

Parent/ Carer Code of Conduct Policy

Published: May 2024

'At a Glance'

The school rules apply to all school stake-holders of Botanic Primary School:

- We show effort
- We show achievement
- We show respect

This following provides a summary of our Parental Code of Conduct, however it is important that you are familiar with the entire policy.

- ✓ Parents should use the school platform to send and receive messages from school in the first instance
- ✓ All communications should be courteous and respectful at all times
- ✓ Any treatment of school staff of an abusive nature will not be tolerated
- ✓ Understand that teachers are not always available
- ✓ Parents should speak with a member of SLT if they need to discuss something of an urgent matter
- ✓ Support their child's education by:
 - Ensuring good time keeping at the beginning and end of the school day (here and on time)
 - Ensuring school uniform is worn
 - Supporting with homework

Parents should be aware that a complaints policy is also available - alongside other relevant policies on our school website.

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Mission Statement

At Botanic Primary we aim to provide a positive, supportive and stimulating environment where each child feels valued, respected and nurtured.

We aim to provide an environment where children are:

- Encouraged
- Seen
- Valued

Our aim is for the children to delight in

- Effort
- Achievement
- Respect

Pastoral Care in Botanic Primary School is a priority. It is acknowledged as playing a crucial role in the development of the ethos of the school. This ethos reflects the values outlined in our mission statement with emphasis on the development of each child to his or her full potential. The Pastoral Care Policy supports the school in promoting a caring, supportive environment in which staff and pupils can work in an atmosphere of mutual respect. It is this respect - at all levels that permeates our school and makes it truly special. All members of the school community are required to acknowledge and promote respect.

Parental Responsibilities

In recognising that the education of our children is a partnership between home and school, we aim to support our parents/ carers in their role of co-educators.

Articles 28 and 29 of the UNCRC* focus on every child's right to an education, stating that:

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"Education is a key social and cultural right and plays an important role in reducing poverty and child labour. Furthermore, education promotes democracy, peace, tolerance, development and economic growth"

[UNICEF]

A major factor contributing to a child's success at school is the support they receive from home. The impact of parental attitudes towards education and their support for school cannot be underestimated. In this regard school requires the following from parents:

- Children arrive at school on time
- Children are collected promptly at their finish time
- Children attend school every day unless they are medically unable (or other extreme circumstances)
- School is made aware of the reason on the first day of any absence by telephone call or a message to the class teacher
- Children wear their uniform every day - with pride
- Children have access to basic stationery essentials at home for completing homework tasks; pencils, colouring pencils, scissors and a ruler
- Parents ensure homework is completed on time and to a high standard
- Parents have registered to our school's communication platform (currently SeeSaw) to keep track of messages and communication regarding your child from their class teacher, also enabling parents to receive and note whole school announcements.



**The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (a legally-binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities).*

Parental Access to School Staff and Volunteers

In recognising that the education of our children is a partnership between home and school, the Board of Governors, the principal and the teaching staff seek to permit parents and guardians access to their child's teacher and the principal at reasonable times.

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Parents/ Guardians often need to have a 'quick word' with their child's class teacher at the beginning of the school day or upon pick-up, and vice-versa. It is important to note that it is not always possible for this discussion to progress due to a number of factors, including the teacher's responsibility to their class and starting/ ending the day promptly (teachers often need to go straight to another class/ meeting at home time). If a parent/ carer wishes to communicate with their child's class teacher they are encouraged to do so in the following way(s):

1. A message directly to the class teacher via SeeSaw, our school communication platform. It is important to note that teachers are not in a position to check communications during the school day as they are teaching, and equally are not expected to read/ respond to messages outside of their working hours, so this should not be used for time-sensitive messages.
2. If a phone call is required then the school office should be contacted with a contact number left and a brief explanation about the situation. The class teacher may call back within their working hours or refer the situation to be handled by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
3. If a parent/ carer wishes to meet with the principal/ senior teacher on school premises an appointment must be made through reception, with the reasons for the meeting clearly stated. An appointment may then be made at a mutually suitable time and a space provided for the meeting.
4. If a parent/ carer is still not satisfied that an issue has been resolved satisfactorily following these steps of communication, then we ask you to refer to the complaints policy.

Code of Conduct

Parents are asked to report to reception upon entering school, where you will be asked to sign in. This will enable us to comply with health and safety requirements by ensuring that the office is aware of who is on site should there be a need to evacuate the building.

It is essential that any conversations between school and home are carried out in a manner which is polite, courteous, mutually respectful and

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professional. Parents/ carers are reminded of the following when visiting school:

- School staff should be approached, contacted and communicated with in a respectful manner.
- The safe, stimulating and caring school environment should not be compromised.
- Appropriate voice level and language is used at all times.

Any treatment of school staff in an abusive manner (either verbal or physical) will not be tolerated. Some examples of which include:

- Inappropriate behaviour towards school staff
- Inappropriate behaviour towards other parents/ carers/ other children on school grounds
- Using offensive language
- Raised voices
- Displaying temper
- Threatening in any way any member of our school community
- Smoking, drinking alcohol or taking illegal drugs on school premises, or at school events

Online Communications

The code of conduct for parents/ carers extends to online platforms. As such:

- Written communications with teachers must be respectful at all times. Parents/ carers must understand that class teachers are busy teaching during school hours and may only have limited time to read and respond to messages at the end of the school day. There may be days when they don't have any time to check for messages, for example if they go straight from class teaching to a staff meeting. As such SeeSaw should not be used for any messages deemed 'time sensitive.'
- SeeSaw is used primarily to keep you as parents/ carers up to date with everything you need to know about your child's school life; from homework tasks, class work they are working on and whole school information. For this reason it is vital that all parents/ carers are logged

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in to their children's SeeSaw accounts so they don't miss important information regarding school events. Class teachers cannot be expected to continually inform and remind individual parents about such things.

- Facebook, SeeSaw and the school website are all used to share information and to celebrate the many wonderful things that happen at Botanic Primary School. Social media sites should not be used to question/ ridicule any part of Botanic Primary School. Any concerns or issues you have must be made through the appropriate channels as listed above. Any posts deemed to be libellous or defamatory will be dealt with in one of the following ways (depending on the seriousness as deemed by the school Principal/ Vice Principal):
 1. Owner made aware of the inappropriateness of the post and asked to remove it immediately
 2. The comment reported to the abuse section of the social media site
 3. Owner removed from Botanic Primary School social medial page and no longer permitted access
 4. If serious enough, legal actions may need to be considered.
- Parents should be aware that any photos posted on school platforms are the property of school and must NOT be copied or shared without permission (see GDPR policy)

Breaches of Code of Conduct

On the advice of the Education Authority - Belfast Region, the school has put in place arrangements for addressing the most serious situations where the approach of a parent/guardian might amount to harassment or intimidation of staff in the workplace. There is a legal option for school to revoke permission for parents/relatives or other adults to enter the school grounds if their behaviour is deemed to be offensive, aggressive, threatening, abusive (verbal or physical) or intimidating. If this is the case:

- Parents/ guardians will be given a verbal/ written warning notice of such an action (depending on circumstance).
- Parents/ guardian will receive letter informing them of the action removing their licence to attend school grounds (see appendix 1)

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- Parent/ Guardian may appeal to the Board of Governors - their decision on the matter is final.
- If it is deemed necessary the PSNI may be contacted in the most serious breaches of this policy.

Acknowledgments

It is the aim of this policy to keep the high standards and safe environment provided at Botanic Primary School paramount for all who attend; teaching staff, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents/ carers and volunteers. We value the positive relationship we have with our parents/ carers and recognise the crucial role you play in the education of your child. Communications at Botanic are largely positive and mutually respectful - for which we are appreciative.

Appendix 1

Date:

Dear _____,

With reference to your recent visit to school it is deemed that you displayed the following behaviour/s which is in breach of school parental code of conduct:

- Inappropriate behaviour towards school staff
 - Inappropriate behaviour towards other parents/ carers/ other children on school grounds
 - Using offensive language
 - Raised voices
 - Displaying temper
 - Threatening in any way any member of our school community
 - Smoking, drinking alcohol or taking illegal drugs on school premises, or at school events
 - Other: _____
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It is necessary therefore that I now give you notice of the intention to revoke your licence to enter school premises.

In future you should not come onto the school premises without an appointment arranged through me. If granted permission to enter school, you should refrain from any behaviour that might be considered by the staff as inappropriate or offensive. Should you fail to comply with the above I will liaise with the Education Authority to seek an injunction excluding you from coming within the school gates. You have the right to comment on this letter and the school's intention to revoke your licence. Any response should be in writing.

Yours sincerely,

Mr P Bell

School Principal

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APPENDIX 2

Licence to Enter School Premises

Date:

Dear ,

I refer to previous correspondence concerning the above matter. The situation has now been reviewed and in the light of the assurances of acceptable behaviour given by or on behalf of you it has been agreed by the Board of Governors that we restore normal access to school. We look forward to welcoming you back and establishing a positive home/school relationship in the best interests of your child. We ask you to keep our school Code of Conduct in mind during any future issues which may arise and hope to resolve any such matters in a swift and mutually respectful manner.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Bell

School Principal

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