



Appropriate Conduct Including Work Related Violence (Parents and Visitors Policy)

APPROVED AND ADOPTED

Policy Author: Laura Thomas (DHT Hatch Warren Juniors) and Jo Padfield (DHT Hatch Warren Infant School)

Approved by: FGB

Date of issue: January 2025

Review Date: January 2026

Our Partnership with Parents, Carers and Visitors

At Hatch Warren Infant and Junior Schools, we are very proud and fortunate to have a dedicated and supportive school community. At our schools, the staff, governors and parents alike, all recognise that the education of our children is a partnership between all parties. As a partnership we recognise the importance of solid working relationships to equip all of our children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons, we welcome and encourage parents to participate fully in the life of our schools. The purpose of this policy is to set out our expectations regarding conduct of all parents, carers and visitors when on the school site. We understand that everyday frustrations can cause misunderstandings and have a negative impact on our relationships. We believe it is essential that we all remain committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner through open, positive dialogue. Any concerns parents or carers may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking firstly to the class teacher, followed by the year leader, Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher and then the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively on behalf of all concerned.

This policy has been created to run alongside our Staff Code of Conduct policy, to which all staff must adhere, as well as our complaints policy.

The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) definition of work-related violence is: 'any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.'

This is a joint policy between Hatch Warren Infant and Junior Schools.

Our Expectations

As well as following the guidance set out in our Home-School Agreement, we expect parents, carers and visitors to adhere to the following:

- Respect the caring ethos of our school
- Understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children
- Demonstrate that all members of the school community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and behaviour
- Talk politely and respectfully towards each other at all times
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue
- Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern
- Avoid using school staff as threats to admonish children's behaviour
- Use the correct school entrances for parents and visitors and not enter the school via classroom doors (only with permission from the class teacher). This will protect the children and keep the school secure.

Inappropriate Conduct

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, the school cannot tolerate parents, carers or visitors exhibiting the following types of behaviour. This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of unacceptable behaviour:

- Shouting at school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- Making impolite and disrespectful comments
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, e.g. standing very close to them
- Using offensive language, swearing, cursing or displaying temper
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to a member of staff, governor, visitor, fellow parent/carer or pupil
- Any language or actions which breach our commitment to equality and diversity, for example, but not exclusively, sexist, racist or homophobic comments/actions
- Damaging or destroying school property
- Abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication

- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding school or any of the pupils/parent/staff on Facebook or any other social networking sites. (See appendix 1)
- Animals being brought onto school premises (unless it's an assistance dog or pre-arranged with school staff as part of our curriculum)
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss with or chastise them because of this child's actions 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, including e-cigarettes and vaping on the school site
- Drinking alcohol or being under the influence of any intoxicating substance.

Should any of the above behaviour occur on school premises, the school may feel it is necessary to contact the appropriate authorities and if necessary, ban the offending adult from entering the school grounds.

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour from parents/carers of visitors

We ensure that Hatch Warren Infant and Junior Schools are a safe place for pupils, staff and visitors and all other members of our community. If a parent/carer has concerns, we will always listen to them and seek to address them. However, inappropriate, abusive, threatening or violent behaviour will not be tolerated. Staff and pupils have the right to expect their school to be a safe place in which to work and learn. The following is intended to give guidance on the following areas:

- How to prepare for and respond to inappropriate behaviour
- What to expect in the event of inappropriate behaviour.

Staff are advised to select actions and responses that seem applicable to the situation. If there is inappropriate behaviour during a meeting between a member of staff and a parent/carer or visitor, the member of staff will ask the parent/carer/visitor to stop the behaviours, and, if the behaviours continue, the following actions may be taken:

- offer to make another appointment when they are calm
- state calmly that the meeting has closed for that day
- request the parent/carer leave or the staff leave the room (staff will call a colleague/line manager or the police if necessary)
- make a record of the meeting on CPOMs.

If the conversation is on the telephone, the following actions will be taken by the member of staff:

- state they will end the call if the caller is not polite and calm
- put the phone down if they do not respond to this request, first stating that they are putting the phone down now.

Where a meeting has been arranged with a person who has previously demonstrated inappropriate behaviours, staff will act as follows:

- be accompanied by another member of staff
- set a clear agenda, expectations and outcomes before the meeting
- agree a time limit
- clarify and record outcomes.

If the parent/carer or visitor approaches a member of staff following an incident of inappropriate behaviour, the member of staff will follow these steps:

- listen to what the parent/carer has to say
- if necessary, the staff member will politely say that the issue has been passed to a senior member of staff, who will now be dealing with it
- walk away
- record the incident on CPOMs.

If a member of staff is upset or affected in any way, they should seek in-school help and advice and/or contact external staff support networks as listed on the staff guidance sheet.

If a member of staff witnesses inappropriate behaviour towards another member of staff, they will not ignore it. Members of staff will support each other in the following ways:

- walk up and stand by the member of staff
- intervene, if this seems appropriate, using strategies from above
- suggest the parent/carer/visitor makes an appointment
- escort the colleague away to a safe place and ensure they are okay
- record the incident on CPOMs
- inform a senior member of staff.

A senior member of staff will take action. They will:

- follow up any incidents of inappropriate behaviour
- make sure the incident has been recorded on CPOMs
- send a letter to the parent/carer/visitor to clarify expected behaviour, make a telephone call or set up a meeting
- decide if any further actions should be taken, e.g. make a risk assessment, take legal advice from the legal team about a warning letter
- ensure the member of staff is supported.

There should be a written record made of all incidents with witness statement attached where appropriate. No meeting at school may be video or audio recorded without the express permission of all parties, and information obtained without such permission will not be admissible in any proceedings.

Use of Social Media and Messaging Apps

Inappropriate use of social media websites and messaging apps can be used to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff and in some cases other parents/pupils. The Governors of Hatch Warren Infant and Junior School consider social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking firstly to the class teacher, followed by the year leader, Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher and then the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively on behalf of all concerned.

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child being educated at Hatch Warren Infant and Junior School are found to be posting libellous, inflammatory or defamatory comments on any social network sites or messaging apps, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about acceptable content that can be posted on their site and they provide robust mechanisms to support investigation into conduct or activity that breaches these.

The school will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases, the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any misuse of social networking and other sites.

We would expect that parents/carers would make all persons responsible, when visiting the school site and when collecting children, aware of this policy.

We trust that parents/carers and visitors will assist our school with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continuing support of the school.