



THORNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Love • Respect • Ambition

PARENTAL AND VISITOR CODE OF CONDUCT 2026–2027

1. Introduction

At Thornton Primary School, we are proud of our supportive and inclusive school community.

We believe that education is a partnership between children, parents/carers, staff, governors and the wider community. Positive relationships between home and school are essential to children's learning, wellbeing, attendance and safeguarding.

Our values of **Love, Respect and Ambition** underpin the way we work with children, families and each other.

We expect all adults connected with our school to model these values and to contribute to a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment.

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour we expect from parents/carers and visitors when they are:

- on school premises;
- attending school events;
- accompanying pupils on educational visits;
- communicating with school staff;
- communicating about the school online;
- acting in connection with the school or school community.

The purpose of this Code is not to prevent parents/carers from raising concerns or challenging decisions. **Parents and carers have the right to express concerns and make complaints.** We ask that this is done respectfully and through the appropriate channels.

2. Our Shared Expectations

We ask parents, carers and visitors to:

- treat all members of the school community with respect;



- communicate calmly, politely and respectfully;
- work with staff in the best interests of children;
- listen to and consider different perspectives;
- respect the confidentiality and privacy of pupils, families and staff;
- follow school procedures and reasonable requests;
- raise concerns through the appropriate channels;
- support the school's safeguarding arrangements;
- ensure that children are collected safely;
- follow parking and site safety arrangements;
- set a positive example for children.

We recognise that parents and carers may sometimes feel worried, frustrated or upset.

We will listen to concerns and seek to resolve difficulties constructively.

However, being upset or disagreeing with a decision does not justify abusive, threatening, discriminatory or intimidating behaviour.

3. Our Nurturing and Inclusive Approach

Thornton Primary School is an inclusive and nurturing school with a high level of SEND and disadvantaged pupils.

We recognise that children and families may have different circumstances and needs.

Our approach is therefore based on **fairness, understanding and proportionality**, while maintaining clear expectations for respectful behaviour.

We will seek to understand concerns and resolve difficulties wherever possible.

Equally, we have a responsibility to protect pupils, staff and other members of the school community from behaviour which causes harm, distress, intimidation or disruption.

Where a parent/carer or visitor has communication, disability or other needs that may affect communication with school, reasonable adjustments will be considered where appropriate.

4. Safeguarding

Thornton Primary School takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously.

All adults visiting or working with the school are expected to support arrangements designed to keep children safe.



Parents/carers and visitors must:

- follow school signing-in and site security arrangements;
- follow reasonable instructions from school staff;
- not enter restricted areas without permission;
- not photograph or record children without appropriate permission;
- not approach or question another child about an incident;
- report safeguarding concerns to an appropriate member of staff;
- not attempt to investigate safeguarding concerns themselves;
- not share confidential information about children or families.

Where conduct by an adult presents a safeguarding concern, the school will respond in accordance with its Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and may involve external agencies where appropriate.

KCSIE 2026 reinforces that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that concerns must be acted upon without delay.

5. Behaviour Which Will Not Be Tolerated

The following behaviour is unacceptable:

- threatening, intimidating or aggressive behaviour;
- shouting at, swearing at or verbally abusing another person;
- physical aggression or violence;
- threatening or abusive telephone calls, emails, letters or messages;
- discriminatory, racist, homophobic, biphobic or otherwise prejudicial language or behaviour;
- harassment or intimidation;
- deliberately disruptive behaviour;
- damaging school property;
- entering restricted areas without permission;
- refusing reasonable requests relating to safeguarding or site security;
- photographing, filming or recording children without appropriate permission;
- approaching another person's child to question, challenge, reprimand or discipline them;
- physical punishment of a child on school premises;
- smoking or vaping where prohibited;
- possession or use of illegal drugs;
- consumption of alcohol on school premises unless specifically authorised by the school;
- bringing dogs onto school premises, other than recognised assistance dogs;
- behaviour which places pupils, staff or visitors at risk.

6. Concerns and Complaints



Parents and carers are entitled to raise concerns about their child's education, welfare or experience of school.

We encourage concerns to be raised at the earliest opportunity.

Where appropriate, parents/carers should:

1. speak to the relevant member of staff or class teacher;
2. if the concern remains unresolved, contact the Headteacher;
3. where appropriate, use the school's formal Complaints Procedure;
4. if the complaint remains unresolved, use the next stage of the school's complaints process, including the governing body where applicable.

Concerns should not be raised through confrontation at the school gate, through social media campaigns or by approaching other children.

The school will ensure that complaints are considered fairly and in accordance with its Complaints Policy.

Parents/carers should not be prevented from making a legitimate complaint because they have challenged a school decision.

7. Social Media and Online Communication

We recognise that social media and messaging platforms can be valuable ways for parents and carers to communicate.

However, online communication must remain respectful and must not compromise the safety, privacy or dignity of others.

Parents/carers should not use social media, WhatsApp groups or other online platforms to:

- make abusive, threatening or discriminatory comments;
- target individual members of staff, pupils or families;
- publish confidential information;
- identify or share images of children without appropriate permission;
- post allegations about individual children;
- encourage others to target members of the school community;
- make defamatory or knowingly false statements;
- intimidate or harass staff, governors, pupils or parents/carers;
- attempt to resolve individual school complaints publicly.

Concerns about school should be raised directly with the school through the appropriate channels.



The DfE's 2026 guidance on preventing and tackling bullying and harassment of school staff specifically recognises the importance of addressing online bullying and harassment and ensuring staff are supported, respected and protected.

8. Confidentiality and Privacy

Parents/carers and visitors must respect the privacy of children, families and staff.

Information about individual pupils should not be discussed or shared publicly.

Parents/carers must not:

- photograph or record another child;
- post images of other children without appropriate consent;
- share information about another child's behaviour or circumstances;
- publish details of safeguarding concerns;
- discuss individual children in public social media groups.

If a parent/carer has concerns about another child, these should be reported privately to the school.

9. Approaching Children

Parents/carers must not approach another child to:

- challenge them;
- question them about an incident;
- reprimand them;
- threaten them;
- discipline them;
- demand an apology.

Any concern about another child's behaviour should be reported to a member of staff.

This is particularly important in relation to safeguarding and child-on-child incidents. The school will investigate and respond through its established procedures.

10. Site Safety

For the safety of pupils, staff and visitors, parents/carers are expected to:

- follow school access arrangements;
- sign in when required;



- wear visitor identification where provided;
- remain in authorised areas;
- follow staff instructions;
- keep children under appropriate supervision;
- park safely;
- not park on yellow zig-zag markings or otherwise obstruct access;
- not obstruct emergency routes or entrances.

School premises are private property and parents/carers do not have an automatic right to enter. The DfE confirms that schools may control access to their premises and may bar individuals where aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour presents a risk to staff or pupils.

11. Supporting Staff

Thornton Primary School recognises that staff have the right to work in an environment where they are treated with dignity and respect.

Parents/carers may disagree with staff decisions. They may question decisions and make complaints.

However, disagreement must not become:

- personal abuse;
- intimidation;
- harassment;
- threatening behaviour;
- repeated unwanted contact;
- discriminatory behaviour;
- online harassment.

12. Reasonable and Proportionate Responses

Thornton Primary School will seek to respond proportionately to breaches of this Code.

When deciding how to respond, the school may consider:

- the seriousness of the behaviour;
- whether anyone was placed at risk;
- whether the behaviour was threatening or abusive;
- whether the behaviour was repeated;
- the impact on children or staff;
- whether the behaviour involved discrimination;
- whether the behaviour involved safeguarding;
- whether the individual has additional needs requiring reasonable adjustment;



- whether the behaviour can be resolved through discussion.

The school will seek to resolve misunderstandings constructively wherever possible.

However, **serious behaviour may result in immediate action without prior warning.**

13. Action Following a Breach

Where this Code is breached, the school may take one or more of the following actions:

- speak to the parent/carer or visitor;
- request that inappropriate behaviour stops;
- arrange a meeting;
- issue a written warning;
- require future communication to take place through a named member of staff;
- restrict communication to written communication where appropriate;
- ask the individual to leave the premises;
- restrict access to particular areas or events;
- temporarily or permanently withdraw permission to enter school premises;
- refer matters to the governing body or local authority where appropriate;
- contact the police or other appropriate agency where a criminal or safeguarding matter may have occurred.

The response will be proportionate to the circumstances.

14. Restricting or Barring Access to School Premises

Where an individual's behaviour creates a risk to pupils, staff or visitors, the school may restrict or withdraw permission for that individual to enter school premises.

This may occur following:

- violence;
- threats of violence;
- serious intimidation;
- aggressive or abusive behaviour;
- harassment;
- repeated serious breaches of this Code;
- behaviour which creates a safeguarding or security concern.

The DfE confirms that schools can bar individuals whose aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour presents a risk to staff or pupils. The individual should normally be informed in writing and given an opportunity to present their views before a longer-term decision is confirmed.



In serious circumstances, a temporary restriction may be put in place immediately while the matter is considered.

Any restriction or barring decision will be reviewed in accordance with relevant DfE guidance and the school's procedures.

15. Criminal or Safeguarding Behaviour

Where behaviour may constitute a criminal offence or presents a safeguarding concern, the school may contact:

- the Police;
- Children's Social Care;
- the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), where relevant;
- the local authority;
- other appropriate agencies.

Examples may include:

- violence;
- threats of violence;
- assault;
- harassment;
- stalking;
- serious discriminatory abuse;
- threats to children;
- behaviour which places children at risk.

The school will not attempt to investigate matters which should appropriately be dealt with by the police or safeguarding agencies.

16. Communication with School

The school will establish clear and reasonable channels for communication.

Parents/carers should:

- use official school communication channels;
- respect published communication arrangements;
- allow staff reasonable time to respond;
- make appointments where a longer discussion is required;
- avoid attempting to resolve complex matters at the school gate;
- avoid contacting staff through personal social media accounts.



Staff are not expected to respond to communications outside reasonable working arrangements unless there is an urgent safeguarding matter.

17. Parents, Carers and Parental Responsibility

The school recognises that children may have complex family circumstances.

The term parent includes people who have parental responsibility and, for education purposes, others recognised as parents under education law.

The school will seek to treat parents fairly and will not become unnecessarily involved in disputes between adults.

Where parental responsibility or family circumstances are unclear, the school will follow appropriate DfE guidance and seek advice where necessary.

The welfare and best interests of the child remain central to decisions. DfE guidance makes clear that parental responsibility does not give a parent the right to obstruct a school from fulfilling its statutory duties.

18. Equality and Inclusion

Thornton Primary School is committed to equality and inclusion.

We expect all parents/carers and visitors to respect people regardless of:

- disability or SEND;
- race or ethnicity;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy or maternity;
- age where applicable.

Discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour will not be tolerated.

Where a parent/carer has a disability or communication need, the school will consider reasonable adjustments to enable effective communication and participation.

Our approach reflects Thornton's wider commitment to **Love, Respect and Ambition** and our nurturing and inclusive ethos.



19. Working in Partnership

We want parents and carers to be active partners in their children's education.

We will:

- listen to concerns;
- communicate respectfully;
- explain decisions where appropriate;
- seek solutions;
- recognise that parents know their children well;
- work with families to support attendance, learning, behaviour and wellbeing;
- signpost families to additional support where appropriate.

In return, we ask parents/carers to:

- communicate respectfully;
- work with staff;
- support school expectations;
- raise concerns through appropriate channels;
- model positive behaviour for their children.

20. Safeguarding and Information Sharing

The school will record and respond appropriately to concerns arising from adult behaviour where they may affect the safety or welfare of children.

Information will be shared with appropriate people or agencies where necessary to safeguard a child.

KCSIE 2026 makes clear that information sharing and accurate record keeping are important elements of safeguarding. Records should identify the concern, actions taken, decisions made, rationale and outcomes.

21. Review

This Code will be reviewed annually or sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance or school circumstances require it.

It should be read alongside the school's:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;



- Equalities Policy;
- Complaints Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Health and Safety arrangements;
- Attendance Policy.

Our Shared Commitment

At Thornton Primary School, we believe that **strong relationships help children thrive.**

We want every child to feel safe, valued, respected and ambitious for their future.

We ask every adult in our school community to model the behaviour we want our children to learn.

Together, we create a safe, positive and uplifting environment for every child.

Signed: Mr David Ashcroft, Headteacher

Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

To be agreed by the Staffing, Finance & Resources Committee on 03/11/2026