



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

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**Code of Conduct for  
Parents and Carers**



**Harwell Community  
Primary School**  
**Reviewed November 2021**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## **Parent/Carer Code of Conduct**

At Harwell school we are very proud, and fortunate, to have a very dedicated and supportive school community. At our school, the staff, governors, parents and carers alike all recognise that the education of our children is a partnership between all these parties. For these reasons we welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our school as a collaborative partnership.

The purpose of this code is to provide clarity to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about our expectations of conduct when on site, interacting with, and about, the school. The school has a duty of care to ensure that our children are safeguarded.

Within our school community, we encourage **Kindness, Safety and Being your Best** (Harwell School Rules).

We understand that everyday frustrations can cause misunderstandings and can have a negative impact on relationships. Should this happen, we remain committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner, through open positive dialogue, in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. **Where issues arise or misconceptions take place, please contact your child's teacher who will go through the issue with you and hopefully resolve it.** Where issues remain unresolved, please follow the school's communications procedures. The complaints procedure outlines further steps that you could take.

### **Social Media**

Most people take part in online activities and social media. It's fun, interesting and keeps us connected.

There are various online school groups managed by parents for parents, such as class Facebook pages, and they can be a wonderful source of knowledge, support and advice. We encourage you to positively participate if you wish.

Within these spaces however we ask that you use common sense when discussing school life online and please remain positive.

### **Think before you click to like, share, send or post**

#### **Guidance for Class Facebook Groups**

- Class facebook groups have been set up for parents (by parents) should they wish to join and are to enable parents to share and clarify information for that particular class.
- The facebook groups are not discussion forums about school or classroom procedures.
- These pages are not official communication channels from the school. If parents need advice on whole school policies or procedures, they should contact the school office, check the website, email, telephone or talk in person.

- This is not the correct forum to voice any concerns or grievances about your child or the school in general - please contact the school directly.
- **'Think before you post'** We ask that social media, whether public or private, should not be used to fuel campaigns and voice complaints against the school, school staff, parents or children.

Please note that the school Data Protection Officer has admin rights for each class facebook group. Parent admins for all class facebook groups are expected to adhere to the school protocol for class facebook groups.

These common sense guidelines are **relevant for all social media channels** (whatsApp, messenger etc) - in essence, please be kind to each other.

### Complaints

In most cases we hope that all complaints and concerns can be resolved through open dialogue with class teachers or other members of staff, as appropriate.

This code of conduct does not prevent parents/carers from raising a legitimate complaint, or concern, in an appropriate fashion.

Where you are not satisfied with responses received however, we would ask that you then follow the complaints procedure as laid out in our school complaints policy. This is available on the school's website but if you would prefer, please contact the school office and we can arrange for a hard copy to be made available.

### **GDPR**

In line with our school Privacy Notice (which is available from the school website), should you become aware of any potential breach of data, please report this immediately to the school's Data Protection Officer.

Should parents have a safeguarding or data protection concern which needs to be brought to the attention of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team, we would ask that you email [schoolbusinessmanager@harwellprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:schoolbusinessmanager@harwellprimaryschool.co.uk) marking the email 'Urgent and Confidential' - thank you.

Thank you for abiding by this code of conduct in our school. Together we create a positive and uplifting environment not only for the children but also all who work and visit our school.

Please note: can parents/carers make sure all persons collecting their children are aware of this policy.

## Appendix 1

### What happens if someone ignores or breaks the code?

In the event of any parent/carer or visitor of the school breaking this code then proportionate actions will be taken as follows;

In cases where the code of conduct has been broken but the breach was not libellous, slanderous or a criminal matter, then initially, the school would remind parents about being responsible and mindful of this code of conduct. Should concerns persist, we will send out a formal letter to the parent/carer with a request to attend a meeting.

If the parent/carer refuses to attend the meeting then the school will write to the parent/carer and ask them to stop the behaviour causing the concern and warn that if they do not they may be banned from the school premises. If after this, the behaviour continues the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that a ban is now in place (see notes below).

In cases where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter the concerns will, in the first instance, be referred to Thames Valley Police. This will include any or all cases of threats of violence and actual violence to any child, staff or governor in the school. This will also include anything that could be seen as a sign of harassment of any member of the school community, such as any form of insulting social media post or any form of social media cyber bullying. In cases where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander then the school will refer the matter to the County Council's Legal Team for further action.

#### **Note:**

(1) A ban from the school can be introduced without having to go through all the steps offered above in more serious cases.

(2) Site bans will normally be limited in the first instance, depending on circumstances.

## Appendix 2

### Unacceptable behaviour

Under the Code of Conduct, there are certain types of behaviour that are not acceptable and if these occur, the school will contact parents and ultimately may consider banning an adult from the school site.

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's normal operation or activities anywhere on the school premises.
- Any inappropriate behaviour on the school premises.
- Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper.
- Threatening in any way, a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or pupil, including malicious complaints.
- Damaging or destroying school property.

- Sending abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications (including social media) to anyone within the school community.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/parents/staff/governors at the school on Facebook or other social media sites.
- The use of physical, verbal or written aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment of your own child on school premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- Smoking, taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on school premises. (Alcohol may only be consumed during authorised events)
- Dogs being brought on to the school premises (other than guide dogs): dogs should wait at the gate but be mindful of other parents and children. Only bring on site if they can be carried.
- Inappropriate use of a mobile phone as outlined in the school Communication Policy.
- Sending unsolicited communications about the school to other parents

We take inappropriate use of social media to publicly humiliate or criticise another parent, member of staff or child very seriously.

- Identifying or posting images/videos of Pupils (children other than their own) without prior permission from their parents.
- Abusive or personal comments about staff, pupils or other parents.
- Acting in a way which might damage the school's reputation including posting defamatory or libellous comments.
- Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff or pupils.
- Using social media to publicly challenge school policies and procedures or discuss issues about individual children.
- Threatening behaviour, such as verbally intimidating staff, or using bad language.
- Breaching school security procedures.

At Harwell Primary School, safeguarding responsibilities are the duty of all. Any actions taken will be in accordance with the principle of best practice to ensure all children and adults are safe.