Parental conduct and communication Policy

Harvington C of E First and Nursery School

Written by: T Holdstock
Reviewed: October 2025
Governors Responsibility: Safeguarding

The purpose of this parental conduct and communication policy

At Harvington CE First and Nursery School, we place great value on the partnership between home and school. In order to ensure that our communication is constructive, manageable, and robust we have developed this parental conduct and communication policy. This policy outlines the systems and procedures that we, as a school, follow and in addition outlines our expectations of parent/carers in this area. Through the following transparent mechanisms, we aim to work together to ensure effective communication for all, thereby getting it right for each and every child.

Our school is proud of its Christian vision "Together we love, learn and grow." We expect our school community to uphold this vision and to stand by our Christian values of:

- Respect
- Friendship
- Trust
- Truthfulness
- Forgiveness
- Perseverance

This policy seeks to use our vision and values to maintain positive, productive communication with parents/carers to ensure that "Together we Love, Learn and Grow."

Communication from School

We have the following mechanisms for communicating with parent/carers:

- The school website includes a great deal of information including about: school life, classes, staffing, governors, policies, the curriculum, special education needs and safeguarding arrangements.
- TheSchoolApp
- Telephone calls
- Face to face meetings
- Parent/carer meetings
- Annual reports to parent/carers on their child's progress and outcomes
- Information evenings

- Class events including workshops
- Celebration assemblies
- Emails
- Message books
- Class Dojo messages

Communication from Home to School

There are a number of reasons for parent/carers to communicate with the school including the following: pupil absence, pupil progress, pupils' medical needs, concerns, questions and queries, day to day arrangements.

There are various channels of communication with the school and for efficiency the majority are routed through the school office who then disseminate the information to the member of staff most able to deal with the issue.

- Absence from school- Please refer to the school's absence procedures and report any absences via the school office.
- Day-to-day arrangements- Sharing information such as medical needs or changes in collection are to be reported to the school office during opening hours of 8.30am to 4pm. Outside of these hours, messages can be left on the school answer phone or sent to the school office by email, office@harvington.worcs.sch.uk
- After school appointments with the class teacher can be booked through your child's message book or via the office. Teachers are very busy and so same day appointments after school are rarely possible. Confirmation that a request for a meeting has been received should be made within 24 hours. Whenever possible, any follow up will take place within 5 working days depending on the severity of the concern.
- Senior leadership appointments: If matters cannot be resolved with the class teacher, appointments can be made to see a member of the senior leadership team. Appointments should be made via the school office and will be offered as soon as possible, but certainly within five working days of requesting a meeting.
- Safeguarding- Cause for concerns come through a range of avenues into school, but they will ultimately be dealt with as a priority through the Designated Safeguarding Team.

Written Communication

All written communication to staff, including the headteacher, should be made via the school office, either by letter or email, office@harvington.worcs.sch.uk

All classes have access to Class Dojo as an alternative written communication method between teaching staff and parents.

Telephone Communication

All telephone communication to staff, including the headteacher, should be made via the school office.

Emergency communication

All parent/carers will ensure that the school has their latest contact details, including but not limited to their address, telephone number and email address, so that they can be contacted in the event of an emergency. An additional emergency contact must also be given to the school. If a pupil is seriously ill or injured, the school will attempt to contact the pupil's parent/carers via telephone.

Where an incident affects the whole school community, such as adverse weather or power failure, the school will communicate out to parent/carers via TheSchoolApp app message and post a message on the school website - We will also use the Worcestershire County Council school closure website. The local radio stations will also broadcast a closure announcement in the event of the school closing due to adverse weather or another emergency situation.

Governor communication

Any contact with the governing body should be made to the chair of governors through the school office.

Contact details

In order to assist us with efficient communication, up-to-date contact details must be shared with school.

Social media

Parents/carers are not to contract staff, school volunteers or governors using social media.

Unreasonable communication, behaviour and demands

At Harvington CE First and Nursery School we recognise that parent/carers are the single biggest influence on their children and their achievements. Therefore, we are committed to building positive and responsive communications with parent/carers. We encourage partnerships with our parent/carers, and work hard to maintain mutual respect and recognition of shared responsibility for the children. We strongly believe that we, as adults, are the ones who must act as role models to the children within our care. However, in a very small minority of cases, the behaviour of a few parent/carers can cause disruption, resulting in abusive, aggressive, harassing, disrespectful or discriminatory language towards, or communicated with staff and this will not be tolerated. All members of the school community have a right to expect that their school is a safe place.

Harvington CE First and Nursery School defines unreasonable communication and behaviour as that which hinders our ability to deal with issues because of the frequency or nature of the parent/carer's contact with the school, such as, if the parent/carer:

- uses threats to intimidate or disrupt school operations.
- uses abusive, offensive, sexual or discriminatory language or violence.
- discriminates against any member of the school community, including pupils, staff, governors and other parents.
- uses bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, verbal and sexual interactions offline or online.
- trespasses on school property without prior permission.
- causes intentional damage to school property.
- makes excessive demands on school time.
- does not specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance.
- refuses to co-operate with the complaint investigation process.
- despite the full complaints procedure being exhausted, repeatedly makes the same complaint.
- knowingly provides falsified information.
- publishes defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or members of its community on social media or other public forums.
- approaches another parent or pupil to discuss or reprimand them because of an issue between pupils.
- Engages in the recording of school staff members in any situation.
- smokes on school property.
- drinking alcohol on school property.

Considerations prior to taking action.

Whenever possible, a member of the school's senior leadership team or chair of the governing board will discuss any concerns with the parent/carer informally before deeming the behaviour to be unreasonable. If the behaviour continues, the headteacher will write to the parent/carer explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to change it. For parent/carers who excessively contact Harvington First and Nursery School causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts to be made. This will be reviewed after three months.

Actions taken by the Headteacher may be one or all of the following;

- placing limits on the number and duration of contacts with staff per week or month
- offering a restricted time slot for necessary calls
- limiting the parent/carer to one medium of contact (telephone, letter, email etc.)

- requiring the parent/carer to communicate only with one named member of staff/governor
- requiring any personal contacts to take place in the presence of a witness and in a suitable location
- blocking communication to certain school email address to protect staff

Banning a parent/carer

In some circumstances, a parent/carer may be banned from the school site. This is a decision that is never taken lightly and only adopted after careful consideration and consultation. It is very important to make sure that legitimate business between the banned parent/carer and school can still take place – bans should not disadvantage the child, e.g., safe delivery and collection of children.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, we will immediately inform the police and communicate our actions in writing. This may include banning an individual from the school site. Schools are not public places and although parent/carers have rights to attend and enter school premises for legitimate proper purposes, The Education Act of 1996 states that it is an offence for a trespasser on school premises to cause a nuisance or disturbance. The school is entitled to withdraw the implied right a parent/carer has to enter the school, if that parent/carer is violent or aggressive. If the parent/carer then enters the premises, they are in breach of the law, and they can be prosecuted in the criminal courts.

This policy applies to all those that engage with the school and not just to parent/carers. Behaviours which can lead to a ban include:

- physical or verbal threats towards staff, pupils, or other parent/carers
- actual violence,
- damage to property
- refusal to leave when asked
- disruption of the running of the school
- general abusiveness and harassment

The headteacher will decide whether the situation has been reached for proposing an actual ban. In extreme circumstances, i.e. if the incident is considered to be very serious, then s/he can issue a short-term temporary ban immediately, if required.

If the issue presents a less immediate threat, then the headteacher will consider issuing a warning letter which says that repeats of such behaviour will likely result in a ban. Events may occur in a number of stages and it may be that upon consideration by the headteacher that a warning letter needs to be issued.

The school will write to the parent/carer setting out:

- what has happened and why it is unacceptable
- that the school will consider banning the parent/carer from the school premises
- give a clear explanation of why the ban is proposed
- give the parent/carer 5 working days to respond in writing giving their own version of events
- state the length of the proposed ban and give a review date.

Following receipt of the written response:

- The headteacher will decide whether or not to ban the parent/carer
- The parent/carer will be informed in writing within 3 days of the decision taken
- The terms of any ban will be clear, with explicit paths of communication between the school and the parent/carer
- Pick up and drop off of children will be taken into consideration
- A date for the review will be given, which will take account of what has happened in the interim period
- If no further concerns have arisen regarding the parent/carer's behaviour, a meeting date will be set which will seek to re-establish a productive working
- relationship between the school and the parent/carer.

If a parent/carer wishes to appeal against a ban, they may do so in writing (following the complaints procedure). The first stage of this appeal will be undertaken by an appointed governor who would invite the headteacher to review the matter with a view to lifting the ban. If the outcome to this stage is that the ban is still in place, then the parent/carer may appeal further to a panel of governors according to the usual complaints process.

In some cases, the unacceptable behaviour is so extreme (for example, an assault on a member of staff) that the headteacher may feel that there is no alternative but to impose a lengthy or permanent ban.

In criminal cases, the headteacher should inform the police and should contact the Worcestershire County Council Legal Team.