

Introduction.

Staff at Tandragee Junior High School are very privileged to serve a supportive community. Our parents and carers work in partnership with us in upholding standards and expectations and in respecting our ethos.

Our partnership is strong and this is sustained when everyone values the importance of a good working relationships. When we demonstrate positive relationships, we equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons we continue to welcome and encourage parents/carers to participate fully in the life of our school.

1. Purpose and scope

At Tandragee Junior High School, we believe it's important to:

- Work in partnership with parents to support their child's learning;
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for students, staff and parents;
- Model appropriate behaviour for our students at all times;
- Resolve difficulties in a constructive manner.

To help us do this, we set clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This code of conduct aims to help the school work together with parents and carers by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour.

We use the term 'parents and carers' to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a student
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or other family members)

2. Our expectations of staff, parents and carers

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Act with care, courtesy and consideration;
- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school;
- Be supportive of our policies, including our Positive Behaviour Policy
- Work together in the best interests of our pupils;
- Communicate courteously on the telephone and in person;
- Maintain reasonable expectations for response to general communications (five working days);
- Appreciate the significant work and personal commitments of each other;
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with speech and behaviour;
- Seek a peaceful and reasonable solution to all issues;
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.

Note: Email is not our normal mode of communication with parents. Email contact with FT is only established in exceptional circumstances.

3. We do not tolerate:

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds and sports team matches);
- Swearing, or using offensive language on the telephone or in person;
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to a member of school staff, Governor, visitor, fellow parent or student, regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence;
- Displaying a temper, or shouting at members of staff, students or other parents;
- Damaging or destroying school property;
- Abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication;
- contacting a member of staff via their personal mobile phone or social media account(s);
- Unreasonable demands regarding staff availability or unreasonable demands upon school staff to respond to a parental query, or expectations for staff to communicate outside of school's normal working hours;
- electronic recording of meetings or telephone calls by parents or staff;
- Making serial and unreasonable complaints (please see complaints policy);
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms;
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally or in writing) towards another child or adult;
- Disciplining another person's child – please bring any behaviour incidents to a member of staff's attention;
- Smoking or drinking alcohol on the school premises (unless alcohol has been allowed at a specific event);
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs) ;
- Should any of the above behaviour occur on school premises, the school may take any of the following actions:
 - Ending a meeting or telephone call if this behaviour is displayed;
 - Not replying to communications that are offensive, abusive or derogatory;
 - Insist that the adult communicates with the school through one member of staff only;
 - Contact the appropriate authorities;
 - Consider banning the offending adult from entering the school grounds.

We trust that parents will assist our school with the implementation of this policy, and we thank you for your continuing support of the school.

4. Breaching the code of conduct

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached the code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent about the incident. Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may then:

- Send a warning letter to the parent;
- Limit contact by allocating one key staff member to communicate with;
- Invite the parent into school to meet with a senior member of staff or the Principal. If the parent/carer refuses to attend the meeting then the school will write to the parent/carer and ask them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not, they may be banned from the school premises. If after this behaviour continues, the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place;
- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour);
- Seek advice from the Education Authority's legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous);
- Ban the parent from the school site;
- In cases where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter, the concerns will in the first instance be referred to the PSNI. This will include any or all cases of threats or violence and actual violence to any child, staff or governor in the school. This will also include anything that could be seen as a sign of harassment of any member of the school community, such as any form of insulting social media post or any form of social media cyber bullying.

The school will always respond to an incident in a proportional way. The final decision for how to respond to breaches of the code of conduct rests with the principal.

The Principal will consult the Chair of Governors before banning a parent from the school site.

Note:

(1) a ban from the school can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above in more serious cases.

(2) Site bans will normally be limited in the first instance.

Issues of conduct with the use of Social Media

Most people take part in online activities and social media. It's fun, interesting and keeps us connected.

Tandragee Junior High School has a Facebook page which promotes our school to the local and wider community. We encourage you to positively participate if you wish. However, social media should not be used to progress a concern.

Within these spaces however we ask that you use common sense when discussing school life online.

'Think before you post' - We ask that social media, whether public or private, should not be used to fuel campaigns and voice complaints against the school, school staff, parents or children.

We take very seriously inappropriate use of social media by a parent to publicly humiliate or criticise another parent, member of staff or child.

If parents or carers have any concerns about their child in relation to the school they should:

1. Initially contact the form teacher;
2. If the concern remains, they should contact the Head of Year or VP;
3. If still unresolved, the school's complaints procedure should be followed.

Staff, parents or carers should not use social media as a medium to air any concerns or grievances.

Online activity which we consider inappropriate:

- Identifying or posting images/videos of children;
- Abusive or personal comments about staff, governors, children or other parents;
- Bringing the school into disrepute;
- Posting defamatory or libellous comments;
- Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or children;
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children or members of staff;
- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language;
- Breaching school security procedures;

At our school we take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents appropriately in line with the actions outlined above.