



Parental Code of Conduct

Signed:

Headteacher

L. Brookes

Chair of Governors

Levy

Approved at FGB April 2026

Review Date: April 2027

1.0 Aims and Expectations

1.1 Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the way relationships between parents and staff at William Penn Primary School. The school is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and staff, promoting positive relationships, and upholding the highest standards of behaviour. This policy sets out the expectations for parental conduct, the procedures for managing breaches, and the support available to those affected. It reflects the statutory duty to protect staff and pupils from harm, including from inappropriate parental behaviour, as required by the Education Act 1996, Children Act 2004, and Department for Education (DfE) guidance.

1.2 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all individuals with parental responsibility for pupils at William Penn Primary School, including carers, legal guardians, and any other adults acting in loco parentis. It also applies to visitors to the school premises and those engaging with the school community through online platforms, social media, or other communication channels. The policy covers conduct on school premises, during school events (on or off site), and in all interactions with school staff and pupils, whether in person, by telephone, email, or online.

1.3 Policy Context and Legislative Framework

The Acceptable Parental Conduct Policy is informed by the following legislative and statutory frameworks:

- Education Act 1996 (Section 547): Provides legal powers to remove individuals causing nuisance or disturbance on school premises.
- Children Act 2004: Places a duty on schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. 3
- Education Act 2011: Sets out powers relating to school discipline and parental involvement.
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997: Protects staff and pupils from harassment, including by parents.
- Malicious Communications Act 1988: Addresses threatening, abusive, or defamatory communications.
- DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE): Statutory safeguarding guidance for schools.
- DfE 'Controlling access to school premises' (2018): Guidance on barring individuals from school premises.
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework: Requires evidence of effective safeguarding and management of parental conduct.

The policy operates in conjunction with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Concerns and Complaints Procedure, Communications Policy, Policy for Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints and Online Safety Policy.

1.4 Policy Status and Distribution

This policy forms part of the school's safeguarding and behaviour framework. It is intended for all staff, parents, carers, and visitors to William Penn Primary School. The policy will be distributed via the school website, staff induction packs and will be available on request from the school office. Summaries and key points will be communicated through newsletters, parent meetings and induction sessions.

2.0 Policy Statement

2.1 School Values and Expectations

William Penn Primary School is founded on the principles of honesty, integrity, reflection, peace, friendship and simplicity. The school expects all members of its community, including parents, carers, and visitors, to uphold these values by demonstrating respect for others, supporting the school's ethos and aims, and

engaging positively with staff and pupils. Parental conduct should reflect the school's commitment to creating a safe and nurturing environment where every child can thrive.

2.2 Commitment to Positive Relationships

The school recognises the vital role that parents and carers play in their children's education and wellbeing. William Penn Primary School is committed to working in partnership with families, fostering mutual respect, open communication, and shared responsibility for pupil success. The school encourages constructive dialogue and collaborative problem-solving to address any concerns or issues that may arise. However, staff are also entitled to work in an environment where they do not feel harassed or intimidated. In addition, staff have to manage the competing demands of their workload in a way that is fair to the needs of all children and families. When in communication with parents, staff are expected to:

- Remain calm and professional in all interactions
- Listen actively and acknowledge concerns
- Avoid confrontation and seek to de-escalate tension
- Set clear boundaries and expectations
- Document all incidents and actions taken
- Seek support from senior leaders or external agencies
- Use restorative approaches where appropriate
- Access training and wellbeing support as needed

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Definition of Parent/Carer/Visitor

For the purposes of this policy, a 'parent' includes any individual with parental responsibility for a pupil at William Penn Primary School, as defined by the Children Act 1989. This includes biological parents, legal guardians, foster carers, and any adult acting in loco parentis. A 'carer' is any adult entrusted with the care of a pupil, whether on a temporary or permanent basis. A 'visitor' refers to any individual who enters the school premises or interacts with the school community, including contractors, volunteers, and external professionals.

3.2 Definition of Acceptable and Unacceptable Conduct

'Acceptable conduct' is behaviour that is respectful, courteous, and supportive of the school's vision, values and policies. It includes constructive communication, adherence to school procedures, and positive engagement with staff, pupils, and other parents. 'Unacceptable conduct' includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse and aggression,
- Direct and indirect threats at staff, pupils, or other parents
- Sarcastic and mocking language or mimicry
- Discrimination or harassment on any grounds, including race, gender, disability, religion, or sexual orientation
- Physical violence or inappropriate physical contact
- Any behaviour chosen to cause embarrassment
- Damage to school property or personal belongings
- Defamatory, abusive, or confidential posts on social media or online platforms

- Persistent or vexatious complaints or demands
- A refusal to engage with the Concerns and Complaints Policy when raising concerns and complaints
- Intimidation, stalking, or harassment (including online)
- Refusal to follow reasonable instructions from staff
- Smoking, drug, or alcohol misuse on school premises
- Any behaviour that compromises the safety, wellbeing, or dignity of staff, pupils, or the wider school community

4.0 Standards of Parental Conduct

4.1 Expected Standards of Behaviour

Parents choosing to place their children at William Penn Primary School are expected to:

- Treat all members of the school community with respect, courtesy, and consideration
- Support the school's policies, procedures and ethos
- Communicate constructively with staff through the channels provided, using appropriate language and tone
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of pupils, staff, and other families
- Use school facilities responsibly and follow all site rules
- Model positive behaviour for children and other adults
- Address concerns or complaints through the appropriate channels, following the school's Concerns and Complaints Procedure
- Refrain from engaging in any behaviour that may cause distress, harm, or disruption to the school community, including the unacceptable behaviour identified above
- Respect the outcome of investigations linked to concerns or complaints

4.2 Communication with the School

Effective communication is essential for a positive school environment. Parents and carers should:

- Use respectful language in all interactions with staff, pupils, and other parents
- Contact the school through appropriate channels
- Allow reasonable time for staff to respond to queries or concerns
- Avoid making demands or complaints on the playground or during school events
- Raise concerns in a constructive manner, seeking resolution rather than confrontation
- Be mindful of the following time frames:
 - Letters and emails should be addressed to the school office (office@williampenn.co.uk). These are acknowledged within 2 working days and responded to within 10 working days.
 - Emails will only be responded to during office hours (weekdays in term time 8am to 4pm).
 - Telephone enquiries and messages left on the school answer phone are dealt with by the school office promptly and signposted to appropriate staff within 2 working days
 - A response to a requested telephone call back may be made by email rather than phone call. The same time scales as for letters and emails apply.

4.3 Use of Social Media and Online Conduct

Parents, carers, and visitors must use social media and online platforms responsibly. The following standards apply:

- Do not post defamatory, abusive, threatening, or confidential information about the school, staff, pupils, or other parents
- Avoid sharing images or personal information about pupils or staff without explicit consent
- Refrain from engaging in online harassment, bullying, or intimidation
- Use online channels to support positive engagement with the school, not to air grievances or complaints
- Report any concerns about online conduct to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Be aware that inappropriate online behaviour may be subject to action under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and Protection from Harassment Act 1997

5.0 Unacceptable Conduct

5.1 Impact of Unacceptable Conduct

Unacceptable parental conduct can have serious consequences for the school community, including:

- Emotional distress or harm to staff, pupils, or other parents
- Disruption of teaching, learning and school activities
- Damage to the school's reputation and relationships with the wider community
- Compromised safeguarding and wellbeing of children and staff
- Increased risk of conflict, complaints, or legal action
- Negative impact on staff morale, retention, and wellbeing

The school takes all incidents of unacceptable conduct seriously and will respond promptly and proportionately to protect the safety and integrity of the school community.

All incidents of unacceptable parental conduct must be reported to the Headteacher. Staff should complete an incident report form (see Appendix A) detailing the nature of the behaviour, those involved, and any immediate actions taken. The senior leadership team will discuss and record any further steps. Incident report forms will be uploaded to CPOMS. The school will maintain confidential records of all incidents, in accordance with data protection legislation. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed, and referrals made to the local authority or police as appropriate.

6.0 Procedures for Managing Breaches

6.1 Reporting and Recording Incidents

All incidents of unacceptable parental conduct must be reported to the Headteacher. Staff should complete an incident report form (see Appendix A) detailing the nature of the behaviour, those involved, and any immediate actions taken. The senior leadership team will discuss and record any further steps. Incident report forms will be uploaded to CPOMS. The school will maintain confidential records of all incidents, in accordance with data protection legislation. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed, and referrals made to the local authority or police as appropriate.

6.2 Graduated Response to Breaches

The school will adopt a graduated response to breaches of this policy, taking into account the severity and frequency of the behaviour. Appendix C provides more information but the following reflects key decisions:

- **Linked Policies:** Consideration given to other relevant policies.
- **Verbal Warning:** For minor breaches, a member of staff or the senior leadership team will speak to the parent/carer to explain the concerns and remind them of the expected standards of conduct.
- **Written Warning:** For repeated or more serious breaches, the parent/carer will receive a formal written warning outlining the unacceptable behaviour, the impact on the school community, and the consequences of further breaches.
- **Formal Meeting:** The parent/carer may be invited to a meeting with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to discuss the behaviour, agree expectations, and identify support or interventions as needed.
- **Restrictions on Communication:** In cases of persistent or vexatious behaviour, the school may restrict communication to specific channels or individuals and timeframes (e.g., written correspondence only, contact through the Headteacher).
- **Temporary or Permanent Barring from Premises:** For serious or repeated breaches, the school may exercise its legal powers under the Education Act 1996 (Section 547) to bar the individual from school premises, either temporarily or permanently.
- **Referral to Police or Other Agencies:** Where behaviour constitutes a criminal offence or poses a significant risk to safety, the school will refer the matter to the police or relevant agencies.

All actions taken will be documented, and the parent/carer will be informed in writing of the reasons, duration, and conditions of any restrictions or bans.

6.3 Process for Serial and Unreasonable Complaints

William Penn Primary School defines unreasonable behaviour as behaviour which:

- purposefully undermines the policies, procedures, vision and values of the school
- hinders our consideration of complaints because of the frequency or nature of the complainant's contact with the school.
- Whenever possible, the headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.
- If unreasonable behaviour continues, the headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it.
- For complainants who excessively contact William Penn Primary School causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will be reviewed after six months.

6.4 Process for Barring Individuals from Premises

The process for barring individuals from school premises is as follows:

- The Headteacher will issue a written notification to the individual, outlining the reasons for the proposed ban, the evidence supporting the decision, and the duration of the ban.
- The individual will be given the opportunity to make representations in writing or at a meeting within a specified timeframe (normally 10 working days).
- The decision to bar will be reviewed by the Governing Body or designated panel, taking into account any representations made.
- The individual will be informed of the final decision in writing, including details of any appeal process.
- The school will liaise with West Sussex County Council, as appropriate, and may seek legal advice where necessary.
- The ban will be reviewed at regular intervals, and the individual will be informed of the outcome.

The school will ensure that the process is fair, transparent, and consistent with statutory guidance.

6.5 Safeguarding Procedures

Where unacceptable parental conduct raises safeguarding concerns, the Headteacher will assess the risk and take appropriate action, including:

- Referring the matter to the local authority children's services
- Informing the police if a criminal offence is suspected
- Providing support to affected staff, pupils, or families
- Reviewing the school's safeguarding procedures to prevent recurrence

All safeguarding referrals and outcomes will be documented in accordance with KCSIE and the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

6.6 Restorative and Preventative Approaches

The school is committed to restorative and preventative approaches wherever possible. This may include:

- Facilitating restorative meetings between staff and parents/carers to address concerns, repair relationships, and agree future expectations
- Providing support, mediation, or counselling for those affected
- Offering training or resources to staff/ parents/carers on positive engagement and communication
- Reviewing school procedures and communication strategies to prevent misunderstandings or conflict

Restorative approaches will be used where appropriate and safe, and participation will be voluntary.

7.0 Support, Training, and Communication

7.1 Staff Training

All teachers will receive training on de-escalation, conflict management and managing challenging parental behaviour. The school will draw on resources from professional bodies such as the National Governance Association (NGA), Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), and National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT).

Staff will be supported to:

- Recognise early signs of conflict or unacceptable behaviour
- Respond calmly and professionally to challenging situations
- Report and document incidents appropriately
- Access support and guidance from senior leaders and external agencies

7.2 Communication of the Policy

The Acceptable Parental Conduct Policy will be communicated to all parents, carers, visitors and staff through:

- Publication on the school website
- Code of Conduct displayed in Reception
- Regular reminders in newsletters and at parent meetings
- Briefings for staff and governors

The school will ensure that the policy is accessible to all, including translation or alternative formats for those with additional needs, as required.

7.3 Support for Staff and Parents

Staff affected by unacceptable parental conduct will have access to:

- Confidential reporting mechanisms
- Counselling or wellbeing support services
- Advice and guidance from senior leaders or external agencies
- Opportunities for restorative meetings or mediation

Parents and carers who experience difficulties engaging with the school will be signposted to support services, including:

- Family support workers or pastoral staff
- Local authority services
- Advice on positive communication and engagement

The school will work proactively to support all members of the community and prevent escalation of conflict.

8.0 Relationship to Other Policies

8.1 Linked Policies and Procedures

- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy:** Sets out procedures for protecting children from harm, including from inappropriate parental behaviour.
- **Behaviour Policy:** Outlines expectations for pupil conduct and the role of parents in supporting positive behaviour.
- **Complaints Procedure:** Provides a framework for raising and resolving concerns or complaints.
- **Online Safety Policy:** Sets out expectations for online conduct and protection from cyberbullying or abuse.
- **Policy for Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints**

All linked policies are available on the school website or from the school office.

8.2 Consistency and Alignment

The Acceptable Parental Conduct Policy is aligned with statutory frameworks and supports the aims of related school policies. It ensures a consistent approach to safeguarding, behaviour, and complaints, and reflects the school's commitment to a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.

9.0 Monitoring, Review, and Evaluation

9.1 Monitoring Implementation

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through:

- Incident logs and records of parental conduct
- Staff feedback and wellbeing surveys
- Parental surveys and engagement activities
- Analysis of complaints and safeguarding referrals
- Review of training and support provision

The Headteacher will report to the Governing Body on the operation of the policy and any emerging trends or concerns.

9.2 Review Cycle and Responsibility

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by changes in statutory guidance, legislation, or school circumstances. The review will be led by the Headteacher, in consultation with staff, governors, and parent representatives. Updates will be approved by the Governing Body and communicated to all stakeholders.

10.0 Complaints and Representations

10.1 Parental Right to Complain or Appeal

Parents and carers have the right to raise concerns or appeal actions taken under this policy, following the school's Concerns and Complaints Procedure.

Appendices

Appendix A: Incident Report Form Headings

- Date and time of incident
- Location
- Names of those involved
- Description of behaviour
- Actions taken
- Witness statements (if applicable)
- Immediate Outcome
- Follow-up actions (to be completed by SLT)
- Signature of reporting staff member
- Signature of senior leader/designated lead

Appendix B: Template Letters for Warnings and Barring Notices

Template Letter: Written Warning

Dear [Parent/Carer Name],

We are writing to inform you of concerns regarding your conduct on [date]. The behaviour described below does not meet the standards expected of parents and carers at William Penn Primary School:

[Description of behaviour]

We ask that you reflect on this matter and ensure that future interactions are respectful and constructive. For further guidance, please read the Acceptable Parental Conduct Policy and linked policies, available on our website. Further breaches may result in restrictions on communication or access to school premises.

Yours sincerely,

[Name of Headteacher/Designated Lead]

Template Letter: Notification of Barring

Dear [Parent/Carer Name],

Following recent incidents of unacceptable conduct, we regret to inform you that you are barred from entering the premises of William Penn Primary School from [start date] to [end date]. This decision has been made under the Education Act 1996 (Section 547) to protect the safety and wellbeing of our school community.

You have the right to make representations in writing within 10 working days. The decision will be reviewed at regular intervals.

Yours sincerely,

[Name of Headteacher/Designated Lead]

Appendix C: Flowchart of Response Procedures

1. Incident occurs
2. Staff report and record incident
3. Consideration given to further steps required under linked policies, for example, the Policy for Managing Serial and Unreasonable Complaints
4. Verbal warning issued (if appropriate)
5. Written warning issued (if repeated/serious)
6. Formal meeting with parent/carer
7. Restrictions on communication (if persistent)
8. Temporary/permanent barring from premises (if severe)
9. Referral to police/local authority (if criminal/safeguarding concern)
10. Restorative meeting/support offered (where appropriate)

Appendix D: Parental Code of Conduct

Parents who have chosen to place their children at William Penn Primary School are expected to:

- Uphold and promote the school's ethos and values
- Ensure that their child is appropriately dressed for school in line with the school's policy on uniform and has the necessary equipment such as a PE kit and water bottle.
- Ensure that their child attends regularly and on time, entering the classroom as soon as they arrive on school premises.
- Take family holidays in school holidays.
- Contact the school on the first day if their child is unable to attend school because of illness or medical appointments.
- Name uniform, coats, bags, lunch boxes and water bottles and proactively take steps to locate lost items, recognising that this is not a class teacher's responsibility.
- Ensure school library books are treated with care and returned
- Inform the school confidentially of concerns or problems that might affect their child's work or behaviour.
- Encourage their child in all homework activities, and support them in line with the school's homework policy.
- Attend parents' evenings and discussions about their child's progress.
- Read newsletters and other communications and respond promptly when required.
- Take an active interest in the life of the school.

11.0 References

- Education Act 1996 (Section 547)
- Education Act 2011 ● Children Act 2004
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Department for Education 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (latest edition)

- Department for Education 'Controlling access to school premises' (2018)
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (latest edition) • National Governance Association (NGA) guidance
- Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) model policies
- National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) advice
- William Penn Primary School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- William Penn Primary School Behaviour Policy
- William Penn Primary School Concerns and Complaints Procedure
- William Penn Primary School Online Safety Policy