

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS & CARERS

Audience:	X-COLLEGE
Requirement:	ADDITIONAL
Policy Owner:	Director of Student Experience
Review Delegation:	SLT
Review Cycle:	Every 2 years
Last Review:	November 2024
Due for Review:	November 2026

Code of Conduct for Parents/Carers.

At the South Hampshire College Group (SHCG), we action our values of aiming to aspire, collaborate and strive for a community characterised by an ethos of inclusivity and respect. We believe it's important to:

- Work in partnership with parents and carers to support their young persons learning
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for students, staff and parents
- Model appropriate behaviour for our students at all times

To support 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 students, through our SHCG charter.

This Parent Code of Conduct aims to help the College work together and outlines the way in which South Hampshire College Group (SCHCG) requires all parents, guardians and family members to conduct themselves when visiting our College Group, participating in College Group activities and communicating with members of the College community.

'Community' at SHCG includes students, College staff, other parents and other visitors to the College. This code applies to all parents/carers and any others who are involved in communication with the College or in activities associated with SHCG.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors about our expected conduct, so that we can work together to ensure a safe and positive environment for our college community. It will also explain the measures that will be taken should any issues arise.

NB: The policy applies to anyone acting on behalf of a student or apprentice. Parent/carer also refers to guardians, stepparents, grandparents, extended family, caregivers and any other adult involved with the student.

SHCG Expectation

It is expected that parents/carers, will act in the best interests of all students, their families and staff members. It is expected that anything they communicate about others is fair and truthful. They will not engage in malicious, judgmental, or aggressive behaviours.

The diversity of SHCG is valued and the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals and their families is respected. Differing points of view are acknowledged and respected and therefore it is expected that parents/carers must refrain from actions and behaviour that constitute harassment, discrimination or vilification of any kind.

We will not tolerate

- Any form of communication that contains threatening, abusive or offensive language
- Threatening harm or the use of physical violence toward an adult or student at any of our campuses
- Rudeness in tone or attitude toward any member of staff or student at SHCG. This includes raising the voice and shouting.

- Any parents/carer approaching another student at SHCG to discuss an issue of concern. This concern must be directed through the appropriate channels via college staff.
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the college, its staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms
- Abusive, threatening or inflammatory phone calls, emails, letters or social media messaging
- Drinking alcohol on the College premises (unless alcohol has been allowed at a specific event)
- Possessing or taking drugs
- Bringing dogs onto the College premises (other than guide dogs)
- The possession of an offensive weapon or anything deemed to be offensive if used incorrectly.
- Immediate requests to see staff members without prior appointments unless the college deem the meeting urgent in light of safeguarding concerns relating to immediate threat to life.
- Staff being approached outside of working hours whether on college site or out of the college premises regarding an ongoing concern.
- Repeated emails and phone calls pertaining to a situation that is or has been dealt with following college policy.

NB:

Staff are not expected to respond to emails outside of college working hours, this includes student holidays. All staff at SHCG regardless of role, have the right to work without fear of violence or abuse, and the right to protect themselves from harm.

The behaviours above apply to all members of the SHCG community we will not tolerate any of the actions above being aimed at any of our staff, students or members of college community.

SHCG staff behave professionally in difficult situations and attempt to defuse a situation, always, in the best interests of the students.

Unacceptable behaviour may impede the ability of staff to investigate a complaint. Staff have the right to conclude a complaint investigation if attempts to contact or gather information from parties has been unsuccessful due the behaviour or lack of engagement from those acting on behalf of the student or apprentice.

Aggressive Behaviour towards Staff

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and would result in a zero-tolerance approach may include:

- Shouting at members of staff either in person or over the telephone
- Verbally or physically intimidating a member of staff, e.g. standing very close to them
- The use of loud offensive language, shouting, swearing, cursing in any form
- Threatening to harm a member of staff
- Pushing, hitting, slapping, punching, spitting or kicking a staff member or insinuating this action so much as to make a staff member feel it could happen
- Racist, sexist or discriminatory homophobic comments
- Accusatory language
- Refusal to engage in respectful conversation with a staff member

This list is not exhaustive but provides illustrations of unacceptable behaviour.

Actions following aggressive behaviour shown towards staff

If the College suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent or carer has breached the Code of Conduct, then depending on the nature of the incident, the action may be one or a combination of the following:

- The parent/carer will have their communication terminated with immediate effect and be asked to leave the premises or the phone call will be terminated.
- Appropriate Authorities contacted
- The parent/carer etc will receive written communication stating that they are under a warning for their behaviours
- The parent/carer will receive written communication stating that they are banned from the college premises including the car park.
- Seek advice from our legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)

In an event of a need to terminate any conversation either face to face or via the telephone the staff member will acknowledge by wording not verbatim but to the effect "I will now be terminating this conversation as your manner is rude/aggressive/accusatory/blasphemous/derogatory /racist/homophobic. I will inform my line manager of this conversation and a member of staff will be in touch either by telephone or letter. Thank you"

A right of appeal against a ban can be made through the normal college complaints policy. Students learn best when there is a positive partnership between home and college. Whilst every effort will be made to work with parents, carers and visitors this will only be possible when people conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.