



# Code of Conduct for Parents

*Supporting a Positive Partnership with Parents*

**This is a mandatory document of the Vale Academy Trust and each member school is required to make it publicly available on its school website**

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Owner	Headteacher	Approver	CEO of the Vale Academy Trust
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**In this document, 'parent' should be read as meaning any parent or carer, or any adult accompanying children onto and away from school premises.**

## **1. Introduction**

**Our school expects the highest standards of behaviour from our pupils and in turn expects that all parents will set a good example to all children and help maintain a safe, calm and respectful environment at all times.**

At our school we are very proud and fortunate to have a highly dedicated and supportive community of parents, staff, governors and volunteers, working together in partnership to provide our children with the best possible education. We know that where parents and the school work within a positive partnership the children benefit and do better at school. And we know too that for this partnership to be effective and harmonious it is vital that we maintain good relations between all involved.

Thankfully, serious relationship difficulties are rare in our school community, however schools are complex environments and everyday frustrations can sometimes cause misunderstandings. Establishing where this happens and remaining committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner through open and positive dialogue is essential.

Our staff, governors and volunteers have all committed to and signed a specific code of conduct for their roles, and of course our children are subject to the school's Behaviour Policy and Procedures, a copy of which is available on our website.

The purpose of this *Code of Conduct for Parents* is to provide a reminder to parents about the expectations on them around relationships and conduct in the school community.

## **2. Principal aim of this code of conduct**

- That all members of the school community treat each other with respect and feel safe at all times

## **3. Expectations**

- That all parents set a good example to all children at all times, showing them how to get along with all members of the school and the wider community
- That parental concerns or complaints are raised and handled with mutual respect and in accordance with the school's Complaints Procedure, which can be found on our website or a copy can be obtained from the school office
- That no staff, governors, volunteers, parents or children are the victims of abusive behaviour or threats from adults on the school premises, or through social media or other electronic means
- That physical attacks, threatening behaviour, abusive or insulting language verbal or written, to staff, governors, volunteers, parents, children and other users of the school premises will not be tolerated and may result in restrictions on access to certain staff, withdrawal of permission to be on school premises, or the police being called

#### **4. How to raise concerns or complaints with the school**

It is in everyone's best interests that when problems or concerns arise they are handled in a fair, prompt and transparent manner. In most cases this usually means raising the matter in the first instance with a class teacher or another member of staff. Experience tells us that the vast majority of concerns are resolved at this 'informal' stage. However, if for some reason a resolution cannot be found informally, we urge the parent concerned to follow our Complaints Procedure, which is designed to bring structure and fairness to finding a resolution.

***It is vitally important that all involved show respect to one another and not let frustration or anger sour relations and prevent the process from finding a resolution.***

#### **5. Unacceptable behaviour**

Our school will not tolerate staff, children, governors, volunteers or parents being threatened, intimidated or defamed, or our school being brought into disrepute, and we will take action if this happens. Depending upon the severity of the incident, our actions could include restricting access to certain staff, and/or informing the police, and/or imposing a ban from school premises. Thankfully, at our school these are very rare occurrences.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Shouting, either in person, or over the telephone or video link
- Inappropriate posting on social media which could bring the school into disrepute or defame an individual or be deemed as bullying or vexatious
- Speaking in an aggressive or threatening tone
- Physical threats or physical intimidation, e.g. standing very close
- The use of aggressive hand gestures/exaggerated movements
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Swearing, spitting, smoking or drug-taking on school premises
- Pushing or hitting e.g. slapping, punching or kicking
- Racist or sexist comments, including sexual innuendo

#### **6. Inappropriate use of social media and messaging services**

Across the nation, social media has sometimes been used to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, headteachers, staff, and in some cases other parents or children. The Board of Directors of the Vale Academy Trust, and the Local Governing Body of our school, considers the use of social media in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

We ask that any parent with a concern or complaint refrain from posting negatively on social media and instead follow our Complaints Procedure.

In the event that any child or parent is found to be posting libellous, defamatory or vexatious comments on Facebook, or any other social media or messaging service, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the service. All social media and messaging services have clear rules about the content which can be posted and they provide mechanisms to report activity which breaches this. We will also expect that any parent or child removes such comments immediately.

In serious or persistent cases we will also consider our legal options to deal with any such misuse of social media.

In cases of cyber bullying, where a child or parent attempts to humiliate or threaten another child or adult through inappropriate posting on social media, or through email or messaging, we will treat the matter as a serious bullying incident.

## **7. The school's right to withdraw permission to be on school premises**

In law, school premises are private property and parents are granted 'implied licence' to be on the premises for the purpose of dropping off and picking up their children, and to attend school events and scheduled appointments. However, in cases of abuse, threats, nuisance or disturbance schools have the right to ban the offending person(s) from being on school premises, and if necessary can call the police to assist in removing the person(s) concerned.

Refer to relevant law: [Persons Causing Nuisance / Disturbance on School Premises - Section 547 of the Education Act 1996](#)

***The school reserves the right to go straight to a ban from the school premises where the circumstances are sufficiently serious in the school's view.***

The school is not responsible for organising arrangements for children in the case of a parental ban, and parents affected would need to provide alternative arrangements for dropping off and picking up children at the school.

If a parent receives a ban from school premises, they can exercise their right of appeal by writing to the Chair of the Local Governing Body within ten days of the ban being imposed.

## **8. Procedures to address inappropriate behaviour on school premises**

### **If a parent acts inappropriately towards a child**

If possible the parent will be spoken to immediately by a member of the School Leadership Team and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The incident will be investigated in line with safeguarding procedures and this code of conduct, recorded and reported to the Headteacher. School action will depend upon the severity of the incident but at the very least the parent will receive a warning letter. Other actions could include the parent being banned from school premises or the matter being passed to the police.

### **If a parent acts inappropriately towards a member of staff or another adult**

The affected person should report this to a member of the School Leadership Team who will carry out an investigation, record the incident and report it to the Headteacher. The offending parent will be spoken to as soon as possible after the incident, if possible, and at the very least will receive a warning letter. Depending upon the severity of the incident, other actions could include the parent having access to certain staff restricted, being banned from school premises, or the matter being passed to the police.

***Depending upon the circumstances of the individual incident, these procedures may be amended at the discretion of the Headteacher at any time.***