



Policy on Courtesy

Review: September 2021

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1. Purpose

Strong working relationships are the bedrock of successful organisations. It is essential for the wellbeing of individuals and the positive and productive ethos of Rastrick High School, that all (governors, staff, students, parents/carers and others involved in the life of Rastrick High School) work co-operatively and effectively together.

Courtesy is something we may take for granted but without it, an individual can feel very unhappy at work. Individuals may not like the comments, behaviour or remarks that are made about them or others but do not feel able to say so in case they are not taken seriously, their feelings are made light of or belittled, or the behaviour/comments become more frequent. This can result in them feeling isolated, uncomfortable and unhappy. Comments/remarks that start out as a joke and seem to cause no offence can, over time, become less funny and even hurtful, irritating and distressing.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- people are treated appropriately by others and;
- that if they find behaviour unacceptable, they feel able to ask for it to stop without fear of reprisals, jokes or isolation.

This policy applies to all those involved with Rastrick High School. It is everybody's responsibility to look after each other and themselves.

This policy is not restricted to the more usual verbal or written exchanges but also to any form of electronic media, including emails and social networking sites.

2. What is expected/accepted

The school expects that everyone will:

- maintain appropriate standards of behaviour, and that individuals will be responsible for ensuring that their own conduct does not cause offence or misunderstanding;
- have a personal responsibility to ensure that their dignity and the dignity of others is not abused;
- challenge inappropriate or unwelcome behaviour that they witness or experience, and will support others when they challenge such behaviour;
- act in an open and honest way, recognising that personal conduct reflects on other individuals, and the school;
- treat others with dignity and respect and ensure that everyone receives the same level of care and attention;
- acknowledge and show a pleasant enthusiastic and helpful manner when dealing with others;
- ensure that any commitments given are achievable and are honoured, with an acceptable explanation if an arrangement has to be broken;
- welcome constructive feedback and acknowledge when mistakes have been made;
- lead by example, with everyone contributing to team and school morale.

3. What is not expected/accepted

It is **not** acceptable to:

- publicly make derogatory remarks or comments about others, or make comments that might undermine them;
- discuss confidential issues in a public place;
- issue reprimands in a public office/place – a private room or area out of earshot should always be found;
- break confidentiality between individuals. Always assume confidentiality unless you have been given permission to discuss the particular matter with others. If in doubt, check with the person who disclosed the information to you in the first place;
- make judgemental, malicious or sweeping statements about others;
- have unnecessarily high noise levels when others are working quietly;
- assume that shared workspace is primarily for your use;
- assume that someone else will clear up a public/shared meeting room, office or desk after you have used it;
- encroach upon the working space of others through excessive untidiness.

What to do

If you think you are not being treated with courtesy there is something you can do about it.

- a. You can ask the person to stop
 - b. You can ask for help
- in the first instance, try to explain to the “offender” that their behaviour is upsetting to you, or
 - discuss the incident/s with the most appropriate person, eg a colleague, your line manager, member of the senior leadership team and/or your union representative, and use them as a sounding board to discuss how the comments/remarks/behaviour have affected you. If you still feel aggrieved, then approach the “offender” either
 - yourself
 - with the chosen appropriate person or
 - the chosen appropriate person to explain your feelings and ask for the comments/remarks/behaviour to stop.
 - if after trying these lines of action, you have not been successful in stopping the behaviour, or the problem is too serious, then you have recourse to the school’s Disciplinary Procedure.

What should you do if you are challenged

- listen to what the person has to say, remembering that their feelings are real to them and are therefore valid and acknowledge and apologise where necessary. Stop the behaviour/comments/remarks if you are asked;
- if the complaint is considered serious enough to follow the school’s Disciplinary Procedure, then, you will be entitled to support as well as having the right to appeal against any action taken.

If you are in doubt about what is or is not acceptable then you need to ask yourself the following questions:

- would you be prepared to repeat your comments/remarks directly to the member of staff in person?
- would you like your comments/remarks to be passed to your colleague?
- would you like similar comments/remarks to be made about yourself?
 - do the comments/remarks need to be made at all?