

## **St Nicholas CE Primary School PTA Parents' WhatsApp Community**

### **Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference for Moderators**

#### **Purpose**

This WhatsApp Community exists to support positive communication between parents and carers, share school-related information, and foster a respectful and inclusive school community. The group is not an official school communication channel, and any urgent matters should be directed to the school office.

#### **Parent and Carer Code of Conduct**

By participating in this group, members agree to:

1. Be respectful
  - Treat all members with courtesy and respect.
  - Avoid personal criticism, offensive language, sarcasm directed at individuals, or discriminatory comments.
2. Keep discussions relevant
  - Posts should relate to the school, pupils, school events, or matters of shared interest to parents.
  - Avoid excessive off-topic conversations.
3. Do not discuss individual children, parents, or staff
  - Concerns about a specific child, parent, teacher, or member of staff should be raised directly with the school through the appropriate channels.
  - Do not speculate, gossip, or share rumours.
4. Respect privacy
  - Do not share personal information, photographs, screenshots, or messages without the consent of those involved.
  - Treat group conversations as confidential unless information has been shared publicly by the school.
5. Avoid conflict
  - Do not engage in arguments or prolonged disagreements within the group.
  - If a discussion becomes contentious, move it to a private conversation or refer the matter to the school where appropriate.
6. No abusive or inappropriate content
  - Do not post content that is threatening, defamatory, discriminatory, bullying, harassing, obscene, or illegal.
  - Spam, repeated promotional content, political campaigning, fundraising (unless authorised), or commercial advertising is not permitted.
7. Think before posting
  - Ensure information is accurate before sharing.
  - Avoid spreading unverified information or rumours.
8. Respect moderator decisions
  - Moderators act to maintain a positive and safe environment.
  - Members should respect reasonable moderation decisions.

## **Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

Moderators may take the following actions where these guidelines are not followed:

1. First breach: A private reminder of the group rules.
2. Second breach: A formal written warning from the moderators.
3. Serious misconduct or repeated breaches: Temporary removal from the group or immediate removal where appropriate.
4. Exceptional cases: Serious incidents involving harassment, discrimination, threats, safeguarding concerns, or unlawful behaviour may be referred to the school leadership and, where appropriate, relevant external authorities.

Removal from the WhatsApp group does not affect a parent's relationship with the school but may result in loss of access to WhatsApp Community communications.

## **Terms of Reference for Group Moderators**

### **Role**

St Nicholas CE Primary PTA have agreed to take responsibility for managing the Whatsapp Community and to appoint and support moderators who are PTA volunteers (or appointed representatives) responsible for maintaining a respectful, safe, and constructive environment for all members.

### **Responsibilities**

Moderators will:

- Promote respectful and inclusive communication.
- Encourage discussions that align with the purpose of the group.
- Remind members of the Code of Conduct where necessary.
- Address inappropriate behaviour fairly, consistently, and without bias.
- Remove posts that clearly breach the Code of Conduct where possible.
- Record significant moderation decisions where appropriate.
- Escalate safeguarding concerns or serious misconduct to the appropriate school representative.
- Protect members' privacy and confidentiality.

Moderators will not:

- Act as representatives or spokespersons for the school unless specifically authorised.
- Resolve complaints about staff, pupils, or school decisions within the WhatsApp group.
- Engage in public arguments with members.
- Use their position to promote personal opinions, businesses, political views, or other unrelated interests.

### **Decision Making**

- Moderators should seek to act consistently and proportionately.
- Significant decisions, including member removal where practicable, should be discussed with another moderator before action is taken.
- Moderator decisions should always prioritise the welfare of the group and the wider school community.

### **Appeals**

A member who has been removed from the group may submit a written request for reconsideration to the Chief Moderator who will be the St Nicholas CE Primary School PTA Chair. The decision following review will be final.

### **Commitment**

This WhatsApp group is intended to strengthen our school community through respectful communication, mutual support, and constructive engagement. Every member shares responsibility for maintaining a positive environment that reflects the values of our school.