



## Sandfield Primary School

### Code of Conduct for the Acceptable Use of Parental WhatsApp Groups

Parent/Carer WhatsApp groups, which operate independently of the school, can be a very useful way to connect parents in a particular class or year group. Class WhatsApp groups have been voluntarily set up by the parents in each class and endeavour to include all parents with children in the class. There is no requirement to join these groups and participation is voluntary.

Ideally, these group chats are used as an efficient means of receiving relevant updates and reminders about school events that have been published in the newsletter and the sharing of information that is of general interest to all parents.

The messages in the year group WhatsApp groups come from parents and carers in their personal capacity. The school does not post directly on any WhatsApp parent/carers groups nor do we have 'parent advocates' who post messages on our behalf.

#### **Code of Conduct**

Most of the time, group chats will be a beneficial resource and an enjoyable place to be in.

**In order to prevent any offense or upset, we ask that everyone using these groups within our school community read and follow the notes and guidelines listed below:**

- The group should never be used as a platform to air views/grievances regarding a member of staff, child or parent in the class or school
- Messages posted on the WhatsApp Year Groups should be supportive and respectful of all other group users
- The group is not a political platform for airing opinions on current affairs
- The group should not be used for private conversations with anyone else using the group
- The group should be used keeping in mind mutual respect and cultural sensitivity between all its members
- Each group should have a parent/carers moderator (This will be the Parent Rep who set up the WhatsApp) who is responsible for monitoring posts in order to oversee and ensure appropriate use. However, please be aware that any parent administering Class or Year WhatsApp groups could have legal responsibility, and potential legal liability, for managing personal data shared within these groups
- Links to other online information posted in WhatsApp messages should only be made to sites which are relevant to school, education or extra-curricular activities. Links and other requests should not be posted if they relate to commercial services, unrelated campaigns or personal appeals
- No one is under an obligation to chat or respond to questions posed.
- Some group members may message you directly. There is no obligation to answer. If this direct personal approach does not suit you, please let the individual know.
- If another parent considers a message inappropriate they should contact the person who posted it and seek removal of the message if desired.

**We anticipate parents, carers and other visitors to:**

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with speech and behaviour
- Seek a peaceful solution to all issues
- Approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern.

**Please note, the school considers the following WhatsApp activity inappropriate:**

- Abusive, personal comments or open criticism about staff, pupils or other parents or any member of the school community
- Displays of anger including swearing, or using offensive language
- Bringing the school into disrepute
- Posting aggressive, defamatory or libellous comments
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies or discuss issues about individual children

#### **Raising Concerns**

For individual concerns regarding pupil performance, school policies, staff conduct etc. please raise any issues directly with the class teacher or, where necessary, the Headteacher, rather than using WhatsApp as a platform to air views.

**If a parent or carer breaks this code of conduct, the following will take place:**

- You will be contacted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- You could be removed from the group
- You could be asked to attend a meeting in person with the Headteacher