

Code of Conduct for Parents and Carers



Harwell Community Primary School

September 2023

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 will continue to welcome and encourage parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our school as a collaborative partnership.

We expect ALL parents, carers and visitors to the school, to follow our school rules in the same way as we expect our children and staff to do:

- BE KIND - to other adults and children
- BE SAFE - when walking children to and from school and when online
- BE YOUR BEST - as adults we are role models to all the children

The school values underpin everything that we do as a school. They are:

- RESPECTFULNESS
- RESPONSIBILITY
- RESOURCEFULNESS
- RESILIENCE

The purpose of this code is to provide clarity to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about our expectations of conduct.

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.

If an issue arises, in the first instance, **please contact your child's teacher who will go through the issue with you and hopefully resolve it.** Teachers are available to chat at the end of the school day when you collect your child OR contact the school office and the teacher will call you.

Where issues remain unresolved, please follow the school's communications procedures by asking to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team:

Kathryn Wells - Assistant Headteacher
Rebecca Tolley - SENCo
Jane Moreton - School Business Manager
Bryn Gibson - Headteacher

Complaints

This code of conduct does not prevent parents/carers from raising a legitimate complaint or concern in an appropriate fashion. Please follow the school complaints procedure. 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.

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.

Appendix A:

Behaviour that constitutes a breach of the code of conduct and may initiate action:

Whilst we very much hope that we can continue to work with parents as members of a positive partnership, there are some types of behaviour that will not be tolerated. This code of conduct also sets out actions the school can take should this code be ignored or where breaches occur.

- 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) without permission.
- Inappropriate use of a mobile phone as outlined in the school Communication Policy.
- Sending unsolicited communications about the school to other parents.

Should **any** of the above occur on school premises or in connection with school, the school may feel it is necessary to take action by contacting the appropriate authorities and/or sadly, consider banning the offending adult from entering the school premises altogether.

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 the school will send out a formal letter to the parent/carer with a request to attend a meeting.

Failure to attend the meeting may result in a ban from school premises.

If the behaviour continues the parent/carer will again be written to and informed that the ban may be extended or made permanent.

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 or 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 above in more serious cases.
- (2) Site bans will normally be limited in the first instance, depending on circumstances.
- (3) Any decision will be advised in writing and advised to OCC.

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 please make sure all persons collecting their children are aware of this Code of Conduct.

Appendix B: Online and Social Media

Think before you post

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 parent whatsapp groups, 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.

Online activity that constitutes a breach of the code of conduct and may initiate action:

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

- 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.

Guidance for Class Facebook Groups

- Class facebook groups have been set up for 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 check the website, email, telephone or talk in person to the school office staff.
- This is not the correct forum to voice any concerns or grievances - 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.

Appendix C: GDPR

In line with our school Privacy Notice (which is sent to parents annually and 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 marking the email 'Urgent and Confidential' - thank you.