



**St Edward's  
School**

Unity - Achievement - Faith

# Building mutually respectful communication with parents, carers and callers

**Reviewed and Approved by the Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes Committee on: 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

**Reviewed and Ratified at the Full Governing Body on: 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Next review date: Summer 2027**

**SLT are responsible for oversight of this policy's implementation**

## **MAY WE BE ONE**

In purpose – educating for life in all its fullness

In faith – encountering God who lives among us, calling us to unity

In dignity – nurturing confidence and maturity

In community – striving together for justice, love and peace

The raising of children to adulthood places a special responsibility upon families and schools to work together for the good of the child. Our mission statement calls us to be united in this purpose, so that together home and school can educate a child in preparation to live life in all its fullness.

As adults we need to model the behaviours that we expect from our children, and this includes the need to recognise the dignity of everyone with whom we meet. This policy describes the mutual respect that will be at the heart of all encounters between home and school. In this way, we can grow as one community, respecting the Spirit who is present in every one of us.

### **1. Statement of intent**

St Edward's School encourages close links with parents and carers and the community. We believe that our students benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. We strive to make our school a place where we model for children the Christian behaviour we teach and expect. We promote respect for all with whom we work, and celebrate differences in a positive manner. We place a high importance on good manners and positive communication, founded on mutual respect. The vast majority of parents and carers and others visiting, or calling our school are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school. However, on the rare occasions when a negative attitude towards the school is expressed, this can result in aggression, contempt, verbal and/or physical abuse towards school staff.

Our school expects and requires its staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations and attempt to defuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. However, all staff have the right to work without fear of violence, denigration or abuse and the right, in an extreme case, of appropriate self-defence. All staff have the right to be supported by their professional associations in pursuing any infringement of their personal and professional safety and reputation including any defamatory comments or threats made online.

We expect all visitors and callers to behave in a reasonable way towards school staff. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable in various modes of communication with our school. The Governors of St. Edward's school have responsibility and oversight of the school campus, and reserve the right to restrict access to this private property as necessary.

### **2a. Behaviour**

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

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

- Shouting at school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, eg standing very close to her/him
- The use of aggressive hand gestures

- Threatening, belittling, disparaging, or insulting school staff
- Online abuse, defamatory comments or the spreading of false and/or malicious information
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Swearing at a member of school staff
- Pushing
- Hitting, eg slapping, punching and kicking
- Spitting
- Racist, sexist or other derogatory comments
- Breaking the school's security procedures

**Unacceptable behaviour will result in the Local Education Authority, the Diocesan Board of Education, the Chair of Governors and the Police being informed. Legal action may follow including individual actions pursued by the member of staff's professional association. The school site is comprehensively covered by CCTV and footage may be used in evidence.**

## **2b. Behaviour on the telephone**

If telephone conversations become contemptuous, abusive or threatening, members of staff are instructed to terminate the call and report the incident. In line with many institutions, all calls to and from the school are recorded for security and training purposes. The school may restrict future telephone contact with the caller, to the extent that it feels necessary. A recording of the call may be used in any dispute with the school.

## **2c. Behaviour online and/or via email**

All school staff have the right to be treated with respect, both in person, or via remote communication. The immediacy of electronic communication can result in ill-considered messages and emails to the school. Contemptuous and/or disparaging remarks in emails, and via social media, can adversely affect staff. In exercising its duty of care towards employees, the school may pursue offenders and/or restrict communication and/or access in regard to the offender(s) to the extent that it feels necessary. The school will act in cases where an individual, or individuals are making defamatory, or offensive comments about members of staff or Governors online, including in email correspondence.

The school will sanction students at its discretion if it considers online behaviour to pose a threat or cause harm to another, or have potential repercussions for the orderly running of the school where the student is identifiable as a member of the school, or if the reputation of the school is or may be adversely affected. Covert recording, either video or audio is forbidden on the school campus at all times. Uploading onto the internet or social media is not acceptable and may result in a criminal offence or being in contempt of court.

## **3. Procedure**

If a visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school staff the Headteacher or appropriate senior staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. If a person refuses to use the informal and formal complaints procedure, the school will consider the concern closed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a visitor may be banned by the Headteacher from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review. The school also reserves the right to restrict access to its staff,

and/or to only communicate on terms that the school feels are appropriate under the circumstances, for the duration of time determined by the school.

In the event of aggression towards, or intimidation of staff, an investigation will be conducted and an incident report form will be completed and evidence taken from witnesses.

If a ban is deemed appropriate the following steps will be taken:

1. The person or persons will be informed, in writing, that s/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, eg that an injunction application may follow.
2. Where an assault or threatening behaviour has led to a ban, a statement confirming that the matter has been reported to the Local Education Authority and the Police will be included.
3. The Chair of Governors will be informed of the ban.
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for students being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

Where such behaviour does occur on site, the person involved will be instructed to leave the premises or be taken to a room away from other persons. The school reserves the right to inform its designated community police officers.

#### **4. Conclusion**

St Edward's School will always take action where behaviour or communication are unacceptable and constitutes a breach of our home-school code of conduct, health and safety legislation, or negatively impacts upon any of our staff.

*This policy has undergone an Equalities Impact Assessment in line with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.*