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Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well and that your children are now settling into a new school year.

As a Trust we work closely with our 21 schools to ensure they are places where our young people can thrive academically, socially, culturally and spiritually. In order to help us achieve this we want our schools to develop strong relationships with parents and carers.

When your school joined our Trust, I spoke to you as parents about our staff being our greatest resource; they are the people you and your children see day in and day out delivering a fantastic education to your children. Part of my role as CEO is to ensure all Trust staff are safe and respected, working in an environment that is free from violence or abuse or even insulting language towards anyone on our school site.

I am now attaching a copy of your school's Parent and Carer Code of Conduct. This is a document which we have asked our schools to adopt to set out the expectations on all involved with school and to ensure our staff know that we are taking all steps to ensure they are treated with respect and protected as far as possible when carrying out their work in school.

I would also ask that you pay special attention to those elements of the Code that relate to 'online' conduct. Sadly, we see in the news almost everyday incidents of hate or general unpleasantness that target school staff. As a Trust we cannot tolerate any behaviours that are directed to one of our schools or those who work there.

Please be assured that I understand that the vast majority of parents and carers value our staff and the work they do. This document simply sets out the expectations we as Trust feel are paramount for us all to work together for the benefit of your children and, as always, I thank you very much for your support in this.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Rickeard", is enclosed in a thin black rectangular box.

Paul Rickeard
MAT CEO



Durham &
Newcastle
Diocesan
Learning
Trust

Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust (DNDLT)

Company Number 10847279

St. Mary's CE Primary

Parent Code of Conduct

"Every child matters and no child is ever left behind..."

**"Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them;
for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs."**

Luke 18:15-17

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Vision Statement:

At the heart of our vision is our commitment to ensure all of our schools are places where children and young people develop and thrive academically, socially, culturally and spiritually. The drive for excellence and effectiveness in our schools is paramount, but not merely because the Government says so. The enabling of every child to flourish in their potential as a child of God is a sign and expression of the Kingdom and is at the heart of the Trust's distinctive mission. This vision statement will be taken into account in all of our policies and their implementation

Statement of intent

At our school we strive to build a strong relationship with parents/carers to help create a stimulating learning environment that continues from school to home, providing all pupils with the opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability.

To create a welcoming and safe learning environment, the school implements a specifically designed set of rules regarding behaviour and conduct which parents/carers are expected to act in accordance with.

All staff members have the right to work without fear of violence or abuse; therefore, physical attacks, threatening behaviour, and abusive or insulting language towards staff members, Academy councillors, visitors, pupils or other parents/carers may result in individuals being removed from the premises.

This document outlines the manner in which parents/carers are expected to act whilst on the school premises, as well as detailing the type of behaviour that will not be tolerated.

1. Legal framework

This document has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2011
- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 2004
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'
- DfE (2018) 'Controlling access to school premises'

This document operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2. Expectations

Our school expects parents/carers to:

- Act in accordance with this code of conduct at all times.
- Support and reflect the school's ethos and values through their behaviour.
- Set a good example to pupils through their behaviour and the way they interact with staff, pupils and other adults.
- Work together with staff members for the benefit of their child and to resolve any issues of concern.
- Treat all academy councillors, staff members, pupils, other parents/carers and any members of the school community with dignity and respect.
- Where appropriate, clarify their child's version of events with the school to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- Correct their child's behaviour appropriately, particularly on the school grounds where it could otherwise lead to conflict or aggressive or unsafe behaviour.
- Respect the school's property and environment by keeping it clean and tidy.
- Follow the school's parking rules and procedures for dropping-off and collecting pupils from school.
- Dress in an appropriate manner when on the school premises and attending school events, and ensure their dress and appearance reflects that they are role models for pupils, e.g. parents/carers may not wear nightwear when dropping-off or collecting pupils.

3. Driving pupils to school

Parents/carers will proceed to the front of school to drop off and collect their children but only where road markings allow. Parents/carers are not permitted, to stop, wait, drop off, or pick up pupils while parked a prohibited area. We also advise not to park in front of the opening to

the green as it makes crossing the road difficult and limits pedestrians view of any oncoming traffic.

There are some options of alternative places parents/carers can park to reduce the flow of traffic at the front of the school:

The Wilson Centre are happy for parents/carers to park in their car park on a morning and on an afternoon (apart from Tuesday afternoon) or you could park on the road outside St. Mary's Church.

Residents' drives should not be blocked under any circumstances, even during short periods of waiting where the car is in use. Vehicles should be driven in a calm manner which causes least disturbance to residents.

Engines should be turned off when a vehicle is stationary and not in traffic as vehicle exhaust emissions contribute significantly to air pollution and are particularly harmful to children.

All pupils will wear a seatbelt at all times while they are dropped off and picked up. Parents/carers will ensure pupils disembark vehicles safely and cross roads with care.

Parents/carers are to use their discretion in severe weather and drive with extra caution as appropriate.

Pupils should not be collected late - all pupils are expected to be collected at 3:15pm (unless they are at an after-school activity). If a parent is delayed in picking up their child for any reason, it is the parents/carers' responsibility to call an authorised adult to collect the pupil from school on their behalf.

Parents/carers that are going to be late picking their child up from school and cannot arrange for an authorised adult to collect the pupil from school on their behalf should inform the school as soon as possible.

4. Inappropriate behaviour

The school takes instances of inappropriate behaviour very seriously and will not tolerate any circumstances that may make pupils, staff members and other members of the school community feel threatened.

Parental behaviour that the school does not tolerate includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Using foul, abusive or offensive language
- Raising voices inappropriately at another individual
- Making racist or sexual comments
- Using aggressive hand gestures, e.g. raising fists and fingers
- Discriminating against any member of the school community, including pupils, staff, Academy councillors and other parents/carers
- Bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, verbal and sexual abuse offline and online
- Sending abusive, aggressive or threatening messages, emails or other communications to any member of the school community

- Trespassing on school property without prior permission or implied licence
- Causing intentional damage to school property
- Breaching the school's security procedures
- Using physical violence on the school premises or on a member of the school community, e.g. hitting, slapping, punching, kicking and pushing
- Physically intimidating an individual
- Partaking in unnecessary physical contact with an individual
- Writing or posting abusive, offensive or defamatory comments about an individual or the school, including on social media
- Psychologically harassing any member of the school community, including displaying vexatious behaviour which is humiliating for the individual and is damaging to their self-esteem
- Displaying disruptive or other inappropriate behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's operations or activities
- Approaching another parent or pupil to discuss or reprimand them because of an issue between pupils
- Threatening any member of the school community in any way
- Arriving on the school premises partially clothed
- Smoking/Vaping on the school premises
- Taking illegal or harmful drugs while on the school premises
- Drinking alcohol on the school premises, unless it has been authorised and supplied by the school
- Taking photographs or videos on the school premises without permission from the school
- Driving unsafely within the vicinity of the school

5. Online safety and social media conduct

The school will expect parents/carers to behave in a civilised nature online and will not tolerate any of the following online behaviour:

- Posting defamatory content about parents/carers, pupils, the school or its employees
- Complaining about the school's values and methods on social media
- Posting content containing confidential information regarding the school or any members of its community, e.g. a complaint outcome
- Contacting school employees through social media, including requesting to 'follow' or 'friend' them, or sending them private messages
- Creating or joining private groups or chats that victimise or harass a member of staff or the school in general
- Posting images of any staff members or pupils without their prior consent

The school retains the right to request that any damaging material is removed from social media websites.

If parents/carers wish to raise a complaint, the school's Complaints Procedures Policy will be followed.

Breaches of this section of the code of conduct will be taken seriously by the school and, in the event of illegal, defamatory, or discriminatory content, breaches could lead to prosecution. Parents/carers are asked not to post anonymously or under an alias to evade the guidance given in this code of conduct.

Parents/carers will be responsible for supporting the school by monitoring their own use of social media.

Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring they support the school by monitoring their children's use of social media.

6. Online messaging

The school will expect parents/carers to use messaging apps, such as WhatsApp, for purposes beneficial to themselves, other parents/carers and the school, and will not accept any of the following behaviour:

- Sending abusive messages to fellow parents/carers
- Sending abusive messages to members of staff
- Sending frequent messages to members of staff
- Sending abusive messages about members of staff, parents/carers, pupils or the school
- Sharing confidential or sensitive information about members of staff, parents/carers, pupils or the school
- Bringing the school or its staff into disrepute

The school appreciates the simplicity and ease of instant messaging; however, the school does not condone parents/carers sending frequent and unnecessary messages to staff. Parents/carers will be expected to understand that staff should not be contacted outside of working hours. If parents/carers wish to talk to staff, parents/carers will arrange a meeting with the teacher by speaking to the school office.

Should any problems arise from contact over messaging apps, the school will act quickly by contacting parents/carers directly, to stop any issues continuing. If necessary, the school will request a meeting with parents/carers if any misconduct, such as sending abusive messages or posting defamatory content, occurs online.

The school's complaints procedure will be followed as normal if any members of the parent teacher association or academy council cause any issues through their conduct whilst using online messaging.

The headteacher will be permitted, with the permission of the parent, to view messages sent between members of the parental body to deal with problems quickly and effectively.

The headteacher will be able to request that 'group chats' are closed down should any problems continue between parents/carers or parental bodies.

Parents/carers will be responsible for supporting the school by monitoring their own use of online messaging.

Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring they support the school by monitoring their children's use of online messaging.

7. Photography and images

Parents/carers will be permitted to take photos/videos at school events but should be mindful of others' privacy and seek permission from other parents/carers prior to taking photos/videos of them or their children. Additionally, they should also seek approval from any other parents/carers before posting photographs to social media if another child is in the photograph/video.

8. Managing inappropriate behaviour

If a parent is behaving inappropriately, a report will be made to the headteacher or the most senior member of staff available in their absence, who will decide on the most appropriate course of action.

Parents/carers will raise concerns regarding another parent's behaviour or conduct directly with their child's class teacher or the headteacher and will not approach the parent themselves.

Instances of parents/carers displaying inappropriate behaviour will be managed in a variety of ways, depending on the severity of the situation.

When a parent has behaved inappropriately, they will be invited to a meeting by the headteacher to discuss their behaviour and to attempt to resolve the issue. Where this initial meeting is not sufficient to resolve the issue, the headteacher, in collaboration with other staff and relevant agencies, will consider what further action may be required. This action, depending on the situation, could include the following:

- Barring the parent from the school premises
- Contacting the police
- Seeking legal redress through the courts
- Restricting the parent's channels of communication to the school, e.g. no longer allowing the parent to send emails to a staff member directly
- Reporting content the parent has posted online to the website's admin
- Referring the case to children's social care, where the behaviour indicates that the parent poses a risk to children

Any child protection and safeguarding concerns will be addressed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The school reserves the right to escort anyone off the premises who is displaying aggressive or disruptive behaviour. The police may be contacted to provide advice on managing an incident or to assist in the removal of an individual from the premises, where necessary. The police will be contacted where a parent is being violent or has committed assault, or where the event has caused harm to an individual.

If a parent has been previously barred from the premises, or has exceeded their implied access to the premises and is causing a disturbance, the police will be contacted to remove the individual from the premises.

If concerns are raised in relation to a parent's appearance or dress, personal factors will be taken into consideration, on a case-by-case basis, when addressing the concern.

If a parent persistently displays unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour, this may result in them being barred from the school premises, in line with the [Barring from the school premises](#) section of this policy.

9. Barring from the school premises

The school has the right to bar a parent from the premises to keep the school community safe. If a parent is displaying inappropriate or concerning behaviour, they will be asked to leave the school premises. Behaviour that could result in a parent being asked to leave the premises includes aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language that is a risk to staff or pupils, or behaviour that is making staff or pupils feel threatened.

If a parent persistently or consistently behaves inappropriately on the school site, or there is a one-off incident of extremely inappropriate behaviour, the school reserves the right to bar this individual from the school site.

The school will either:

- Bar the parent temporarily, until the parent has had the opportunity to formally present their side.
- Inform the parent that they intend to bar them and invite them to present their side.

The headteacher will send a letter to the parent, informing them of the following information:

- Why they have been temporarily barred or face a bar
- The nature of the bar, i.e. if they are temporarily barred pending their representation or if they must present their side before the decision to bar can be made
- That they have the right to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing to the chair of Academy councillors within 10 working days

The headteacher's decision to bar the parent will be reviewed by the chair of Academy councillors.

The chair of Academy councillors will take account of any representations made by the parent and decide whether to confirm or lift the bar. The parent will be notified in writing of the decision to uphold or lift the bar.

If the decision is confirmed, the parent will be notified in writing, explaining:

- How long the bar will be in place.
- When the decision will be reviewed.

Decisions to bar will be reviewed at the end of the agreed timescale, in line with the process outlined above. Following a review, the bar may be lifted or, if there are grounds for continued concern regarding the parent's conduct, it may be extended.

Once the appeal process has been completed, parents/carers that remain barred may be able to apply to the Civil Courts. If a parent wishes to exercise this option, they will be advised to seek independent legal advice.

10. Smoking and Vaping

St. Mary's CE Primary is a non-smoking and vaping site. Please do not smoke or vape in or around the school grounds.

11. Dogs and other animals

Dogs and other animals should not be brought onto the school site. On occasions, the school may ask for pets or animals to be brought into school (e.g. lambs). This will be on the request of school and full risk assessments will be completed. If you bring a dog to the school gates, please ensure it is on a lead and kept under control at all times.

12. Monitoring and review

This document will be reviewed on a regular basis by the headteacher and any changes made will be communicated to all parents/carers and staff at the school.

All parents/carers will be provided with a copy of this code of conduct upon their child's attendance at the school, and are required to familiarise themselves with the procedures and guidelines outlined.

Parent Code of Conduct Agreement

By sending my child to St. Mary's CE Primary, I declare that I have received, read and understood the terms and conditions of this code of conduct.

I understand my obligations under this code of conduct and agree to comply fully with them. I will ensure that my conduct does not breach this code in any way, including not:

- Being abusive or threatening to any member of the school community.
- Bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, verbal and sexual abuse offline and online
- Dressing in an inappropriate manner.
- Behaving inappropriately or aggressively in any way.
- Being discriminatory towards any member of the school community.
- Trespassing on the school property.
- Smoking, drinking alcohol or taking any illegal or harmful substances on the school premises.
- Sending inappropriate, abusive or aggressive messages to parents/carers or school staff.
- Requesting to 'follow' or 'friend' school staff on social media or sending them private messages
- Sending abusive messages about parents/carers and teachers.
- Posting defamatory content about other parents/carers, pupils, teachers or the school.
- Using social media to complain or post any grievances about the school's values and methods.
- Posting content containing confidential information to do with the school or any members of its community, e.g. regarding a complaint outcome
- Creating or joining private groups or chats that victimise or harass a member of staff or the school in general.
- Posting images of any staff members or pupils without their prior consent.
- Smoking or vaping in or around the school grounds.
- Bringing a dog or any other animal into the school grounds (unless requested by the school). Keep any animals on a lead and under control if I bring them to the school gates.