



Dear Parents and Carers,

The Parent Code of Conduct for Romsey Schools

We are a group of local schools who work together. Our group includes Romsey Primary; Rownhams St Johns; Nursling; North Baddesley Junior and Infants; Cupernham Juniors, Cupernham Infants; Romsey Abbey Primary; The Mountbatten School; The Romsey School.

We are writing to explain a new initiative that we ask for your help with. Please see our shared 'Parent Code of Conduct' attached. This document describes the expectations that each school within our partnership has for parents and carers whilst they are working closely with our teams.

It must be emphasized that the vast majority of our parents work with us extremely well; in a supportive and mutually respectful manner. This positive partnership between home and schools helps our young people to thrive.

However, you may have seen the national press which reports that a significant number of schools are now overwhelmed by the sheer number of negative actions from their students' parents and the wider community: both face to face and online. We are not immune to this within Romsey and its local area. Regrettably all schools and Headteachers within our local group have experienced situations involving disrespectful, unprofessional and at times abusive behaviour from a small minority of parents within the last year.

These experiences are, of course, hurtful and unhelpful to the school professionals who work tirelessly to provide an excellent service across the area. They also undermine the relationships that we have with our children/students and are counter to our schools' behaviour policies. We can cite colleagues both locally and nationally who have left the profession due to their well-being having been affected by this unfair negativity.

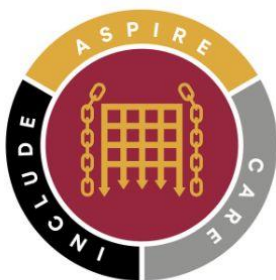
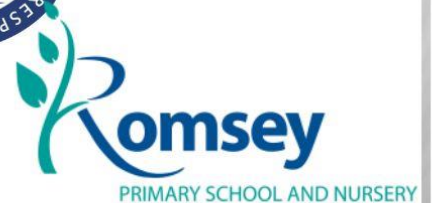
The repeated nature of these poor behaviours has led us to believe that it is vital to share what we expect from parents within this 'Code of Conduct'. We trust and expect parents to familiarise yourselves with the content of this code of conduct so that you are aware of our expectations moving forward.

We sincerely thank the vast majority of you who remain supportive and professional at all times. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

With regards,

The Romsey Partnership of Schools.

Parent Code of Conduct 2024-25



INTRODUCTION

We are very proud to work in and with a supportive community. Across our schools, the staff, governing bodies and parents/carers alike, all recognise the importance of positive working relationships to equip all our children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons we welcome and encourage parents/carers to participate fully in the life of each school.

As employers, we also have a duty of care for the health, safety and wellbeing of its staff. The school also has a legal responsibility to provide a safe and secure working environment for staff. Staff mental health is as important as their physical health.

Therefore, all parents/carers, visitors and staff are expected to behave in an acceptable, respectful manner.

The purpose of this code of conduct is to set out our shared expectations regarding conduct of all parents, carers and visitors, either when they are on the school site or in any other interactions with the school and/or school staff either directly or indirectly. We understand that everyday frustrations can cause misunderstandings and have a negative impact on relationships. Therefore, it is essential that we all remain committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner through open, positive dialogue.

We all have a role in ensuring that each school is a safe place for pupils, staff, visitors and all other members of our community. If a parent/carer has concerns, we will always listen to them and seek to address them. However, inappropriate, abusive, threatening or violent behaviour will not be tolerated. Staff and pupils have the right to expect their school to be a safe place in which to work and learn.

This code of conduct has been written to run alongside our shared Staff Code of Conduct, to which all staff must adhere.

WE EXPECT PARENTS, CARERS AND VISITORS TO:

- Respect, support and uphold the ethos and values of our schools.
- Understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefits of their children.
- Demonstrate that all members of each school's community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and behaviour.
- Always talk politely and respectfully towards each other.
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Avoid using school staff as threats to admonish children and young people's behaviour.
- Use the correct school entrances for parents/carers and visitors and sign in at reception. Please do not use other entrances such as classroom doors. This will protect the children and young people and keep each school secure.

We expect all adults to model the high standards of behaviour we want to see from children and young people.

To support a peaceful, harmonious and safe environment, our schools will not tolerate parents, carers or visitors exhibiting the following types of behaviour (this is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of unacceptable behaviour):

- Abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication.

- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding school or any of the pupils/parents/staff on any social networking sites (see Appendix 1).
- Using aggression, offensive language, swearing, cursing or displaying temper.
- Shouting at school staff, either in person or over the telephone.
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, e.g. standing very close to them.
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to a member of staff, governor, trustee, visitor, fellow parent/carer or pupil.
- Any language or actions which breach our commitment to Equality and Diversity, for example, but not exclusively, sexist, racist or homophobic comments and/or actions.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Animals being brought onto school premises (unless it is an assistance dog or pre-arranged with school staff as part of our curriculum).
- Approaching someone else's child (or parents/carers) to sort an issue out directly on school site. Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences.
- Smoking, including e-cigarettes and vaping on school site.
- Drinking alcohol or being under the influence of any intoxicating substance on school site

Unacceptable behaviour may result in the police and Local Authority being informed of the incident.

The following is intended to give guidance on:

- How schools will prepare for and respond to inappropriate behaviour.
- What any parent should expect if they demonstrate inappropriate behaviour.

Staff are advised to act and respond in a manner appropriate to the situation. The following detail shows examples of how our schools will respond to inappropriate behaviour. These may be deployed as appropriate, based on the colleague's professional judgment and the specific context at the time.

Where a meeting has been arranged with a person who has previously demonstrated inappropriate behaviours, staff may:

- Be accompanied by another member of staff.
- Set a clear agenda, expectations and outcomes before the meeting.
- Agree a time limit.
- Clarify and record outcomes.

If there is inappropriate behaviour during a meeting, staff may:

- Ask the parent/carer to stop their behaviours, change their manner and approach the situation in a calm manner.
- If the unacceptable behaviour continues:
 - State calmly that the meeting has closed for that day.
 - Offer to make another appointment when they are calm.
 - Request the parent/carer leave or the staff leave the room – call a colleague/senior leader or the police, if necessary.
- Make a recording of the meeting on our recording system for safeguarding.

If the conversation is on the telephone, staff will:

- State they will end the call if the caller is not polite and calm.
- Make a joint call with another member of staff and inform the parent which staff members are on the call.

- Put the phone down if they do not respond to this request – first stating that they are putting the phone down now.
- Parents/carers are reminded that telephone calls may be recorded.

If the parent/carer or visitor approaches a member of staff following an incident of inappropriate behaviour, the member of staff will:

- Listen to what the parent/carer has to say.
- If necessary, the staff member will politely say that the issue has been passed to a senior leader, who will now be dealing with it.
- Walk away.
- Only listen to concerns raised through school channels, e.g. not when out in public,
- Record the incident on the school's safeguarding system.

If a member of staff is upset or affected in any way they are encouraged to:

- Seek in-school help and advice from a senior leader.
- Contact external staff support networks as listed on the staff guidance sheet.

If a member of staff witnesses inappropriate behaviour towards another member of staff, they will not ignore it. They will:

- Walk up and stand by the member of staff.
- Intervene if this seems appropriate using strategies from above.
- Suggest the parent/carer/visitor makes an appointment.
- Escort the colleague away to a safe place and ensure they are ok.
- Record the incident on the school's safeguarding system.
- Inform a senior leader.

A senior leader will take action. They will:

- Follow up any incidents of inappropriate behaviour.
- Make sure the incident has been recorded on the school's safeguarding system.
- Send a letter/email to the parent/carer to clarify expected behaviour, make a telephone call or set up a meeting.
- Decide if further actions should be taken (e.g. make a risk assessment, take legal advice from a legal team (for some schools this will be Hampshire County Council) about a warning letter, and/or a ban from school site).
- Ensure the member of staff is supported.
- If required or necessary, contact the Police.

There should be a written record made of all incidents with witness statements included where appropriate. No meeting at school may be recorded electronically without the express permission of all parties, and information obtained without such permission will not be admissible in any proceedings. Further details from the DfE on this can be found [here](#).

Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking with the class teacher, the school leaders, or the Chair of Governors/Trustees. All schools in the area encourage parents/carers who have an issue to use the complaints policy. These are found on the website of each individual school. This will enable them to be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively, with the aim of resolving the situation on behalf of all concerned.

If parents/carers continue to be unhappy with the quality of service that our schools provide, they have the right to exercise their parental right to register their child with another school.

We trust that parents/carers and visitors will assist our schools with the implementation of this code of conduct, and we thank you for your continuing support of our schools.

APPENDIX 1 – SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Inappropriate use of social media websites is being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff and in some cases other parents/carers/pupils.

The Governors of our schools consider social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and neither in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

In the event that any pupils or parent/carers of a child/ren being educated in our schools are found to be posting libellous, inflammatory or defamatory comments on any 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 acceptable content that can be posted on their sites, and they provide robust mechanisms to support investigation into conduct or activity that breaches these.

The school will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately. Where we deem appropriate, the individual school will also consider its legal position to deal with any misuse of social networking and other sites.

APPENDIX 2 – RELEVANT NATIONAL GUIDANCE

- 1) HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE (HSE) DEFINITION OF WORK-RELATED VIOLENCE: 'Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work'.
- 2) SECTION 547 OF THE EDUCATION ACT 1996 - PERSONS CAUSING NUISANCE/ DISTURBANCE ON SCHOOL PREMISES:

School premises are private property, and parents/carers have been granted permission from the school to be on the premises. However, in extreme or persistent cases of abuse or threats to staff, pupils or other parents/carers, school may ban parents/carers from entering school site.

School is not responsible for organising arrangements for children in the above circumstances. Parents/carers will need to provide alternative arrangements for bringing children into school.

It is also an offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996 for any person (including a parent) to cause a nuisance or disturbance on school premises. The police may be called to assist in removing the person concerned.