Leigh Academy
Tonbridge

Parent Code of Conduct

Date written: January 2023
Reviewed September 2026
Date of next review: September 2027

1. Purpose and scope

Here at Leigh Academy Tonbridge (LATon), we believe it's important to:

1. Work in partnership with parents to support their child's learning
2. Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents
3. Model appropriate behaviour for our pupils at all times

To help us do this, we set clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the staff code of conduct) and pupils (through our behaviour policy). 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 pupil (See Appendix A for information and the Trust's response to Parental Responsibility and Family Court matters).
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders)

2. Our expectations of parents and carers

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with speech and behaviour
- Seek a peaceful solution to all issues
- Correct their own child's behaviour (or those in their care), particularly in public, where it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct
- To support the application of policies in partnership within the school
- Approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern

3. Behaviour that will not be tolerated is as follows:

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations (including events on the school grounds, in the community such as school trips or sports team matches)
- Swearing, or using offensive language
- Displaying a temper, or shouting at members of staff, pupils or other parents
- Threatening another member of the school community
- Sending abusive messages to another member of the school community, including via text, email or social media
- Recording staff via any means of communication
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms
- Use of physical punishment against your child while on school premises
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally or in writing) towards any 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)
● Bringing dogs onto the school premises (other than guide dogs)
● Spitting

When students are issued with a sanction, these are discussed after school at 3.30pm and parents will then be contacted after 4pm to inform of the level of sanction and context.

4. Incidents in the Community:
We expect that all parents and carers promote positive relationships within the community and that children have the ability to access good examples of conflict resolution with others from the adults who care for them. In the event of aggressive or threatening behaviour from adults outside of the school premises, we stress the importance of contacting community agencies with a specialism to support and maintain safety for all involved. This includes local police, Community Police or Local Council for advice and assistance.

5. 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
● Make adaptations to the channels of communication with the academy
● Invite the parent in to school to meet with a senior member of staff or the headteacher
● Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour or Child Protection concerns)
● Seek advice from a legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)
● Ban the parent from the school site

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 Academies Director or CEO before banning a parent from the school site.

Appendix 1:

Our practice has been developed in accordance with the DFE guidance,
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dealing-with-issues-relating-to-paren

tal-responsibility https://www.gov.uk/parental-rights-responsibilities.

As a school we must treat all parents equally, unless there is a court order limiting an individual's exercise of parental responsibility. Individuals who have parental responsibility whether they are the resident parent or not have the right to:

- information, e.g. pupil reports/attendance
- to participate in activities, e.g. vote in elections for parent governors
- to be asked to give consent, e.g. to the child taking part in school trips
- to be informed about meetings involving the child, e.g. Parent Consultations

Where a parent's actions, or proposed actions, conflict with our ability to act in the child's best interests, we will try to resolve the problem with that parent but avoid becoming involved in conflict or offer biased support in favour of either parent. However, there may be occasions when a school needs to decline requests for action from one or more parents.

In cases where we cannot resolve the conflict between separated parents, we will advise the parent to pursue the matter through the Family Court. We urge parents to engage in appropriate systems to resolve their conflicts and avoid making impulsive decisions that may affect the child's wellbeing. While we will honour the terms of a court order, issues around residency and contact arrangements remain a civil matter to be agreed between the parents and will not be facilitated by members of our staff.

Court orders under section 8 of the Children Act 1989 (often called section 8 orders) settle areas of dispute in relation to the exercise of parental responsibility or a child's care or upbringing, and can limit how an individual exercises their parental responsibility. It must be noted that a Court order limiting a parent's exercise of their parental responsibility does not necessarily prevent or restrict us from continuing to carry out our duties under education law including Safeguarding.