

## Parent/Carer /Visitor Conduct

### School Expectations for Parent/Carer/Visitor

At Unity College we do our utmost to ensure that care for students is of the highest quality in all that we do.

There are times however, as with all colleges when a student might be left feeling upset by the events of the day and this can be very distressing for parents too. On these occasions it is important that we respond swiftly, carefully and fairly. The college has excellent procedures to ensure that we do respond effectively and this has been recognised by a number of external agencies.

While issues can be distressing for parents, students and staff it is important for the students involved that when a problem does occur that calmness is maintained. Within Unity College there are procedures and expectations for students and staff to ensure that this remains the case. It is less well known that there are expectations for parents too that must be respected so that issues can be resolved calmly.

The college's expectations:

**As well as following the guidance set out in our Home-College Agreement we expect parent, carers and visitors to:**

- Respect the caring ethos of our college.
- Understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that all members of the college community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and behaviour.
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the college's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- Correct own child's behaviour especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behaviour or unsafe behaviour.
- Approach the college to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Avoid using staff as threats to admonish children's behaviour.

**In order to support a peaceful and safe college environment the college cannot tolerate parents, carers and visitors exhibiting the following:**

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, office area or any other area of the college grounds including team matches.
- Using loud or offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying temper.
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to a member of college staff, governor, visitor, fellow parent/carers or student, regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.
- Damaging or destroying college property.

- Abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the college or any of the students/parents/staff at the school on Facebook or other social sites. (See Appendix 1). Any concerns you may have about the college must be made through the appropriate channels, which can include the college Complaints Procedure. You can speak to the appropriate member of staff, in the first instance, the Deputy Head, the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned. If you are not happy with the outcome, you can also ask for a copy of the Complaints Procedure and follow the steps for formal complaint.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on college premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- Smoking and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on college premises.
- Dogs being brought onto college premises.

In the event that a parent, carer or visitor does not respect these expectations we reserve the right to stop a telephone conversation or ask the person to leave the college site with immediate effect. The college may exercise its right to bar any individual from the college site on grounds of aggressive or abusive behaviour.

#### Inappropriate use of social network site

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against colleges, headteachers, college staff, and in some cases, other parents/students. The governors of Unity College consider the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole college community. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any student or parent/carer of a child or children being found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site, and if necessary to the police. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The college will also expect that any parent/carer or student removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases the college will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another child or member of staff by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of college bullying. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

#### Department for Education Guidance

Sometimes aggressive or abusive behaviour from a parent can present a risk to staff and children. College premises are private property and parents will generally have permission

from the college to be on college premises. However, in cases of abuse or threats to staff, students or other parents, colleges may ban parents from entering the college.

It is also an offence under Section 547 of the Education Act 1997 for any person (including a parent) to cause a nuisance or disturbance on college premises. The police may be called to assist the college in removing a parent but local authorities and governing bodies may also authorise a person to remove a person if they have reasonable cause to believe that the person is causing a nuisance or a disturbance.

Colleges should have a written policy setting out the behaviour expected of parents on the premises and the procedures that will happen when the college wishes to restrict a parent's access to college premises. A parent who has been banned from entering college premises is trespassing if he or she does so without permission.

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

This policy is updated and reviewed on a regular basis.