



# Parents/Carers Unacceptable Conduct & Parental Dispute Policy

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Approved by: Head teacher

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## Parents/Carers Unacceptable Conduct Policy

Portway Junior School is a place where children, their parents/carers and our staff are entitled to feel safe and free from harm or abuse. Relationships between staff and parents/carers should demonstrate mutual respect and reflect the shared responsibility for pupils' wellbeing.

The vast majority of parents, carers and visitors to our school demonstrate positive behaviour. However, on rare occasions, individuals behave in a way which is unacceptable. This can include aggressive behaviour, verbal or physical abuse, or harassment, towards members of staff or members of the wider school community. Abusive behaviour towards school staff or other members of the school community will not be tolerated. We follow our School Communication Charter contained in Appendix 1 of this policy.

If a parent/carer behaves in an aggressive, harassing or otherwise abusive manner towards a member of the school community, the Headteacher or a member of Senior Leadership Team will initially seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If the parent/carer wishes to do so, the school's complaints procedure may also be implemented.

Incidents of unacceptable conduct or threatening/violent behaviour may be documented by staff on an incident report form. The template of this form is available in Appendix 2 of this document. Where appropriate, a risk assessment may also be undertaken in order to identify and assess any potential risk to staff or wider school community members and to determine and implement an appropriate course of action. For transparency, a copy of our risk assessment is available within Appendix 3.

Where all procedures in the Communication Charter have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continues, or where there is an extreme act of violence or aggression, a parent or carer may be banned by the Headteacher from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review.

In imposing a ban, the following steps will be taken:

- the parent/carer will be informed, in writing, that she/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, e.g., that police involvement or an injunction application may follow
- where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the local authority and the police will be included
- the chair of the Governing body will be informed of the ban
- where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified

Should a parent/carer attend school grounds while a ban is in place, the school may call the police to remove the person under s547 of the Education Act 1996.

This policy may be revised as necessary.

## **Parental Dispute Policy**

Parental Responsibility (PR) is defined within the Children Act 1989 as: “All the legal rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority a parent has for the child and the child’s property”. Both parents may exercise their rights and responsibilities for the child. A Child Arrangements Order can also share PR with a person specified in that Order.

Information provided to Portway Junior School on enrolment, detailing who has PR and the address or addresses of that pupil, is presumed to be correct unless an original Birth Certificate or Court Order is provided to us demonstrating otherwise. PR can be applied jointly and severally. In practice, this means that parents can act in agreement to make decisions, or they can act independently and separately.

Portway Junior School does not have the legal authority to act at the request of one parent to restrict the other, unless we have been provided with a Court Order allowing for this, such as a Prohibited Steps Order or a Specific Issue Order. This applies to consents and to information sharing. If such an Order is made, it is the responsibility of the parents to inform school and provide relevant documentation to us.

Portway Junior School expects all parents to behave in an acceptable manner.

Complexities can arise where there is a parental dispute and parents hold different views about what is in the best interests of their child. Portway Junior School will focus on the welfare of the pupil as being paramount. In the absence of a Court Order, parents are responsible for resolving conflicts between themselves and it is not appropriate for school to intervene in disputes within families other than where our involvement is necessary for safeguarding.

Portway Junior School will balance requests of parents with our statutory duties – having parental responsibility does not allow a parent to obstruct Portway Junior School from carrying out our duties under legislation, including the effective provision of education or meeting our welfare and safeguarding obligations to a pupil.

If there has been a serious breakdown in the relationship between child and parent, or where there is a risk of domestic abuse or other such factor, it may be necessary for Portway Junior School to limit information shared or consent for some activities. Where parental consent is required for outings, activities or residential trips, we will seek consent from the resident parent.

This policy may be revised as necessary.

Data will be processed to be in line with the requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation, Data Protection Act as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

## **Appendix 1**

### **School Communication Charter**

Communication between home and school is vital to good communications and for the well-being of pupils, parents, carers and staff. This Charter sets out how communication will be managed to make sure it is productive. In addition to parents' evenings, school events, etc., there may be occasions when parents or carers wish to communicate with the school directly with questions or information related to their child. To make sure that this is effective these principles will be applied. If an emergency situation arises, it is important that you contact us as soon as possible and explain what has or is happening.

#### **Our commitment as a school**

##### **We will:**

- ensure that there is regular, proactive communication about your child's achievement and wellbeing
- respond to emails, phone calls or requests for meetings usually within two/three] working days
- if there is an urgent matter, the school receptionist will ask an appropriate member of staff to deal with the issue as soon as possible
- display polite, professional conduct at all times

#### **Our expectations of parents and carers**

##### **You will:**

- ensure that any communication with the school, whether by email or telephone, is polite and respectful
- make use of information channels in place, such as the school website, for keeping up to date with routine information
- give an outline of what the issue is, to make sure the query is directed to the right person
- use the school mailbox or main reception telephone number as first point of contact (the school will forward your request to the appropriate staff member)
- ensure your emails are brief and clear
- refrain from sending multiple emails regarding the same query
- limit the number of people you send an email about a query
- understand that a teacher or member of staff may be unable to respond on the same day on which a query is made
- understand that teachers or other school staff will not respond outside of school hours, i.e., evenings or weekends

If there is an in-person meeting, everyone must show mutual respect. The meeting will focus on resolving the issues that are relevant to that family or pupil. No offensive language, insults or personal attacks on school staff will be tolerated. If any such incidents occur, the meeting or call can be terminated with immediate effect. A parent, carer or pupil may only record a meeting or conversation with the express permission of all parties to that call or meeting.

The constraints on school resources make it essential that parents and carers use authorised school procedures in order to avoid diverting time and attention that must be invested directly in pupils' learning and wellbeing.

Please note that unreasonable, abusive or offensive communication is unacceptable, and the school reserves the right to address any such problems as they feel are appropriate. This can include restricting correspondence to a specified email address, using a single person as a point of contact or using hard copy post and/or by placing restrictions on phone calls. Parents and carers have an implied licence to enter a school site, in cases where behaviour is inappropriate, threatening or argumentative, this licence can be revoked.

If a response has been given to a query, unless matters change, further responses will not be sent.

Our aim is to ensure that all communications and discussions about pupils and their families are positive and move matters forward in a mutually respectful manner.

## Appendix 2

Incident report form	
Recording date	
Recording time	
Witness name School job title (if applicable)	
Date of incident	
Time of incident	
Name of individual(s)	
Incident location	
Incident details	
Outcome/planned action	

### Appendix 3

#### Risk assessment form Violence & Aggression

Hazard/ Activity	Persons at Risk	Risk	Control Measures in Use	Residual risk rating H / M/ L	Further Action Required	
					YES	NO
Violence	Staff members from pupils, parents or visitors.  Lunchtime supervisors, Caretaker, other people who work on site.	Verbal or physical attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff members are encouraged to diffuse situations which escalate into verbal and/or physical attack.</li> <li>• Training courses are available for identified staff members to attend.</li> <li>• When talking to parents or visitors, staff should always try and talk to them where other staff members are around.</li> <li>• Staff members are encouraged to take a non-confrontational approach when interacting with others.</li> <li>• Staff to ensure they have a place of escape and a way of summoning help.</li> <li>• Staff should try to refrain from having no escape route.</li> </ul>	LOW		√