WATERTON
ACADEMY TRUST®

Code of Conduct
for Parents, Carers & Visitors

Introduction

We are very proud and fortunate to have dedicated and supportive communities in all Waterton Academy Trust academies. Staff, governors, parents and carers all recognise that the education of our children is best delivered through partnership. For these reasons, we will continue to welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our academies.

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

We understand that everyday frustrations can cause misunderstandings and have a negative impact on relationships. Establishing where this happens and that we remain committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner through open positive dialogue is however essential.

Waterton Academy Trust already has a code of conduct for all its employees and governors and deems it only appropriate that this code should therefore focus on the wider academy community. The policy clarifies the types of behaviour that will not be tolerated and requires parental adherance to these expectations. The policy also sets out the actions the Trust and academies may take should breaches occur.

Behaviour that will not be tolerated:

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the academies normal operation or activities anywhere on the academy premises.
- Any inappropriate behaviour on the academy premises.
- Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper.
- Threatening in any way, a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or pupil.
- Damaging or destroying academy property.
- Sending abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications (including social media) to anyone within the academy community.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the academy or any of the pupils/parents/staff/governors at the academy on Facebook or other sites .
- The use of physical, verbal or written aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment of your own child on academy premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child.
- Smoking, including e-cigarettes, taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on academy premises (Alcohol may only be consumed during authorised events).

Should **any** of the above occur then the academy may feel it is necessary to take action by contacting the appropriate authorities and/or sadly, consider banning the offending adult from entering the academy premises altogether. Thank you for abiding by this policy in our academy. Together we create a positive and uplifting environment not only for the children, but also all who work and visit our academy.

Please note: can parents/carers please make sure all persons collecting their children are aware of this policy.

Breaches of the Code

In the event of any parent/carer or visitor of the academy breaking this code then proportionate actions will be taken as follows;

In cases where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter, the concerns will in the first instance be referred to the Police. This will include any or all cases of threats or violence and actual violence to any child staff or governor in the academy, This will also include anything that could be seen as a sign of harassment of any member of the academy community, such as any form of insulting social media post or any form of social media cyber bullying. In cases where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander

then the academy will refer the matter to the Waterton Academy Trust's Legal Team for further action. In cases where the code of conduct has been broken but the breach was not libellous, slanderous or criminal matter, then the academy will send out a formal letter to the parent/carer with an invite to a meeting.

If the parent/carer refuses to attend the meeting then the academy will write to the parent/carer and ask them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not they may be banned from the academy premises. If after this behaviour continues the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place.

Note: (1) a ban from the academy can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above in more serious cases.
(2) Site bans will normally be limited in the first instance.

Complaints

This code of conduct does not prevent parent/carers from raising a legitimate complaint in an appropriate fashion.

In most cases we hope that all complaints and concerns can be resolved through open dialogue with class teachers or other members of staff as appropriate.

Where you are not satisfied with responses received however, we would ask that you then follow the complaints procedure as laid out in our academy complaints policy. This is available on the Waterton Academy Trust website, however should you prefer, then please contact the academy office and we can arrange for a hard copy to be made available.

Issues of conduct with the use of social media

Most people take part in online activities and social media. It's fun, interesting and keeps us connected. There are various online academy groups managed by parents for parents, such as class Facebook pages, and they can be a wonderful source of knowledge, support and advice. We encourage you to join in and positively participate if you wish. Within these spaces however, we ask that you use common sense when discussing academy life online.

Think before you post

We ask that social media, whether public or private, should not be used to fuel campaigns and voice complaints against the academy, academy staff, parents or pupils.

We take very seriously inappropriate use of social media by a parent to publicly humiliate or criticise another parent, pupil or member of staff.

If parents have any concerns about their child in relation to the academy as we have said above they should:

1. Initially contact the class teacher
2. If the concern remains they should contact the head teacher
3. If still unresolved, follo0w the formal complaints procedure

They should not use social media as a medium to air any concerns or grievances.

Online activity which we consider inappropriate:
• Identifying or posting images/videos of pupils without permission.
• Abusive or personal comments about staff, pupils or other parents.
• Bringing the academy into disrepute.
• Posting defamatory or libellous comments.
• Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or pupils.
• Using social media to publicly challenge academy policies or discuss issues about individual children.
• Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language.

• Breaching academy security procedures.

At Waterton we take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents appropriately in line with the actions outlined above.

Auto opt in:

As a trust that educates and cares for over 3500 pupils, we do not believe it is the best use of our administration team to be managing the signing of Code of Conduct agreements. Therefore, going forward, we will work on the premise that every parent auto opt in and agrees to adhere with the Code of Conduct. Should a parent not wish to follow to the code, then they must inform the trust in writing and their concerns will be dealt with on an individual basis.

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