St James Infant School
Parent Code of Conduct

Our partnership with families

At St James Infant School, we want every child to feel safe, welcome and ready to learn. A positive partnership between home and school helps children thrive.

This code applies to parents, carers, family members and adults acting on their behalf, including when volunteering. It covers the school and pre-school, the gates, school events and visits, meetings, telephone calls, ClassDojo and other online communication connected with the school.

Our shared values

- **Respect**: treat children, staff and other families with courtesy, listen to different views and look after our school.
- **Kindness**: speak calmly, show consideration and help children resolve difficulties safely.
- **Inclusion**: make everyone welcome so that no one is an outsider; respect different backgrounds, circumstances and needs.
- **Teamwork**: share relevant information, work with staff and support children to keep trying, explore ideas and listen to others.

What families can expect from school

We will listen to concerns, communicate respectfully, explain decisions and work with families to support children. We will consider individual circumstances and communication needs, offer reasonable adjustments where needed and protect personal information. We will take genuine concerns seriously and explain how to use the complaints procedure if a concern remains unresolved.

What we ask of parents and carers

- Model the behaviour we want children to learn, including when you feel worried, frustrated or disagree with a decision.
- Share information that may affect your child's safety, wellbeing, attendance or learning, and keep contact and collection details up to date.
- Support school routines and agreed plans; discuss any difficulties with staff so that we can find a practical way forward.
- Allow staff time to establish what has happened. Raise concerns about another child with school staff rather than approaching the child or their family to challenge them.

Communicating through ClassDojo

St James uses ClassDojo for school communication, including notices, reminders, learning updates and private messages. Please check it regularly and use the appropriate school contact for your query. Tell the school office if you need help accessing Dojo or an alternative way to receive information.

Using messages appropriately

- Write politely and clearly. Explain your concern and the help you are seeking, and keep messages relevant to your child or school matters.
- Use a private message for an individual concern. Comments visible to other families must not name children, discuss incidents or disclose confidential information.
- Send your query to the relevant member of staff and allow time for a response. Avoid repeated messages or contacting several staff members about the same issue unless directed to do so.
- Staff respond during their working hours in term time, alongside teaching and other duties. Dojo is not continuously monitored, and an immediate response should not be expected. Messages sent outside working hours may not be read until staff next return to work.
- Dojo can be used to request a conversation or meeting. Sensitive or complex issues may need a telephone call or meeting, and formal complaints follow the school's complaints procedure.
- Do not contact staff through personal social media accounts or personal telephone numbers about school matters.

Urgent messages and safeguarding

Telephone the school office or speak directly to a member of staff so that the information can be acted on promptly. Ask for the Designated Safeguarding Lead if a child may be at risk. In an emergency where someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

Report absence through the school's stated absence-reporting arrangements. A message to a class teacher alone must not be assumed to have reached the attendance team. On school visits, staff prioritise supervising children and may be unable to read or answer individual messages; urgent queries should go through the school office.

Keeping Dojo safe

- Keep passwords and invitation codes secure. Use your own authorised account and do not allow others to access it. Tell school promptly if access may have been compromised.
- Check who can see a post or comment before sharing it. Check photographs and their backgrounds for private information, including addresses and contact details.
- Do not copy, screenshot, forward or publish school-shared photographs, videos or posts featuring other children, families or staff outside Dojo. Do not circulate private messages about others in parent groups or on social media.
- Support your child to use any learning activities safely. If something inappropriate appears, report it privately to school rather than sharing it further.

A safe and welcoming school site

Please follow staff instructions, use designated entrances and wait in the agreed areas. Do not enter classrooms or other restricted areas without permission. Keep gates and access routes clear and supervise children who are in your care.

Arrivals and collection

- Ensure school knows who is collecting your child and notify changes through the agreed arrangements. Urgent changes must be confirmed directly with the school office.
- Cooperate with staff who ask who you are collecting or check your identity. These checks help keep children safe.
- Keep disagreements between adults away from children and the school gates. Do not follow, confront or intimidate another adult on school premises.
- Inform school promptly of family circumstances, disputes or relevant court orders that may affect collection or safety. Work with staff on any agreed collection or safety plan.

Where a disagreement occurs, staff may ask adults to wait separately and involve a senior leader. The child's safety and wellbeing will guide the response. School will follow safeguarding procedures and any relevant legal restrictions, and may work with support services where appropriate.

Behaviour we cannot accept

The following examples apply in person, by telephone, on Dojo and online. The list is not exhaustive; we will consider the circumstances and impact of each incident.

- Shouting, swearing, abusive language, threatening gestures, intimidation or threats of harm.
- Physical aggression, violence, damaging property or bringing an item intended to threaten or harm others.
- Bullying, harassment, humiliation or discriminatory language or behaviour towards any child or adult.
- Disrupting teaching, meetings, events or the safe running of the school, or refusing reasonable safety instructions.
- Confronting or attempting to discipline another person's child, or encouraging a child to retaliate physically.
- Knowingly making false or malicious allegations, or encouraging others to harass a member of the school community.
- Repeated or excessive contact that becomes intimidating or materially prevents staff from carrying out their duties, after reasonable contact arrangements have been explained.
- Smoking or vaping on site, using illegal drugs, or attending while under the influence of alcohol or drugs in a way that creates a safety risk. Alcohol must not be consumed on site unless specifically authorised for a school event.

Disagreeing with school, asking questions, making a complaint or raising a safeguarding concern is not, in itself, unacceptable behaviour. A concern will not be treated as malicious simply because it is not upheld.

Privacy and raising concerns

Respect the privacy of children, families and staff in conversations and online, including parent messaging groups. Do not post threatening, abusive or discriminatory material, personal information or allegations that identify children. Raise concerns directly with school so they can be considered and addressed. This code does not prevent lawful reporting to safeguarding services, the police or other appropriate bodies.

Follow school instructions about photography at events. Do not publish images of other children without appropriate permission. Agree any recording of a meeting, telephone call or online discussion with school in advance. If recording is needed to support a disability or communication need, discuss arrangements with us. Staff may pause a meeting if an unagreed recording is discovered and arrange how the discussion can continue.

For most concerns, contact the class teacher through Dojo to arrange a discussion. If the matter remains unresolved, request contact with a senior leader or the Headteacher. Formal complaints, including complaints about the Headteacher, should follow the school's published complaints procedure and its named contacts.

How we respond to breaches

Our response will be proportionate to the behaviour and risk. We will listen to those involved, consider relevant needs and circumstances, and record the incident and action taken. Where appropriate, we will seek to restore a constructive working relationship.

- **Stage 1:** A reminder of expectations, a verbal warning or ending a conversation until it can continue calmly.
- **Stage 2:** A meeting with a senior leader, a written warning or an agreed behaviour and communication plan.
- **Stage 3:** A time-limited communication arrangement specifying a named contact, channel or contact times. If Dojo access is restricted, essential school information and an effective way to raise urgent concerns will remain available.
- **Stage 4:** Restrictions on visits or access to the school site, following Trust procedures and relevant guidance. Serious or repeated incidents may require Trust advice, police involvement or legal advice.

Steps do not have to be followed in order where immediate safety is at risk. Any site restriction will be explained in writing, with reasons, arrangements for the child, an opportunity for the adult to present their account and a review date. Restrictions will be time limited and reviewed; the child's education and support will not be used as a sanction for an adult's behaviour.

Records and review

The Headteacher will oversee implementation and report relevant patterns to governors. This code will be reviewed annually or sooner if needed. It should be read alongside the complaints, safeguarding, behaviour and relationships, online safety and data protection policies.