

Spires Federation Policy

OPENING
DOORS



OPENING
MINDS

Code of Conduct for Parents and Visitors Policy

Date : November 2023

Review Date: November 2025

Our Vision is:

To provide an aspirational education which inspires all in our community so that they are happy, confident and equipped for life in all its fullness.

The Spires Federation is proud to be a family of friendly, caring schools where children feel valued and secure. Our enthusiastic and dedicated staff work in partnership with parents, governors and the community, to provide a well-planned and challenging education for all, helping each and every pupil achieve high standards. The children are at the centre of everything planned in our schools and we look to support their development socially, emotionally and morally as well as academically. We value parents as partners in the education process and there are many occasions when we welcome families into our schools to share our activities.

At the Spires Federation, 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 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 schools.

The purpose of this code of conduct is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our schools about the expected conduct. This is so we can continue to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

Our schools encourage close links with parents and the community. We believe that students benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one.

The majority of our parents, carers and others visiting our schools are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school. However, sometimes a parent can have a negative attitude towards school, pupils and one another and, on occasion, this can result in aggression, verbal and/or physical abuse towards school staff and each other.

The schools expect the staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations and attempt to defuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. However, all staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse.

The school expects parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable and respectable way towards school staff and others. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where parents' behaviour is unacceptable.

2. Our expectations of parents and carers

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 pupils

- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with speech and behaviour
- Seek a peaceful solution to all issues
- 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 and not discussing these concerns with other parents outside of school.
- Any concerns parents have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the Head Teacher or the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

3. BEHAVIOUR

Some types of behaviour and conduct are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of unacceptable behaviour:

- Shouting at someone, either in person or over the telephone.
- Physically intimidating someone e.g. standing very close to him/her
- Threatening school staff or other parents
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Writing abusive comments about a member of staff or another parent on social media
- Swearing at a member of school staff or another parent
- Pushing or hitting
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child.
- Negative posts on social media
- Smoking, vaping and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on school property.
- Dogs being brought on to school premises.
- Racist or sexist comments
- Breaking the school's security procedures

Unacceptable behaviour could result in Lincolnshire County Council and the Police being informed of the incident.

3. PROCEDURE

When a parent or member of the public behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school staff, pupils or other parents, the headteacher or appropriate senior staff member will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where

there is an extreme act of violence, a parent or carer may be banned by the headteacher from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review.

4. 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:

- Discuss the concern with the parent either face to face or over the phone (as appropriate)
- Send a warning letter to the parent
- Request the parent attends a meeting in school with a senior member of staff or the headteacher
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from the Local Authority 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 headteacher.

The headteacher will consult the chair of governors before banning a parent from the school site.

If a ban is deemed necessary, the following steps will be taken:

1. The parent will be warned, in writing, that s/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, eg that an injunction may follow.
2. Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to Lincolnshire County Council and the Police will be included.
3. The Chair of Governors will be informed of the ban.
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for students being delivered to, and collected from, the school gate will be clarified.

5. CONCLUSION

Pupils learn best when there is a positive partnership between home and school. Whilst every effort will be made to work with parents, this will only be possible where parents behave in an acceptable way.

Unfortunately, where a parent's behaviour is either unacceptable or serious, it will not be possible to continue working with him or her. As a final resort, legal action may be taken.

The school will take action where behaviour is unacceptable or serious and breaches our code of conduct or health and safety legislation.

Appendix: Inappropriate use of Social Network Sites

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns or complaints against schools, Head Teachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. The Governors of the Spires Federation considers the use of social 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 Head Teacher or the Chair of Governors, 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 the Spires Federation is found to be posting libellous 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 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. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

The Spires Federation follows the County Council policy on the taking of photographs and the filming of pupils. This means that we allow parents to take photographs and videos at school events but only if this is for the family's enjoyment only. At school events, we regularly remind parents that they must not post these images on any form of social network. This is to protect the other children who may be in the photographs and films, some of whom may not be allowed on social media due to child protection issues.