanderous comments about a member of staff (including on social media sites). Any concerns a parent/carer may have about the Academy must be made through the appropriate channels
- d) sending abusive or threatening messages via email, social media apps, text, voicemail etc
- e) presenting disruptive behaviour which interferes, or threatens to interfere, with the operation of the Academy
- f) threatening to inflict harm to a member of staff, governor, visitor, fellow parent/carer, or student at the Academy irrespective of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence
- g) approaching someone else's child in order to chastise them because of the actions of that child towards the parent/carer's own child
- h) using physical or verbal aggression towards another adult or child, including physical and verbal punishment against a parent/carer's own child on the Academy premises
- i) undertaking any forms of harassment against any member of the Academy staff (this can be evidenced through repeated instances of any of the above)
- j) damaging or destroying property belonging to the Academy
- k) smoking, taking illegal drugs or consuming alcohol on Academy premises or bringing dogs, other than assistance dogs, on to Academy premises
- l) demanding to see a member of staff without prior arrangement/appointment

Dealing with unacceptable behaviour

Should any of the behaviours / actions outlined above take place, Academy staff will complete a report form (Appendix 1). The Academy may then feel it necessary to apply restrictions to the offending adult's contact with the Academy. Any such restrictions will be tailored to deal with the individual circumstances of the unacceptable conduct and may include one or more of the following:

- a) putting in place a communication strategy to limit the point of contact and the frequency of the times that communications may be sent/made or reviewed

- b) banning the offending adult from making contact with Academy by telephone except through a third party e.g. a friend or relative acting on their behalf
- c) banning the offending adult from sending emails to individual and/or all Academy employees or governors and insisting they only correspond by letter
- d) banning the offending adult from entering the Academy premises
- e) banning the offending adult from accessing any Academy building except by appointment
- f) requiring contact to take place with one named member of staff only
- g) restricting telephone calls to specified days / times / duration
- h) requiring any personal contact to take place in the presence of an appropriate witness

When the decision is taken to apply any of the above restrictions or conditions, the Head of Campus or nominated person will contact parents/carers in writing to explain:

- Why the decision has been taken
- What action is being taken
- The duration of that action

Chiltern Way Academy Trust fully reserves the right, where it feels it necessary, to report the matters to the police or other appropriate authorities. It may also consider taking legal action.

In such cases, the Academy may not give the complainant prior warning of its actions.

Inappropriate use of Social Media

Parents/carers and students are reminded, that the law prohibits statements being made which are malicious, have the intention to cause harm or harass another. False statements published about individuals may also amount to defamation and subject to civil action.

Chiltern Way Academy Trust considers the use of social media websites/apps in this way to be unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole Academy community. The Academy therefore encourages parents/carers to raise any concerns through the appropriate channels so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned. Inappropriate use of social media by parents will be treated as a breach of the parent conduct policy and taken very seriously.

Examples of 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
- Being a member of a parents/carers WhatsApp group where members are making defamatory, libellous, or abusive comments about the school or the staff
- Breaching school security procedures

In the event that any student or parent/carer/family member of a student is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social media sites/apps, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report' or 'abuse' section of that social network site.

Parents/carers are reminded that all social media sites/apps have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the sites, and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches these rules. The Academy will also expect that any parent/carer or student remove such comments immediately and in serious cases, will consider its legal options with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Parents/carers are also reminded that whilst WhatsApp groups may not be thought of as a 'public forum', comments made on these groups will be considered a breach of the rules and treated accordingly.

Finally, Chiltern Way Academy Trust is committed to tackling the issue of online bullying and therefore will take appropriate action against students or parents/ carers should inappropriate social media posts be used to publicly humiliate another student, member of staff or parent/carer at the Academy.

Appendix 1

Abusive or threatening behaviour – incident report form

1. Details

Date of incident:

Time:

Location:

Brief description of incident:

2. Member of staff reporting incident

Name:

Role:

3. Details of person assaulted / verbally abused

Name:

Role: (if member of staff):

4. Details of trespasser / assailant / verbal abuser (if known)

5. Witness(es) if any

Name:

Member of staff / Other:

Address:

Other information / relationship between member of staff / abuser if any