



Parent and Carer Code of Conduct

St Mary's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all members of the school community to share this commitment.

At St Mary's, we are fortunate to have a supportive, engaged and caring parent body. We recognise that the education of children is most successful when school and homework together in a spirit of mutual trust, respect and partnership.

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour and communication that all parents, carers and guardians can expect from the school and, in turn, what the school expects from those who are part of our community.

The purpose of this Code is not to restrict communication or discourage parents and carers from raising concerns. Rather, it is intended to ensure that concerns are addressed constructively, relationships remain positive and all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect.

By working together in this way, we can provide the best possible experience for every pupil and maintain the positive culture that underpins life at St Mary's.

Section1: Partnership Between Home and School

Parents and carers play a vital role in the life of the school. We ask all members of our community to support the values, expectations and ethos of St Mary's by:

- Treating all members of the school community with courtesy, respect and professionalism.
- Supporting the school's policies, procedures and expectations.
- Working collaboratively with staff in the best interests of pupils.
- Seeking clarification and information before drawing conclusions when concerns arise.
- Raising questions, concerns or complaints through the appropriate channels.
- Modelling respectful behaviour and communication to children both in person and online.
- Respecting the professional responsibilities and judgement of staff.
- Supporting the school's Attendance Policy and procedures, including reporting absence appropriately and requesting leave of absence in accordance with school expectations.
- Recognising that effective communication is most likely when concerns are raised promptly, respectfully and with the colleague best placed to assist.

Section 2: Raising Questions, Concerns and Complaints

At St Mary's, we believe that most questions, concerns and misunderstandings can be resolved quickly and positively when they are raised with the appropriate member of staff at the earliest opportunity.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers and welcome constructive dialogue. In return, we ask that parents and carers follow the school's agreed communication and escalation routes so that concerns can be addressed efficiently, fairly and by the colleague best placed to help.

In most circumstances, concerns should be raised in the following order:

Senior School:

Academic Matters

Subject Teacher

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Subject Lead/Form Tutor (where applicable)

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Head of Faculty

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Assistant Head (Academic)

Pastoral Matters

Form Tutor

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Phase Lead

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Assistant Head (Pastoral)

Lower School:

Parents and carers in the Lower School should normally raise concerns in the first instance with their child's Class Teacher or the Specialist Teacher.

Where a matter remains unresolved, or where additional support is required, concerns may then be referred to the relevant member of the Lower School Senior Leadership Team. For academic concerns please raise with the Assistant Head (Academic) and for Pastoral concerns please raise with Assistant Head (Pastoral). If issues are still not resolved concerns would be escalated to the Vice Principal.

Academic Matters

Class Teacher / Specialist Teacher

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Assistant Head (Academic)

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Vice Principal

Pastoral Matters

Class Teacher

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Assistant Head (Pastoral)

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Vice Principal

If a concern remains unresolved after these stages have been followed, parents and carers may request a meeting with the Principal. Requests for meetings with the Principal will normally be coordinated through the Principal's PA, who will gather relevant information from colleagues involved before the meeting takes place.

The school will always seek to ensure that concerns are directed to the colleague best placed to resolve them.

Parents and carers are asked not to bypass these stages unless there is a safeguarding concern or another exceptional circumstance which makes this inappropriate.

Where concerns become complaints, parents and carers should follow the school's Complaints Procedure. The school reserves the right to manage complaints in accordance with its Complaints Policy, including those complaints which may be considered unreasonable, serial, persistent or vexatious.

Section 3: Standards of Conduct We Expect

St Mary's is committed to maintaining a culture of respect, kindness, professionalism and partnership.

We ask all parents and carers to:

- Communicate with staff in a courteous and respectful manner, recognising that school staff are entitled to work in an environment free from intimidation, harassment and abuse.
- Respect the professional judgement of staff and engage in constructive dialogue where differences of opinion arise.
- Make appointments when wishing to discuss matters with members of staff, recognising that colleagues may be teaching, supervising pupils or undertaking other professional duties during the school day.
- Follow school procedures regarding access to the site, signing in and safeguarding arrangements.
- Treat other pupils, parents, carers and visitors with respect.
- Support the school's Behaviour Policy, School Rules and attendance expectations.
- Support the school policy on mobile phone and device usage.
- Support the Pupil Code of Conduct.
- Follow the school policy on medication in school as documented in the Medical Conditions Policy.
- Use school communication channels appropriately and allow reasonable time for responses.
- Recognise that disagreements are best resolved through calm, respectful and private communication rather than through public criticism or social media discussion.
- Work with the school to model positive relationships and behaviour for all pupils.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers already demonstrate these behaviours on a daily basis, and we are grateful for the positive contribution they make to school life.

Section 4: Unacceptable Conduct

To protect the wellbeing of pupils, staff and the wider school community, St Mary's will not tolerate behaviour that undermines the safe and orderly operation of the school.

Examples of unacceptable conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Entering school buildings or restricted areas without permission or in breach of school security procedures.
- Arriving at school without an appointment and insisting on immediate access to staff.
- Refusing reasonable requests from members of staff, including requests to leave the premises.
- Interrupting staff whilst they are teaching, supervising pupils or carrying out professional duties.
- Using aggressive, intimidating, abusive or offensive language towards any member of the school community.
- Threatening behaviour, harassment, discrimination or conduct that causes another person to feel unsafe.
- Physical aggression towards any pupil, member of staff, parent, carer or visitor.
- Damaging, or threatening to damage, school property.
- Sending abusive, excessive, persistent or threatening emails, messages, letters or telephone communications.
- Making knowingly false, malicious or defamatory allegations about members of the school community.

- Publishing or sharing defamatory, misleading or derogatory comments about the school, its staff, pupils or families.
- Approaching, reprimanding or attempting to discipline another person's child.
- Smoking, vaping, consuming alcohol (except at authorised events) or using illegal substances on school premises.
- Bringing dogs onto school premises, other than registered assistance dogs.
- Driving or parking in a manner that places pupils, staff or members of the public at risk.

The examples above are not exhaustive. The school reserves the right to determine whether conduct is unacceptable based on the specific circumstances of each case.

Section 5: Social Media and Online Communication

St Mary's recognises that social media and digital communication platforms form part of everyday life and can provide valuable opportunities for communication and community engagement.

However, parents and carers are reminded that online behaviour should reflect the same standards of courtesy, respect and professionalism expected in face-to-face interactions.

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Communicate respectfully when discussing matters relating to the school, its staff, pupils, families or wider community.
- Raise concerns directly with the school through the appropriate channels rather than through social media platforms.
- Respect the privacy and dignity of pupils, parents, carers and staff.
- Exercise caution before sharing information, recognising that online content can be rapidly circulated and difficult to remove.
- Parents and carers must not:
 - Publish, post or share defamatory, offensive, malicious or misleading comments about the school, its staff, pupils, families or wider community.
 - Share confidential information relating to pupils, staff or school matters.
 - Post information about another child or family without their consent.
 - Use social media or messaging platforms to organise, encourage or perpetuate hostility towards members of the school community.
 - Send abusive, intimidating or harassing messages to members of staff.

The school encourages parents and carers to raise concerns directly with the appropriate member of staff so that issues can be addressed fairly, professionally and in a timely manner.

Parents and carers should not attempt to establish personal social media connections with members of staff.

The school reserves the right to take appropriate action where online behaviour has a detrimental impact upon pupils, staff or the wider school community.

Section 6: Breaches of the Code

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers conduct themselves in a manner fully consistent with the expectations outlined in this Code. However, where behaviour falls below these standards, the school reserves the right to take appropriate action.

In most circumstances, the school will seek to resolve concerns through discussion and constructive dialogue. This may include meetings with the parent or carer concerned and clarification of expectations moving forward.

Where behaviour is more serious, persistent or has the potential to impact upon the safety, wellbeing or professional working environment of others, the school may take further action.

Such action may include:

- Issuing a written warning.
- Restricting communications to specified channels.
- Requiring communications to be directed through nominated members of staff.
- Restricting access to school premises.
- Temporarily or permanently withdrawing permission to attend school events.
- Referring matters to external agencies, including the police, where appropriate.

Nothing within this Code prevents parents and carers from raising concerns or making complaints in accordance with the School's Complaints Procedure.

The school will consider all concerns and complaints fairly and proportionately. Equally, the school reserves the right to manage complaints in accordance with its Complaints Policy where concerns become unreasonable, persistent, serial or vexatious.

Section 7: Relationship to Other Policies

This Code should be read alongside the following school policies and documents:

- Parent Contract
- Complaints Procedure
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy (including the School Rules)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Educational Visits and Residential Visits Procedures

Expectations regarding pupil conduct on educational visits and residential trips are contained within the Parent Contract, Behaviour Policy and trip-specific documentation.

This Code does not replace any of the rights, responsibilities or obligations contained within the Parent Contract.

Reviewed/Approved: July 2026
Next Review: July 2027

Parent/Carer Declaration

I/We confirm that we have read and understood the Parent/Carer Code of Conduct and agree to support the expectations outlined within it.

Name of Pupil	
Year Group	
Signature of person(s) with Parental Responsibility	
Print Name	
Signature of person(s) with Parental Responsibility	
Print Name	

Please sign and return to School