



Walford Parent Code of Behaviour

Introduction

At Walford Anglican School for Girls we are dedicated to creating a safe and nurturing environment that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all individuals. To foster a welcoming and secure place for students to learn, Walford establishes and administers policies, procedures, and rules.

Parents are key partners in this journey, actively participating in the care and growth of each student and working together with the School to ensure the best outcome for their child. Walford aims to provide the best education for a child, and help equip that child with the skills required for a fulfilling adult life, with cooperation and support from that child's family. Together, we create a flourishing, connected learning community, where each student achieves her best, her way.

To ensure cooperation between School and family, this Code of Behaviour outlines the School's expectations for a student's parents, caregivers, step-parents, guardians, grandparents, extended family members and extended family visitors to the School (collectively, *parents*).

In developing this Code, the School recognises that parents ultimately want the best for their children. However, the School also expects parents to recognise that it must ultimately balance the interests of all of the School's stakeholders (including not only students and parents, but also the School's staff and their right to a safe working environment).

This Code does not attempt to provide a detailed and exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of a parent's interactions with the School and the school community. Rather, it sets out general expectations, ensuring respectful interactions with the School, its staff, students, and fellow parents, both in person and online.

The Code is applicable both on and off the School premises and in and out of School hours. It extends to interactions with stakeholders, School-related activities, and representation of the School.

The Code has been approved by the Walford Council of Governors and operates in conjunction with existing school policies and procedures applicable to parents, and may be subject to modifications at the discretion of Walford Anglican School for Girls.

Summary

In summary, the five key expectations of parents expanded on in the following pages are as follows:

1. Support the educational ethos and values of the School.

Parents are expected to support the educational ethos and values of the School, model appropriate behaviours for their children to learn from, and work with the School as it educates and provides pastoral support to all students.

2. Behave respectfully towards members of our community.

Parents should behave respectfully at all times towards the School's staff (including employees, contractors and volunteers), students and other parents.

3. Communicate and use technology and social media appropriately.

Parents are expected to be respectful in their communication with others, be mindful of privacy and safety in publishing information online, and ensure confidential information is not shared without permission.

4. Be a responsible visitor and participant.

Parents must respect the School's risk-management procedures when visiting the School and attending school activities and events off-campus.

5. Raise grievances appropriately and productively.

Parents should raise genuine grievances they may have about such matters in an appropriate, constructive and respectful forum.

1. Support the educational ethos and values of the School

Parents can support the School and be positive role models by doing, for example, the following:

- a) Comply with the School's codes of behaviour, directions policies, procedures, rules and regulations, and ensure their children do the same.
- b) Respect (and show to their children that they respect) that the School is inclusive and welcomes students from a variety of backgrounds, and with different needs.
- c) Encourage their children to actively participate in the life of the School, including in the many sporting and extracurricular activities available along with special days such as Special Assemblies, Giving Day, Sports Day, and Eucharistic celebrations (noting that some will be compulsory).
- d) Support the School's commitment to developing a student's initiative, independence and sense of responsibility for their own lives and actions.
- e) Support the School's approach to student behavioral concerns, which can include a range of outcomes (including those which are educational, pastoral or disciplinary in nature).
- f) Be responsive to concerns raised by the School about their own child, including by being cooperative, providing information, and attending meetings when required.

- g) Keep the School informed about a child's needs (including but not limited to their behavioural, educational, personal, and physical or mental health needs). This includes providing updated medical information, family developments and other like information as it becomes available. However, parents need to also appreciate that while the School will take into account any new information, and comply with its legal obligations, the School cannot necessarily accommodate every need.
- h) Keep the School informed about a child's parenting arrangements, including any court orders that may be in place. However, parents should not involve the School in parenting disputes, or expect the School to act as the go-between for estranged parents.
- i) Recognise the damage that gossip can do within a school community, and avoid unconstructive commentary (including criticism, uninformed rumour or speculation) with other parents or students, including on social media.

Parents are expected to be a role model for responsible and safe behaviours. This includes ensuring the health and safety of all members of our School community (including students, parents, staff and alumni) and the wider community. Parents are expected to ensure that other individuals involved in their child's life, such as other relatives and caregivers, also comply with this Code.

2. Behave respectfully towards members of our community

Walford expects that parents will behave respectfully at all times towards other members of the School community, through words used, and also tone and body language. Verbal or written interaction with all members of the School community should be courteous and respectful.

Parents are expected to respect the authority of members of staff, as well as School property and the property of staff, contractors, volunteers and other students. Parents are encouraged to understand that community feedback is likely to be diverse, and that the School cannot necessarily make changes based on a small number of opinions or suggestions.

'Respect' is intentionally a broad concept. The following is a non-exhaustive list of behaviours that are not respectful.

- a) Rude, confrontational, impolite, aggressive or insulting behaviour, including passive-aggressive, name-calling, insults, and intimidating or derogatory language.
- b) Unconstructive commentary (including criticism, uninformed rumour or speculation) with other parents, including on social media platforms.
- c) Bullying, intimidation, discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation and child abuse. In addition to being a breach of this Code, such behaviour may also be unlawful.
- d) Actual or threatened aggression (verbal or non-verbal) or violence.
- e) Behaviour that causes a risk to a person's health and wellbeing.
- f) Defamatory or disrespectful comments, including activities, conduct or communication that would reasonably be seen to undermine the reputation of the School, employees or

students of the School (including activities on social media).

- g) Gossip, rumour, and innuendo.
- h) Raising one's voice, or using offensive language or actions, while communicating.
- i) Age-inappropriate language when communicating with or about children.
- j) Vexatious complaints.
- k) Being intoxicated by alcohol or under the influence of illicit drugs or other substances harmful to health whilst visiting the School site, attending School functions or engaging in School-based activities (including activities online).

Staff and volunteers are empowered to take steps to protect their own health and wellbeing. If they feel that a parent is being inappropriate, they are encouraged to verbally note this and ask that it stop. If it does not, or if a staff member feels that a parent's actions are posing a risk to their or someone else's health and wellbeing, they are empowered to remove themselves from the situation. This may include immediately concluding a meeting or phone call, or by asking the parent to immediately leave the School grounds (or School activity or event).

3. Communicate and use technology and social media appropriately

The expectations set out in this Code can also apply to the way a parent uses technology and behaves online, including communication. Parents should show respect, courtesy, and consideration in all communication, including when engaging in school-related private group chats on platforms such as Whats App and Facebook.

For example, parents should:

- a) Use polite and acceptable language in written and verbal communication, and on social media.
- b) Read School communication and respond to emails and telephone calls in a timely manner, where possible within three working days of receipt of the communication.
- c) Respect a staff member's professional and personal boundaries, by not using their personal online presence to raise School matters (or otherwise engage in disrespectful behaviour).
- d) Understand that responses from staff are not expected to be instantaneous or outside normal working hours, unless urgent. Parents can expect a response from a staff member within three working days of receipt of the communication.
- e) Recognise that phone calls are most suitable for time-sensitive or urgent concerns, while routine information or clarification is appropriate for email communication.
- f) Consider face-to-face communication for extended or sensitive discussions.
- g) Not take photos, videos or other recordings of a staff member or parent without their consent, or of a student without their parent's consent, and not publish information (including personal details, contact information, images and recordings) concerning a

staff member, parent, student or other member of the school community online without express consent.

- h) Avoid publishing information which may bring the School (or any of its staff, students, parents and other members of the school community) into disrepute. This may include an image or recording which shows a student in School uniform, or a member of the school community at the School or at a school activity or event, behaving inappropriately.
- i) Avoid publishing anything using the School's logo, images or name without express permission from the Principal.
- j) Not communicate with students from another family outside of the School, including by email or on social media, without prior consent from that student's parent(s).
- k) Not discuss confidential or sensitive School matters, including in relation to grievances about a particular staff member or student, online.
- l) Not set up any online websites, forums or groups which feature the School's name in its title, or which may suggest that it is operated or sanctioned by the School.
- m) Post negative comments in the heat of the moment on a private or group social media page that damages the reputation of the School .
- n) Not use school related platforms for their own commercial interests.
- o) Not participating in conversations with their children when lessons are being conducted.

Parents are asked to be mindful that the time immediately preceding and following the school day is dedicated to lesson preparation, marking, staff meetings, scheduled appointments, training, and professional development. Parents should avoid trying to talk with staff before the school day begins or sending multiple emails about matters that would be best-managed face to face. If a parent wishes to meet with a staff member, they should make an appointment so that a mutually convenient time can be arranged. This can be done through the Reception or the relevant administration person.

4. Be a responsible visitor and participant

Parents must respect the School's risk-management procedures when visiting the School. Parents should immediately proceed to Reception upon arrival to sign in, and should only enter a classroom or other student environment when invited to do so by a staff member. This requirement does not apply when visiting the School only to:

- a) Attend an activity or event to which all members of the school community have been invited.
- b) Visit the School uniform shop.
- c) Drop-off or collect a child from School.

When visiting the School, or attending School activities and events, parents should model appropriate and respectful behaviours, and uphold the School's values. This includes:

- d) Demonstrating good sporting conduct and fair play when attending the School's art, drama and sporting events.
- e) Complying with applicable occupation, student and workplace health and safety and risk-management procedures.
- f) Complying with any reasonable directions given by the School's staff.
- g) Showing appropriate care and regard for the property of the School and others. Any damage should be promptly reported to the School.
- h) Dressing appropriately for the occasion.
- i) Not being under the influence of drugs or alcohol (and otherwise not engaging in the possession, sale or supply of the same at the School).
- j) Behaving lawfully on School grounds whether at events hosted by or connected to the School, whether conducted on site or otherwise.
- k) Ensuring that physical contact with students is appropriate given the age of, and relationship with, the student.
- l) Respecting the School's property and the property of other members of the school community (including staff, students and parents).
- m) Being conscientious about the wellbeing and safety of all members within our school community, as well as the broader community when dropping off or picking up students, including complying with all traffic rules and any school traffic management system in place. This includes adhering to applicable speed limits, observing all traffic signs, limiting the use of car horns (unless indicating imminent danger), and parking appropriately and safely.

5. Raising Concerns Appropriately and Productively

The School is committed to the education and wellbeing of each student. It is therefore critical that Parents are able to raise genuine concerns and grievances they may have about such matters in an appropriate, constructive and respectful forum.

The School's grievance-management procedures are set out in the Handling Complaints Policy. This policy, available on the School website, sets out how concerns and grievances may be raised with the School; who they should be raised with; and how the School will respond to these in a respectful and timely manner.

In general:

- a) Parents should take care with volume, tone and vocabulary when communicating with another family's child.
- b) Parents should not communicate with another student about an issue concerning their own child. In particular, parents should refrain from any attempt to discipline a student who is not their child, unless they are attempting to restrain a student from causing a risk to themselves or others.

- c) Parents should raise their grievances with their child's teacher in the first instance. More serious concerns or grievances, including where a parent is dissatisfied with a teacher's response to a grievance, may be raised with the appropriate member of the School (as set out in the policy).
- d) Parents should arrange a face-to-face meeting to discuss their grievances, rather than relying on email or other written communications.
- e) Parents should clearly identify their grievances, and what they would practically like to see happen. If there is more than one issue or problem, parents should write a list so that they are adequately prepared and then decide which issue or problem matters most.
- f) Parents should appreciate that while the School is committed to dealing with their grievances in a timely manner, it will not always be practicable for staff to provide an immediate acknowledgement or response (particularly where a concern or grievance is sent by email).
- g) Parents should respect that the School employs experienced educators and other professionals who are well-trained in making academic, disciplinary, extracurricular, pastoral and wellbeing decisions every day. Please understand that while the School will always take into account the interests of the parent's child, the School must ultimately make decisions that take into account the interests of all students (and others who may be affected by the School's decisions).
- h) Parents should recognise that just as the School will seek to respect each student's privacy, the School will also respect the privacy of other members of the School community. This means there are limits to what information the School will share with a parent when issues arise. This does not mean that the School is not taking an issue or situation seriously, or hiding information from a parent.
- i) If a parent is not satisfied with the School's response to a grievance, a School policy may provide a parent with a right to request an internal review of the School's decision. Alternatively, an external body, court or tribunal may be able to deal with the issue. The School respects a parent's right to invoke any formal grievance-resolution procedures which may exist. Parents should refrain from refusing to engage in constructive processes that may resolve their grievances, or publicly airing their grievances about the School (and in particular about staff or students) on social media.

Consequences for Breaching this Code of Behaviour

Under the Terms and Conditions of Enrolment, parents agree to abide by the policies of the School which includes the Parent Code of Behaviour.

With these guidelines in place, it is hoped that parents can appropriately direct their concerns and contribute to the harmonious School community that reflects the School's values.

The Principal will have absolute discretion for deciding how to best respond to concerns about a parent's compliance with this Code of Behaviour.

Where the Principal considers a parent has breached the Code, the Principal may implement one or more of the following consequences (not necessarily in any particular order; i.e. steps may be skipped; this is not an exhaustive list):

1. A request seeking the relevant conduct immediately ceases.
2. A written warning.
3. A parent (as defined in this policy) being banned from the Schools grounds, either for a particular period of time or permanently.
4. A parent (as defined in this policy) being excluded from School activities or events.
5. A requirement a parent, or another relevant person, only communicate with a nominated school representative.
6. Termination of the enrolment of a parent's student(s).

A 'right of appeal' will apply to any decision made by the Principal under the Code.

Further Information

Parents can access policies relating to students and the School community through the Parent Portal.

Further information regarding this policy is available from any member of the Executive Leadership Team.

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