

# **St. Bernard's Primary School and Nursery Unit**



## **Visitor Code of Conduct**

**September 2023**

**Version 2.1**

## **VISITOR CODE OF CONDUCT**

Welcome to our school and thank you for visiting. We hope you enjoy your time with us. St Bernard's Primary School is focused on the needs of our pupils, we ask all visitors to respect our aims and ethos. The aim of this policy and its associated procedures is to:

- protect the pupils and staff from harm both during and outside of school hours when they are on our site; and
- to promote effective and meaningful liaison between school staff and the wider school community.

We have a duty of care to our pupils and staff to ensure that they are safe from harm and therefore expect visitors to comply with the school code of conduct and child protection procedures.

### **The Objectives of this Policy**

The key objectives of this policy are to have in place a clear protocol and procedure for the admittance of external visitors to the school which is understood by all staff, governors, visitors and parents/carers and conforms to child protection guidelines and prevents unsuitable people from working with or accessing children and young persons in the school setting.

We have a responsibility for the safety and well-being of all of our pupils and staff anywhere on the school site, during normal school hours, during after school activities and on school organised (and supervised) off-site activities.

This policy applies to:

- All teaching and non-teaching staff employed by the school;
- All external visitors entering the school site during the school day or for after school activities (including peripatetic tutors, sports coaches etc);
- Governors;
- Parents/carers;
- Volunteers;

- Children;
- Local Authority staff;
- Building & Maintenance Contractors.

### Guidelines

The school has many visitors during the course of any single day. In order to make them feel welcome and to maintain the security of pupils and staff, the following guidelines must be followed:

- All visitors should report to reception on arrival;
- For pre-arranged visits the office staff should be informed the date of any visit, their name, their host and the purpose of the visit;
- A visitors' book is available to record who is on the premises at any particular time;
- Identification lanyards are available from the school office and should be worn by visitors;
- A member of staff will escort all visitors to the appropriate location within the school;
- Visitors should ensure they do not use any photographic devices or video/recording devices whilst in the building without consent;
- Parents are to report to the school office at all times and not to enter the school unless invited by a member of staff;
- Parents are respectfully required to make an appointment when you wish to speak with a member of staff.
- Visitors should sign out when leaving the premises;
- Visitors are expected to set a good example to pupils through their speech and behaviour towards all members of our school. Aggressive behaviours will not be tolerated;
- Please do not smoke (including e-cigarettes) in the school building or school grounds;

- In event of a fire alarm, please vacate the building via the nearest emergency exit. Details of exits and Assembly Points are displayed throughout the school;
- Please ensure you do not have any physical contact with a child unless it is part of your professional duties e.g. Nurse or Doctor;
- Adult visitors must use the designated toilets for staff;
- Inform us of any concerns you have about the safety or welfare of our pupils;
- Designated Teacher for Child Protection is Mr Kavanagh;
- Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection are Mrs Craig, Mrs Dempsey, Mrs Lawlor and Mrs Patterson.

Parents/carers are asked to adhere to the school's guidelines when seeking contact with their child's teacher. The Board of Governors endorses the school's arrangements for effective parent/carer - teacher communication as set out below.

The contact between parent/carer and teacher will take the form of:

- Meetings to discuss the pupil's academic progress;
- There are two formal opportunities each year for parents/carers to discuss their child's progress;
- Casual or informal exchanges of information made for routine housekeeping purposes e.g. dental appointments, illness, lost property, etc.
- To minimise disruption when possible this information should be sent in advance to the class teacher in written form;
- In the cases of more sensitive matters that are causing concern, an appointment should be made and the issues clarified in advance to enable the parent/carer and the member of staff to make appropriate preparation. If a parent/carer requires a meeting with a member of staff, this should be arranged in advance by letter or a phone call. This means the member of staff will be able to allocate quality time for the meeting.

When working on the school premises contractors have a duty to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the school who may be affected by their work activities. Also, they have to cooperate with our health and safety policies and procedures. We have a legal responsibility under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure that all contractors when working on the premises act in a responsible and proper manner.

In line with the Education Authority, the Board of Governors reserves the right to put in place arrangements for addressing the most serious situations where the approach of a visitor might amount to harassment of staff, pupils or other members of the public. These arrangements include the Board of Governors seeking to put in place an injunction to restrain any such person from coming onto the school premises.

We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards our pupils and members of school staff. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

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

- shouting at members of the school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- physically intimidating a member of staff, e.g. standing very close to her/him;
- personal comments;
- the use of aggressive hand gestures;
- threatening behaviour;
- shaking or holding a fist towards another person;
- swearing;
- pushing;
- hitting, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking;
- spitting;
- breaching the school's security procedures.

When there is a breach of the guidelines, the school will respond depending on the seriousness of any inappropriate conduct:

- initiate a meeting/dialogue with the individual;
- write to the visitor, requesting them to behave in accordance with this policy;
- write to the visitor, describing their misconduct, explaining its impact on the school and stating its unacceptability;
- vary the person's "licence", say, through the addition of conditions;
- warn of the possibility of a "ban" (i.e. the withdrawal of their licence) if the misconduct is repeated;
- impose a ban with a review after a fixed period;
- impose a ban without review.

The Principal can initiate any of these actions on their own authority, more serious sanctions are initiated by the Board of Governors or the Education Authority, as appropriate.

The Board of Governors, Principal and staff would like to thank parents/carers for their co-operation and support in this matter and look forward to working together to further strengthen the home/school partnership.