



# **VISITOR & PARENT/CARER CODE OF CONDUCT & COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

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### 1. John Colet Policy Statement

John Colet Academy considers the safety of everyone in our school as the highest priority in our organisation. As part of our focus on diversity and inclusion, JCS pledges that our policies will seek to promote equality, fairness, and respect for all. Our policies reflect the JCS community values.

This policy has been implemented following consultation with the recognised trade unions and will be reviewed on an triennial basis to reflect changes in local and national guidance.

Our main aim is to develop a good working relationship with parents and carers. We hope that you understand our need for guidance in this area to ensure we can provide a productive and safe environment for our school community. We trust that you will assist the school with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continuing support.

For the purpose of this policy, the term Trust refers to JCS. The term school and the term academy are interchangeable. The term pupil and the term student are interchangeable. Visitors include, but are not limited to, parents/carers, wider family, members of the community, external agencies and other guests.

### 2. Introduction, Scope and Policy Aims

JCS is committed to ensuring that all of our school environment is safe for everyone and that all adults act as role models to our pupils in the way that they conduct themselves. Throughout JCS, we seek to maintain positive relationships with members of our school communities and value strong relationships with all stakeholders as we recognise that these relationships are fundamental to the success of our pupils.

According to [DFE Guidance on Controlling Access to School Premises](#), people do not have an automatic right to enter school premises. Visitors (including parents), however, do have what is known as an 'implied licence' to come onto school premises at certain times for certain reasons. Examples include appointments or meetings, school events and to

drop off or collect younger children.

The vast majority of visitors to JCS, whether they are parents, wider family, members of the community or other guests, demonstrate the values which we want to promote to our pupils. We value the positive interaction between staff, volunteers and the families of our students and we will always listen to any concerns and seek to address them.

Unfortunately, there may be occasions where visitors do not conduct themselves in a manner we would deem acceptable. JCS owes a duty of care to all persons at our academies – staff, volunteers, students, Trustees and Governors.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the behaviour expected of adults visiting our schools, as well as detailing the procedures in place for dealing with any instances where conduct falls below these expectations.

This scope of this policy also includes communications via phone or electronically (i.e e-mail) use of social media to bring the school or any member thereof into disrepute, or comments deemed to be defamatory or abusive .

### **3. Expected Behaviour**

The school expects that all adults visiting JCS will:

- Act in a way and use language that is consistent with our values of Ready, Responsible, Respectful and Kind, as well as the ethos of the school.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with speech and behaviour, whether face to face or via other forms of communication such as telephone or email
- Respect the school environment by keeping it clean and tidy.
- Respect the professional integrity of staff
- Work in partnership with staff to resolve any concerns in a positive manner. This includes clarifying their child's version of events with the school who are able to gather information that gives a holistic perspective of any situation.
- Correct their child's behaviour appropriately, particularly where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggression or a lack of safety.
- Respect that staff may not always be immediately available and an appointment may be required.
- Follow site-specific rules in relation to parking, one-way systems, visitor signing-in procedures etc.
- Show consideration and respect for all staff, pupils and other visitors including parents of other pupils.
- Support the school's policies
- Make an appointment in advance where this is appropriate to the reason for the visit.

In light of the above, when on school premises, JCS expects that adults visiting our school will not:

- Discriminate against any individual, whether a staff member, pupil or other visitor, on the basis of a protected characteristic under the [Equality Act 2010](#).
- Engage in inappropriate conversations with any pupils that they may encounter upon their visit. If they have any concerns about a pupil they should report it to school staff immediately in line with the safeguarding procedures at that school.
- Engage in conversations with others about pupils, staff or other adults within the school community that are unrelated to the concerns about their child.
- Discuss any issues of a confidential matter outside of school.
- Resort to any form of bribery or other inducement or other such manipulations which would compromise staff in any way.

#### **4. Staff Conduct**

Equally the school expects staff to conduct themselves in line with professional standards. For many staff managing challenging scenarios or agitated parents can be intimidating and create anxiety. Over time as scenarios are experienced staff become more confident and skilled in such instances.

#### **5. Inappropriate Behaviour**

At JCS, we take instances of inappropriate behaviour very seriously and will not tolerate any circumstances which may make staff, pupils or any other member of the school community feel threatened or uncomfortable.

The following are examples of what JCS considers to be inappropriate behaviour at our central office, or in any communication with staff directly (e.g. face to face) or indirectly (e.g. e-mail) . This list is not exhaustive and other types of behaviour that cause harm or distress to any member of the school community will also fall under the remit of this policy:

- Any form of actual or threatened violence including behaviour which causes alarm or distress.
- Verbal abuse including swearing or using other offensive or discriminatory language.
- Shouting at individuals either in person or over the phone.
- Using aggressive gestures or body language such as raising a fist or finger.
- Sending any form of abusive or offensive communication about a member of the school community, including posting on social media.
- Making defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school or any member of the school community, including on social media.
- Any form of harassment whether in person or online.
- Disruptive behaviour that interferes with the operation of the school.
- Causing intentional damage to property.
- Trespassing on school property.
- Breaching security procedures (e.g. not following visitor sign-in protocols).
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss/chastise them in relation to perceived/actual actions towards their own child.
- Approaching another parent in order to discuss/chastise the other parent's child in relation to a perceived / actual action towards their child.
- Smoking, drinking alcohol or taking illegal drugs on school premises (including vaping).
- Dangerous driving on school premises.
- Refusal to support school rules which comply with the law (e.g. detentions)
- Expecting immediate contact from school staff (not in line with our communication policy)

Should any of the above occur at JCS we may feel it is necessary to take action in line with this policy including contacting the Police if we feel a criminal offence has occurred.

#### **6. Responding To and Managing Inappropriate Behaviour**

JCS recognises that situations in school can often be complex, challenging and emotive. This does not stand in the way of our commitment to ensuring that our school environment is as safe as possible for everyone, however, we understand that a prescribed approach to managing inappropriate behaviour by visitors isn't necessarily apt depending on the context and severity of the situation. However, if the school suspects,

or becomes aware, that a parent has breached the code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent/carer about the incident. All incidents will be logged as a matter of course regardless of next steps.

Depending on the nature of the incident and the parental response to any issue, the school may then:

- Send a warning letter to the parent
- Invite the parent in to school to meet with a senior member of staff or the Headteacher
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from the trust's legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)
- Ban the parent from the school site
- Ban other forms of direct communication (e.g email) by the parent/carer to school staff

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the code of conduct rests with the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will consult the Chair of Governors before banning a parent from the school site.

Leaders will ensure that appropriate aftercare and support is put in place for any member of the JCS community who is affected by an incident.

The following are further examples of responses to inappropriate behaviour that may be utilised by JCS in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community. The list is not exhaustive and leaders may take other appropriate measures in the interests of safeguarding staff and pupils:

- **In any instances of physical violence, calling the Police immediately.**
- Barring an individual from the school premises when an incident is severe or the inappropriate behaviour is repeated (see Appendix Two for further details).
- Inviting anyone who is behaving inappropriately into a separate and private room so they have the opportunity to collect themselves and calm down.
- Terminating any meetings where inappropriate behaviour is persistent or severe.
- Asking anyone who is behaving inappropriately to leave the school site.
- In instances where an individual is refusing to leave the school site or attends whilst they are barred, calling the Police to remove them in line with the [Education Act 1996 s547](#).
- Following up any instances of inappropriate behaviour with a verbal warning, either via phone call or in a separate meeting, advising that repetition of such conduct may result in a ban from the school site.
- Following up any instances of inappropriate behaviour with a written warning advising that repetition of such conduct may result in a ban from the school site.
- Appointing a single point of contact for individuals who have behaved inappropriately.
- Where there is conflict between two people with parental responsibility for a child, arranging separate meetings (e.g. parent consultation evening appointments).
- Instructing a single method of communication with individuals who have behaved inappropriately (e.g. email only if verbal abuse has taken place over the phone).

## **7. Policy Monitoring and Review**

Monitoring of the impact of this policy will be undertaken through our governance processes. The policy will be reviewed on a triennial basis.

## **APPENDIX ONE: PROCEDURE FOR BARRING A PARENT FROM SITE**

[DFE Guidance on Controlling Access to School Premises](#) clearly states that a school may bar someone from their premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or pupils. It is enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened.

In the event that JCS has to take this course of action, the following process will be implemented:

1. School will inform the governing body that they intend to ban a person from their school site so that appropriate support and guidance can be provided. This may include consultation with BDAT legal partners.
2. Next, the Headteacher will inform the person in writing that they have been barred or that they intend to bar them from the school premises, setting out the reasons behind this intention.
3. The individual has a right to present their side of the situation so the Headteacher should invite them to make written representations or attend a meeting to give them this opportunity.
4. The Governors will make the final decision whether to bar based on the representations made by the school and the individual, whether this has been done through a meeting or in writing.
5. The Governors will inform the individual of the outcome in writing. If the decision is to bar them from school premises, this correspondence should detail the timescale for which the barring applies and when the decision will be reviewed.
6. The welfare of any children affected by the decision remains paramount. All measures should be taken to safeguard them and promote their wellbeing. For example, if the barred individual is a parent and the child needs dropping off or collecting, the Headteacher should ensure that this can be done safely with minimal disruption to the child's education.
7. The governing body and Headteacher should review any bars on a termly basis to see whether they need to remain in place. This should take into account any subsequent behaviour of the individual who is barred and balance the risk to safety of staff/pupils against the rights of the individual to attend the school premises.
8. Where a person who is barred is unhappy about the decision, they should refer to the Complaints Policy and follow these procedures.