



## **Parent Code of Conduct Policy**

### **Singleton Church of England School**

#### **Mission Statement**

“Passion for learning ....Passion for life”

To be a Christ centred community where the uniqueness of each individual is recognised and celebrated. We ensure pupils and staff feel loved and valued, and that their full potential is realised within a secure, stimulating and happy environment.

#### **The Singleton School Overview**

Singleton Church of England Primary School strives to provide a well-rounded education for our children within a stimulating, fun learning environment. We believe that all children who become pupils at our school deserve the best Christian Education and we have the highest expectations of pupil attainment, teacher performance, governor performance, support staff performance and parental involvement. We encourage everyone to strive for excellence and achieve their full potential.

At Singleton Church of England Primary School, 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 school. Singleton Church of England Primary School has a duty of care to all stakeholders, including staff, parents and pupils, to ensure their safety and well-being. The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about the expected conduct. This is so we can continue to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

We believe staff, parents and children are entitled to a safe and protective environment in which to work. Behaviour that will cause harassment, alarm or distress to users of the premises is contrary to the aims of the school.

**Aims:**

All members of the school community treat each other with respect and dignity.

**Expectation:**

- That adults set a good example to children at all times, showing them how to get along with all members of the school and the wider community.
- That no members of staff, parents or children are the victims of abusive behaviour or open to threats from other adults on the school premises.
- Physical attacks and threatening behaviour, abusive or insulting language verbal or written, to staff, governors, parents and carers, children and other users of the school premises will not be tolerated and will result in the withdrawal of permission to be on school premises.
- Any parent who is asked to leave the school premises will have the right to appeal the decision by writing to the Chair of Governors.

Please note that incidents of rudeness will be logged with the Chair of Governors.

Responsibilities: It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher and Governors to monitor and review this policy.

**Signed**

**Date**

**Reviewed**

# Parental Behaviour Policy

## Guidelines

As well as following the guidance set out in our Home-School Agreement, we expect parents, carers and visitors to:

- Respect the Christian ethos of our school.

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated towards any member of the school community:

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

- Disruptive behaviour, which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, office area or any other area of the school grounds.
- Shouting, either in person or over the telephone
- Intimidatory behaviours including displaying temper
- Inappropriate posting on Social Networking sites - e.g. deemed as bullying or personal / derogatory towards members of staff or the school
- Defamation of the school's or staff character on Facebook or other social sites
- Speaking in an aggressive/threatening tone
- Physically intimidating, e.g. standing very close
- The use of aggressive hand gestures/exaggerated movements
- Physical threats
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Swearing
- Pushing
- Hitting e.g. slapping, punching or kicking
- Spitting
- Racist or sexist comments
- Unwarranted and unnecessary correspondence taking up undue teaching and administrative time
- Abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of their actions towards another child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- Using loud, rude or offensive language or making malicious comments

## Key Principles

Should any of the above behaviour occur on school premises the school may feel it is necessary to contact the appropriate authorities and, if necessary, even ban the offending adult from entering the school grounds. Here are our key principles:

- The education of the children of the parent involved will not be compromised in any way;
- Clear documentary evidence is kept of any correspondence, action or decisions for a period of at least 12 months;
- The school will fully investigate all valid concerns;

- Any decisions will be fully communicated to the parent
- Unacceptable behaviour may result in the Police being informed.
- The school reserves the right to take any necessary actions to ensure that member of the school community are not subjected to abuse.
- School premises are private property and parents have been granted permission from the school to be on school premises. However, in case of abuse or threats to staff, pupils or other parents, school may ban parents from entering school.
- It is also an offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1997 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.
- School is not responsible for organising arrangement for children in the above circumstances. Parents will need to provide alternative arrangements for bringing children into school.
- Parents have the right of appeal by writing to the Chair of Governors within ten days of permission to enter the school premises being withdrawn.

### **Procedures**

The school has a range of strategies to employ with any parent who persists with unacceptable conduct. Whilst these sanctions are set out in the policy by way of a sequential process, they can initiated at any stage if, in the judgement of the Principal, the severity of the behaviour warrants such a level of intervention.

1. School guidance – Parent Conduct Policy and Zero Tolerance policy (Appendix 2)
2. Verbal Warning/Mediation Meeting

A parent who displays any of the behaviour as described above will be asked politely to desist and offered the opportunity to discuss the matter in person on the first occasion.

3. Two Formal Written Warnings

A formal written letter will be sent to the parent where they continue to act unacceptably. This is signed by the Head Teacher / Chair of Governing body or the Safeguarding Governor if the Chair is not available and circulated to relevant internal parties to ensure that an informed and consistent approach can be adopted. This letter is kept in the file of any pupil at the school. Should a further incident occur, a second formal written warning should be issued.

4. Legal Sanctions

If a parent breaches the expected standard of behaviour as set out in the Parental Code of Conduct despite formal written warnings, then the school may consider the following the following sanctions – these will only be used in extreme circumstances if a parent continues to exhibit conduct in breach of this policy.

## 5. An injunction under the Protection from Harassment Act

The school may seek an injunction requiring them to desist from behaving in the manner in question. The school will seek an injunction against the parent's conduct under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

6. Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) The school may seek an ASBO. The Court will have the ability to grant an ASBO which would prohibit the parent from pursuing a certain course of action.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Parental Complaints Policy. Singleton Church of England Primary School expects all parental complaints to be taken seriously and to be dealt with comprehensively and as far as possible in confidence. Singleton Schools complaints policy allows parents' complaints about school issues to be dealt with efficiently and sensitively, and at the appropriate level. We trust that parents and carers will assist our school with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continuing support of the school.

### **PERSISTANT AND VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS - WHO IS A PERSISTENT COMPLAINANT?**

For the purpose of this policy, a persistent complainant is a parent/carer or member of the public who complains about issues, either formally or informally, or frequently raises issues that the complainant considers to be within the remit of the school, and whose behaviour is unreasonable.

Such behaviour may be characterised by:

- a) actions which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious;
- b) prolific correspondence or excessive e-mail or telephone contact about a concern or complaint;
- c) uses Freedom of Information requests excessively and unreasonably
- d) an insistence upon pursuing unsubstantial complaints and/or unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes;
- e) an insistence upon pursuing complaints in an unreasonable manner;
- f) an insistence on only dealing with the headteacher on all occasions irrespective of the issue and the level of delegation in the school to deal with such matters;
- g) an insistence upon repeatedly pursuing a complaint when the outcome is not satisfactory to the complainant but cannot be changed, for example, if the desired outcome is beyond the remit of the school because it is unlawful.

For the purpose of this policy, harassment is the unreasonable pursuit of such actions as in (a) to (g) above in such a way that they:

- a) appear to be targeted over a significant period of time on one or more members of school staff and/or
- b) cause ongoing distress to individual member(s) of school staff and/or
- c) have a significant adverse effect on the whole/parts of the school community and/or

d) are pursued in a manner which can be perceived as intimidating and oppressive by the recipient.

This could include situations where persistent demands and criticisms, whilst not particularly taxing or serious when viewed in isolation, have a cumulative effect over time of undermining confidence, well-being and health.

#### **THE SCHOOL'S ACTIONS IN CASES OF PERSISTENT OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS OR HARASSMENT**

In the first instance the school will verbally inform the complainant that his / her behaviour is considered to be becoming unreasonable / unacceptable and, if it is not modified, action may be taken in accordance with this policy.

1) This will be confirmed in writing (Model Letter 1).

2) If the behaviour is not modified the school will take some or all of the following actions as necessary, having regard to the nature of the complainant's behaviour and the effect of this on the school community:

a) inform the complainant in writing that his/her behaviour is now considered by the school to be unreasonable/unacceptable and, therefore, to fall under the terms of this policy (see Model Letter 2);

b) inform the complainant that all meetings with a member of staff will be conducted with a second person present and that notes of meetings may be taken in the interests of all parties (see Model Letter 2);

c) inform the complainant that, except in emergencies, all routine communication with the complainant to the school should be by letter only (see Model Letter 2);

d) (in the case of physical, or verbal aggression) take advice from LA HR / Legal Services (services purchased by the Governing Body) and consider warning the complainant about being banned from the school site; or proceed straight to a temporary ban;

e) consider taking advice from the LA on pursuing a case under Anti-Harassment legislation;

f) consider taking advice from the HR / Legal Services of the LA about putting in place a specific procedure for dealing with complaints from the complainant, i.e. the complainant will not be able to deal directly with the headteacher but only with a third person to be identified by the governing body of the school, who will investigate, determine whether or not the concern / complaint is reasonable or vexatious and then advise the headteacher accordingly.

3) Thus, based on point 2f above, legitimate new complaints may still be considered even if the person making them is, or has been, subject to the Policy for Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints and/or Harassment in Schools.

However, the school will be advised by the HR / Legal Services of the LA.

4) If a complainant's persistent complaining/harassing behaviour is modified and is then resumed at a later date within a reasonable period of time, the school may resume the process identified above

at an appropriate level. In these circumstances advice may be sought from the HR/Legal Services of the LA

### **Possible Appendix items**

#### **Appendix 1**

##### **Inappropriate use of Social Network Site**

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Head teachers, school staff, governors, volunteers and in some cases other parents/pupils.

The Governors of Singleton Church of England School 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 Singleton Church of England Primary School 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 content 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.

We would expect that parents would make all persons responsible for collecting children aware of this policy.

**Zero Tolerance Policy**

Zero Tolerance - Singleton Church of England Primary School will not tolerate aggressive or obstructive behaviour, swearing, threatened or actual bodily harm.

Discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated nor will malicious damage or theft. Any individual who displays abusive, aggressive or violent behaviour will be asked to leave the site and may be reported to the police. If appropriate, an exclusion order may be issued to prevent an individual coming to or Singleton Church of England Primary School in the Future.



## **GUIDANCE ON DEALING WITH AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR**

### **MODEL LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER / CHAIR OF GOVERNING BODY**

#### **DISAPPROVAL OF BEHAVIOUR**

Dear (Name)

I am writing to you following an incident that took place on ..... between yourself and the above school. I find this behaviour totally unacceptable. (Summarise what the unacceptable behaviour was). Not only was it extremely distressing to myself and the other members of the school community involved, but also it was worrying for children and parents who witnessed it. I am also very concerned that such a sudden deterioration in the relationship between you and the school will not help (name)'s progress.

Any parent who has **serious** concerns about the school should make an appointment to speak to the Head / Chair of Governors. If you are not satisfied with the response, you may contact or write a letter of complaint to the Governing Body. I recommend you continue to pursue your concerns about the school in this way.

Meanwhile, I must warn you that any repetition of what happened will lead to me taking further action. This could involve your being prohibited from coming onto the school site and referral to the Local Authority or the Police, **with a view to criminal and/or civil legal proceedings being commenced against you if necessary without further notice to yourself.**

I hope this will not be necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher /Chair of Governors

MODEL LETTER FROM HEADTEACHER PROHIBITION FROM SCHOOL SITE

Dear (Name)

In view of what happened when you came into school and (brief details of incident), **I am prohibiting you from entering the school site until further notice.**

The only exception to this prohibition will be on those occasions when you are specifically invited by me to come into school to discuss your child's progress.

If you wish to communicate with the school on any matter, you must do so by telephone or writing.

If you do not abide by this prohibition I will refer to the Local Authority, **with a view to criminal and/or civil legal proceedings being commenced against you, if necessary without further notice to yourself,** although I hope this will not be necessary.

I regret taking this action, but your recent behaviour has left me no alternative.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

c.c. Chair of Governors

Prior to this letter being issued the legal department would be contacted and protocols and procedures followed

## **MODEL LETTER 1:**

### **INITIAL LETTER INFORMING A COMPLAINANT THAT HIS/HER BEHAVIOUR IS CONSIDERED TO FALL BELOW A REASONABLE/ ACCEPTABLE STANDARD RECORDED DELIVERY**

Dear

This letter is to inform you that the school considers your actions in [describe actions, dates, behaviour] on ..... when you ..... to be unreasonable/unacceptable [delete as appropriate].

We would ask you to bear in mind the fact that such behaviour on a school site can be disruptive and distressing to pupils, staff and parents/carers [delete if behaviour complained of did not occur on school site e.g. persistent use of e-mail, verbally abusive telephone calls].

We are aware that you have raised some concerns, and would advise you that these are usually dealt with most effectively through the School's Complaints Procedure.

At the moment we are dealing with these issues by [describe actions being taken to resolve concern].

Please note that the School's Code of Conduct for Parents Policy under Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints/Harassment sets out standards of behaviour expected of all people in their dealings with the School. These include:

- Behaving reasonably;
- Treating others with courtesy and respect;
- Resolving complaints using the School's Complaints Procedure;
- Avoiding physical and verbal aggression at all times.

The Policy also indicates the steps that we may take if these standards are breached. These include:

- making special arrangements for meetings and communication with the school;
- considering a ban from the school premises;
- considering legal action. I would ask that you allow school time to resolve the issues according to the correct procedures, and would assure you that we shall take every step to move this process forward as quickly as possible.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

**MODEL LETTER 2:**

**INFORMING A COMPLAINANT THAT HIS/HER BEHAVIOUR IS NOW CONSIDERED TO FALL UNDER THE TERMS OF THE POLICY FOR DEALING WITH PERSISTENT OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS/HARASSMENT RECORDED DELIVERY**

Dear

You will recall that I wrote to you on [insert date] telling you that I felt your behaviour was unreasonable. I am now writing to inform you that in view of your behaviour on [date], when you [describe actions/behaviour] it has been decided that the School's Parent Code of Conduct Policy under Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complaints/Harassment will apply from the date of this letter.

In the circumstances I have made the following arrangements for your future contact with the school: [\*Delete A or B as applicable]

\*A For the foreseeable future, should you wish to meet with any member of staff, I would ask you to note: (a) all routine communication, including any request for a meeting between you and the school, will be by letter only.

Letters from you need to be addressed to ..... at the school address; email correspondence will not be responded to;

- (a) An appointment will be arranged and confirmed in writing as soon as possible;
- (b) A third party from the school will be present;
- (c) In the interests of all parties, formal notes of this meeting may be made.

\*B For the foreseeable future, all meetings arising from any written communication with the school will not be conducted by a member of staff, but will be conducted by ..... representing the school. I would ask you to note:

- (a) All routine communication, including any request for a meeting between you and the school, will be by letter only. Letters from you need to be addressed to ..... at the school address; email correspondence will not be responded to;
- (b) An appointment will be arranged and confirmed in writing as soon as possible; a third party will be present;
- (c) In the interests of all parties, formal notes of this meeting may be made. Exceptionally, these arrangements do not apply to any emergency involving [insert name of pupil] – in which case you should contact the school in the usual way.

While these arrangements are in place, with respect to normal access to information available on parents' evenings, this will be provided in a summary written report. These arrangements take effect straightaway. If you wish to make a representation about the contents of this letter, which may include any expressions of regret on your part and any assurances that you are prepared to give about your future good conduct, you can do so by writing to me at the school by [state ten working days from the date of the letter].

If on receipt of your comments I consider that the arrangements outlined above should continue, you will be supplied with details of how to review a circumstance of your case. I do hope that the difficulties we are currently experiencing can soon be resolved.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher/ Chair of Governors