



# Code of Conduct

## For Parents, Carers and Visitors

To keep things simple, all parents and carers are automatically included in our Code of Conduct from the moment their child joins us. If you ever have concerns about the Code or feel unable to follow part of it, please let us know in writing. We will listen carefully and discuss your concerns with you on an individual basis.



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## Working Together

At Waterton Academy Trust we believe children do best when school and home work closely together. To keep things simple, **all parents and carers are automatically included in our Code of Conduct from the moment their child joins us.**

If you ever have concerns about the Code or feel unable to follow part of it, please let us know in writing. We will listen carefully and discuss your concerns with you on an individual basis.

By following the Code, we create a safe, respectful, and positive environment for every child, every family, and every member of staff.

This policy is available on all academy websites and from the school office for reference. All visitors and volunteers will be made aware of this Code on arrival and given time to read it before starting their activities in school.

## Introduction

We are proud to have strong, supportive communities across all Waterton Academy Trust academies. Staff, governors, parents, and carers share the belief that children's education is best delivered in partnership. For this reason, we continue to welcome and encourage parents and carers to play a full part in academy life.

The purpose of this policy is to set out clear expectations of conduct for parents, carers, and visitors. By following these standards, we can ensure that our academies remain places where pupils and adults thrive in an atmosphere of respect and understanding.

We recognise that everyday frustrations can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or strained relationships. When this occurs, it is essential that concerns are raised and resolved constructively through open and positive dialogue.

The Trust already has a Code of Conduct for its employees and governors. This policy extends the same principles to the wider academy community – parents, carers, visitors or volunteers in the school. It makes clear the behaviours that will not be accepted and explains the steps the Trust and its academies may take if these expectations are not met.

## Behaviour that will not be tolerated

### On-site conduct

- Bringing animals onto the school site without prior permission (other than assistance animals).
- Misuse of car parks, drop-off areas, or entrances in a way that endangers pupils or others.
- Repeated breaches of site rules (e.g. car parking, drop-off arrangements, health and safety instructions).
- Refusing to follow reasonable instructions from staff or site supervisors.
- Disruptive behaviour that interferes with, or threatens to interfere with, the normal operation of the academy.

- Using loud, offensive, or aggressive language, or displaying temper.
- Approaching another person's child to discuss or chastise them for their behaviour.
- Failure to follow safeguarding or site procedures, such as signing in, following visitor protocols, or respecting restricted areas.
- Attempting to gain unauthorised access to classrooms, offices, or restricted areas.
- Refusing to leave school premises when asked to by staff or site supervisors.
- Damaging or destroying academy property.
- Smoking (including e-cigarettes), taking illegal drugs, or consuming alcohol on academy premises.
- Threatening, intimidating, or abusive behaviour towards staff, pupils, parents/carers, visitors, or governors.
- Physical, verbal, or written aggression towards another adult or child. This includes the physical punishment of a parent/carer's own child while on academy premises.
- Using camera-enabled wearable devices capable of recording audio, images or video where this compromises safeguarding, privacy or data protection requirements, or where requested not to do so by academy staff.

### **Communication and Online Activity**

- Persistent or unreasonable demands that cause undue stress or hinder staff in carrying out their duties.
- Using social media to fuel campaigns, air grievances, or publicly challenge academy policies instead of raising concerns through the correct channels.
- Inappropriate use of parent-run groups, including online social media groups (for example WhatsApp groups, class Facebook pages, or PTA/PTFA groups), including posting negative or personal commentary about the academy, its staff or pupils, circulating offensive material, spreading misinformation, or bringing the academy into disrepute, rather than raising concerns through the appropriate school channels.
- Creating or circulating rumours, misinformation, or disinformation that undermines trust in the academy or individuals.
- Tagging or naming pupils/staff in online posts without their consent, especially alongside criticism or negative commentary.
- Making defamatory, offensive, or derogatory comments about the academy, its pupils, parents, staff, or governors on social media or other websites.
- Publicly humiliating or criticising another parent, pupil, or member of staff online.
- Sending abusive, threatening, or excessive communications (including emails, phone calls, texts, voicemails, or messages through academy platforms).
- Sharing confidential information about pupils, staff, or families without consent.
- Impersonating staff, pupils, or parents online, or setting up unofficial accounts/pages that could be mistaken for official academy communication.
- Posting or sharing images or videos of pupils or staff without consent.
- Recording, photographing, filming, livestreaming, or using camera-enabled wearable devices (including smart glasses) or AI-enabled technologies to capture or manipulate images, audio or video of pupils, staff or visitors without the explicit permission of the Headteacher.
- Breaching academy security procedures through online activity.

### **Respect and inclusion**

- Any form of harassment, bullying, or discrimination on the basis of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

- Victimisation of any individual who has raised a concern, complaint, or safeguarding issue.
- Language or behaviour that undermines the dignity and rights of others, even if not directed at a protected characteristic.
- Failure to show respect for cultural or religious practices within the school community.

**Please note: Parents and carers must ensure that anyone collecting their child, or attending school events, is made aware of, and follows, this policy.**

## Trust Approach: Parent-Teacher Groups

Where parent groups operate in connection with the academy or present themselves as associated with it, they are expected to work in partnership with the academy and follow reasonable direction from the academy in relation to safeguarding, communication, and the organisation of meetings and activities.

## Trust Approach: Zero Tolerance of Abuse

Waterton Academy Trust has a duty of care to ensure that all members of its community work and learn in a safe environment. There is zero tolerance of violence, threatening behaviour, or abuse in any form. Any act of actual or threatened violence will be referred to the police immediately. Racist or discriminatory incidents will be reported to the Trust and appropriate authorities.

## Breaches of the Code

If any of the behaviours listed above occur, the academy will take proportionate action.

Where behaviour breaches this Code in the presence of senior school staff, they will address the individual directly at the time. The individual will be told clearly that the behaviour is unacceptable and must stop immediately.

- **Step 1: Verbal warning** – The Headteacher will contact the individual and seek assurance that the behaviour will not be repeated. If the Headteacher is the subject of abuse, the CEO will undertake this step.
- **Step 2: Written warning** – If behaviour is repeated, a written warning will be issued by the Headteacher (or CEO where appropriate).
- **Step 3: Final written warning** – For repeated incidents, or in serious cases, the CEO may issue a final written warning.
- **Step 4: Ban from premises** – Where behaviour continues, or a single incident is deemed sufficiently serious, the CEO may impose a ban from the premises.
- **Step 5: Police involvement** – Any violent incident or breach of a ban will be referred to the police. Trespassers may be removed under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996.

At any stage, incidents may be escalated directly to the Trust Central Team, the Legal Team, or the police if considered serious. The Trust reserves the right to impose an immediate ban in the most serious cases.

All staff are expected to report any abusive or threatening behaviour to the Headteacher without delay, in line with the Waterton Abusive or Threatening Behaviour Policy.



## Controlling access to school premises

The headteacher, or the CEO, may bar an adult from the school premises where behaviour poses a risk to staff or pupils, including where staff or pupils feel threatened. This power is set out in the Department for Education guidance *Controlling access to school premises*. Individuals who are barred have the right to make written representations. A breach of a barring order may constitute a criminal offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996.

- Individuals who are barred will be notified in writing, with reasons and the duration of the ban.
- They have the right to make written representations against the decision, within 10 school days of receipt of the letter. The headteacher/trust will consider any representations and confirm in writing whether the barring decision is upheld, varied or withdrawn. The decision will be reviewed at the end of the specified period, or earlier if circumstances change.
- A ban will be reviewed at the end of the specified period, or earlier if circumstances change.
- Breaching a barring order may constitute a criminal offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996 and could lead to Police involvement.
- Where a parent is banned from the school site, alternative arrangements must be made for the safe collection of their child. The parent must nominate another trusted adult, recorded on the pupil's contact list, to collect the child. School staff will not lift or vary a site ban for the purposes of child collection. In exceptional circumstances, the school will seek safeguarding advice to ensure the child's welfare is protected.

## Complaints

This Code of Conduct does not prevent parents and carers from raising genuine complaints in an appropriate manner.

In most cases, concerns can and should be resolved quickly through open and respectful dialogue with the class teacher or another relevant member of staff.

If you are not satisfied with the response received, you should follow the formal process set out in the academy's Complaints Policy. The policy is available on the Waterton Academy Trust website, and a hard copy can be provided on request from the academy office.

If, after completing the Trust's complaints procedure, you believe the process has not been followed correctly or that the Trust has acted unlawfully or unreasonably, you may escalate your concern to the Department for Education through the DfE complaints service.

## Related Policies

This policy should be read in association with the following:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Abusive or Threatening Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy

| Document Detail             |            |                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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| Version                     | Date       | Author                                                                            | Change/Reference                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1                           | 01/01/2024 | D Dickinson (CEO)                                                                 | New Policy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 2                           | 01/01/2024 | D Dickinson (CEO)                                                                 | Grammar amends and automatic opt in to policy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 3                           | 01/09/2025 | M Bretherton (DCEO)                                                               | Moved the auto opt-in clause to the top of the policy.<br>Clarified availability<br>Addition of parent groups.<br>Expanded behaviour that will not be tolerated:<br>Inserted DfE barring reference:<br>Strengthened social media guidance:<br>Added collection arrangements: procedure for safe collection of children where a parent is barred from site.<br>Corrected typos and formatting onto new trust template.<br>Addition in relation to Smart Technologies like smart glasses. |