



Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct

Key Document Details

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Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct

1 Introduction and purpose

The White Horse Federation is committed to fostering a safe, respectful and inclusive school environment where all members of the community; staff, pupils, parents, carers and visitors feel valued and supported.

This Code of Conduct outlines the standards of behavior expected, from everyone, when engaging with school. It is designed to:

Promote a culture of mutual respect and collaboration.

Support the schools safeguarding responsibilities and legal obligations.

Ensure that all interactions contribute positively to the wellbeing and educational progress of pupils.

Prevent and address behaviors that may disrupt learning, compromise safety or undermine the schools values.

2 Legal Framework

2.1 This Code of Conduct has due regard to :

Education Act 1996 (section 547)

Makes it a criminal offence to cause a nuisance or disturbance on school premises without permission to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance. This supports the school's authority to remove or bar individuals who breach conduct expectations.

DfE (2018) Controlling access to school premises

Clarifies that schools are private property and outlines procedures for barring individuals whose behavior poses a risk to staff or pupils.

DfE (2021) Best Practice Advice for academies complaints procedures 2021

Provides guidance on handling complaints respectfully and expediently.

DfE (2024) Behavior in Schools, whole school behavior culture and parental role

Emphasises the role of the parents in supporting a whole-school behavior culture and outlines expectations for respectful engagement.

KCSIE 2025 Safeguarding responsibilities, online safety and digital conduct

Reinforces safeguarding responsibilities including online safety, digital conduct and the importance of a safe school environment.

Working together to Safeguard Children 2023

Promotes multi agency collaboration and child centered practice in safeguarding

Equality Act 2010

Ensures all conduct is inclusive, non-discriminatory and respectful.

3 Expected Conduct

3.1 In addition to following the guidance set out in each school's Home-School Agreement, The White Horse Federation expects all parents, carers, and visitors to uphold the following standards of behaviour:

Respect the school's ethos and core values, contributing to a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment for all pupils.

Work collaboratively with staff, recognising that strong partnerships between home and school are essential for children's wellbeing and educational success.

Model respectful behaviour in all interactions, including speech, tone, and body language, both in person and online.

Support positive behaviour in children, including addressing inappropriate behaviour calmly and constructively, particularly in public settings.

Engage constructively with the school to resolve concerns or queries, recognising that early dialogue helps prevent escalation.

Use appropriate channels to raise concerns, including contacting the relevant teacher, Principal/Headteacher, or Chair of the Local Governing Body, to ensure issues are addressed fairly and effectively.

Participate positively in meetings, maintaining a respectful and solution-focused approach, and refraining from recording or disruptive behaviour.

Adhere to all safeguarding and child protection policies, including signing in at reception, wearing visitor identification, and respecting boundaries around pupil contact and confidentiality.

4. Behaviour and Conduct Which Is Not Tolerated

4.1 White Horse Federation has a zero-tolerance approach to poor conduct and will not tolerate the following behaviours from parents, carers, or visitors, whether on school premises or in school-related contexts (including online):

Disruptive behaviour that interferes with the operation of classrooms, offices, meetings, or any part of the school site, including playgrounds and sports areas.

Aggressive, threatening, or abusive language or gestures, including shouting, swearing, or displaying temper.

Threats of harm—verbal, written, or implied—towards any member of staff, governor, pupil, parent, or visitor, regardless of whether the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.

Damage to or destruction of school property, whether intentional or reckless.

Disrespectful or intimidating conduct towards staff, governors, or other members of the school community.

Defamatory, offensive, or derogatory communication, including emails, texts, voicemails, or written correspondence directed at staff, governors, or other parents.

Inappropriate use of social media, including posting or sharing defamatory, offensive, or misleading content about the school, its staff, pupils, or governors.

Recording conversations or meetings with staff or governors without prior consent.

Physical aggression or violence towards any adult or child, including physical punishment of their own child on school premises.

Approaching another child to discuss or reprimand them for perceived behaviour towards their own child. This may be considered a safeguarding concern or potential assault.

Harassment or intimidation via digital platforms, including WhatsApp groups, parent forums, or messaging apps.

Refusal to follow safeguarding procedures, such as signing in, wearing visitor badges, or respecting restricted area or protocols.

Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances on school property.

4.2 Should any of the behaviors listed above occur on school premises or in connection with school activities, the school reserve the right to take appropriate action to safeguard its community. This may include:

- Contacting relevant external authorities e.g. Police, Children's Services, Legal Advisers
- Issuing a formal warning in writing to the individual involved.
- Temporary withdrawing permission for the individual to enter school premises.
- Recording the incident and maintaining evidence for future reference or legal proceedings.

All actions will be proportionate to the nature and severity of the behavior and will be taken in accordance with statutory guidance and the schools safeguarding policies.

5 Inappropriate Use of Social Media

5.1

Parents, carers, and community members are expected to raise any concerns about the school through the appropriate channels. Please see the complaints policy for more information. This ensures that concerns are addressed fairly, promptly, and constructively.

5.2

The Trust will not tolerate the use of social media or other online platforms to post or share content that is defamatory, abusive, threatening, or misleading about the school, its staff, pupils, governors, or other members of the school community. This includes, but is not limited to, posts on Facebook, Twitter/X, WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, and online forums.

If such content is identified:

- It will be reported to the relevant platform using their 'report abuse' mechanisms.
- The individual will be asked to remove the content immediately.
- The school may take further action, including restricting access to the premises or seeking legal advice.

5.3

In serious cases, the Trust reserves the right to pursue legal remedies, including action for defamation, harassment, or breach of safeguarding protocols. Misuse of social media may also be referred to external agencies such as the Police or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), where appropriate.

6 Code of conduct during meetings

Meetings between staff, governors, and parents/carers are a vital part of the school-home partnership. To ensure discussions are productive, respectful, and focused—especially when addressing sensitive or emotive issues—the following expectations apply:

- Meetings will be held in a private, interruption-free setting.
- A Chair will be identified to guide the meeting.
- Each party may bring a representative (e.g. a friend, legal advisor, or professional colleague).
- The purpose and desired outcomes of the meeting will be agreed at the outset.
- A time limit may be set where appropriate.
- All participants are expected to listen respectfully and avoid unnecessary interruptions.
- Recording of meetings is not permitted.
- Discussions should remain constructive and solution-focused.
- Intimidating, offensive, or threatening behaviour will result in the meeting being terminated immediately.

7 Referral to External Agencies

7.1 Referral to External Agencies

In cases where behaviour breaches this Code of Conduct and poses a risk to safety, wellbeing, or reputation, the Trust may refer the matter to external agencies as appropriate:

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

If a member of staff or governor sustains an injury as a result of an assault or serious incident, the Trust may report it under the *Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013*. This should be discussed with the Trust's Estates Director in the first instance.

HSE Guidance on Reporting Incidents in Schools

Legal Advice

The Trust may seek legal advice in cases involving alleged harassment, defamation, or misuse of digital platforms targeting staff, governors, or the school. This should be escalated to the Trust's Chief Executive Officer.

Police and Safeguarding Authorities

Serious criminal acts, including threats, physical violence, or safeguarding breaches, will be reported immediately to the Police and/or relevant safeguarding bodies.

All referrals will be made in accordance with statutory guidance and the Trust's safeguarding and complaints procedures.

8 Referral to Complaints Officer

All incidents involving abuse, threatening behaviour, violence (verbal or physical), or any breach of this Code of Conduct must be reported to the Trust's nominated Complaints Officer. Reporting is essential for documentation purposes, ensuring a clear and accurate record of events and for Trust oversight, enabling appropriate monitoring, investigation and action.

Where appropriate, supporting evidence such as CCTV footage, may be included to assist with investigation and potential legal proceedings.

All personal data collected during incident reporting will be:

- Processed lawfully, fairly, and transparently.
- Used solely for the purpose of safeguarding, investigation, and policy enforcement.
- Stored securely and retained only for as long as necessary, in line with the Trust's data retention policy.

Witnesses to an incident may be asked to provide a written statement as soon as possible. These statements should be signed, dated, and include only factual observations. Witnesses will be informed of how their data will be used and their rights under the UK GDPR.

9 Access to school premises

Parents and carers of pupils at schools within The White Horse Federation generally have implied permission to access school premises for legitimate purposes—such as drop-off, collection, and scheduled meetings. This access is conditional upon adherence to the Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct and safeguarding protocols.

Where behaviour significantly breaches this Code—particularly if it compromises safety, wellbeing, or the orderly operation of the school—the Trust may temporarily or permanently withdraw access. Any such decision will be proportionate, clearly communicated in writing, and subject to review. Individuals will be given the opportunity to respond before a permanent restriction is considered.

Under **Section 547 of the Education Act 1996**, it is a criminal offence for a person who has been barred from school premises to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance. In such cases, the school may seek removal and prosecution to protect the school community.

10 Roles and responsibilities

Each school's **Local Governing Committee** is responsible for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy at school level.
- Supporting the Headteacher in maintaining a safe and respectful school environment.

The **Headteacher** of each school is responsible for:

- Ensuring full implementation of this policy within their school.
- Communicating the policy to all parents, carers, visitors, and staff.
- Conducting risk assessments where there is concern about abusive or violent behaviour.
- Liaising with the Trust's Complaints Officer when breaches occur.

All **parents, carers, visitors, staff members, and governors** are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with this policy.
- Upholding the standards of behaviour outlined within it.
- Reporting concerns or breaches through appropriate channels.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The **Complaints Officer** will review this policy regularly to ensure it remains compliant with current legislation, guidance, and best practice. Schools will be expected to report incidents and report trends or concerns to the Complaints Officer for oversight and improvement.

