HEDNESFORD HILLS FEDERATION

PARENT, CARER AND VISITOR CONDUCT POLICY

Policy owner	Headteacher / Governing Body
Approved by	Governing Body
Date approved	7.10.26
Review date	September 2027
Review cycle	Annual, or sooner if guidance or circumstances change

1. Introduction and purpose

At Hednesford Hill Federation, we value the positive relationships we have with parents and carers and recognise that children benefit most when home and school work together. Our values of Respect, Learn and Achieve apply to everyone in our school community.

This policy sets out clear expectations for the conduct of parents, carers and visitors when communicating with or attending the school. Its purpose is to maintain a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for pupils, families, staff and visitors, while ensuring that concerns can be raised and resolved appropriately.

The policy applies on school premises, at school-organised events and activities, when communicating with school staff in person, by telephone, email or online, and where conduct outside school has a direct impact on the safety, welfare or effective operation of the school community.

2. Legal and guidance framework

This policy has been prepared with regard to relevant legislation and national guidance, including:

- Education Act 1996, including section 547 concerning nuisance or disturbance on school premises;
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the employer's duty, so far as is reasonably practicable, to protect employees' health, safety and welfare at work;
- Equality Act 2010, including protection from unlawful discrimination and harassment and the duty to make reasonable adjustments where applicable;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- DfE guidance on controlling access to school premises;
- DfE guidance, Preventing and tackling bullying and harassment of school staff (2026); and
- relevant safeguarding, security and complaints guidance.

Nothing in this policy prevents a parent or carer from raising a legitimate concern or complaint. Concerns should be raised respectfully through the appropriate school procedure.

3. Our expectations

We ask parents, carers and visitors to help us maintain a calm, safe and respectful school environment. We expect adults to:

- treat pupils, staff, other parents, carers and visitors with courtesy, dignity and respect;
- support the school's ethos, values and reasonable policies and procedures;
- work constructively with staff in the best interests of children;
- raise concerns calmly and through the appropriate member of staff or the school's Complaints Policy;

- respect the professional role, working time and privacy of school staff;
- follow arrangements for entering, leaving and using the school site, including parking, smoking/vaping and site-security expectations;
- avoid approaching, questioning, reprimanding or disciplining another person's child and instead raise concerns with a member of staff;
- respect confidentiality and the privacy of children, families and staff; and
- follow staff instructions during emergencies, incidents, events and other situations where safety must take priority.

4. Behaviour that is not acceptable

The federation will not accept behaviour that compromises the safety, dignity or wellbeing of members of the school community or significantly disrupts the work of the school. This includes, but is not limited to:

- aggressive, intimidating, threatening or violent behaviour;
- shouting, swearing, abusive, insulting, discriminatory or offensive language;
- harassment, bullying, coercion or persistent intimidation of staff, pupils, parents or visitors, whether in person or online;
- behaviour related to a protected characteristic that amounts to discrimination or harassment;
- threats of violence or physical aggression;
- deliberately damaging or attempting to damage school property or the property of another person;
- disrupting lessons, offices, meetings, school events or the normal operation of the school;
- refusing to leave an area or the school site when reasonably asked to do so;
- approaching, confronting, questioning or disciplining another person's child;
- physical punishment of a child on school premises, which will be considered under safeguarding procedures;
- attending the school site while seriously impaired by alcohol or drugs, or possessing or using illegal drugs on the premises;
- smoking or vaping on the school site;
- bringing weapons or other dangerous items onto the school site;
- abusive, threatening, malicious or harassing telephone calls, emails, messages or social-media communications; and
- persistent or unreasonable contact which has the effect of harassing staff or significantly interfering with the school's ability to carry out its work.

The federation recognises that people can become upset when discussing matters concerning their children. A parent expressing disagreement, making a complaint or asking challenging questions will not, by itself, be treated as unacceptable conduct. The federation will consider the nature, context, frequency and impact of behaviour and respond proportionately.

5. Communication with school

Parents and carers are encouraged to raise concerns at an early stage. In most cases, the appropriate first contact will be the child's class teacher or another relevant member of staff. More serious or unresolved matters may be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Headteacher.

Formal complaints should be raised through the school's Complaints Policy. Making a complaint does not justify abusive, threatening or harassing behaviour, and the school may manage the conduct issue separately from the substance of the complaint.

The federation may set reasonable communication arrangements where the volume, frequency, tone or method of contact has become unmanageable. These may include a named point of contact, agreed communication method, scheduled meetings, limits on repetitive correspondence or a requirement that meetings take place by appointment.

6. Meetings and recordings

Meetings should be conducted respectfully and with the aim of resolving issues constructively. The school may end or adjourn a meeting if behaviour becomes abusive, threatening or unsafe.

A parent or carer who wishes to record a meeting should request agreement in advance. Recording will normally be subject to the consent of all parties. The school will consider reasonable adjustments for disability or other relevant needs. Any agreed recording must not be used in a way that causes harassment, intimidation, distress or a safeguarding or data-protection concern.

7. Social media, online communication and filming

The federation supports respectful discussion and does not seek to prevent parents from expressing legitimate views. However, online communication must not be used to bully, harass, threaten or intimidate pupils, staff or other members of the school community.

Parents and carers should not publish confidential information about pupils, families or staff, or post photographs, video or audio in a way that creates a safeguarding, privacy or harassment concern. Concerns about the school should be raised through the appropriate school channels rather than through targeted online abuse or campaigns against individuals.

Filming or recording staff or pupils without agreement may create safeguarding, privacy and staff-welfare concerns. The school may ask a person to stop filming on school premises or at a school event and may take further action where filming is used to intimidate, harass or place children or staff at risk.

Where potentially unlawful online content is identified, the school may preserve appropriate evidence, ask for content to be removed, report content to the platform and/or seek advice from the Local Authority, Police or legal advisers as appropriate.

8. Safeguarding

Safeguarding children is the school's overriding priority. Any conduct that raises a concern about a child's safety or welfare will be dealt with under the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. The complaints or conduct process will not delay necessary safeguarding action.

Where an incident involves a child, staff will consider the child's welfare and best interests. Relevant concerns, decisions and actions will be recorded through the school's safeguarding systems, including MyConcern where appropriate, and information will be shared with external agencies where necessary to safeguard a child.

9. Responding to breaches of this policy

The school will respond to concerns about adult conduct fairly, proportionately and according to the seriousness and circumstances of the incident. Wherever appropriate, the aim will be to restore constructive working relationships.

Possible responses include:

- an informal reminder of expected standards;
- a written reminder or warning;
- a meeting with a senior leader or the Headteacher;
- mediation or another agreed approach to restoring communication;
- agreed or imposed communication arrangements, such as a named contact or written communication only;
- conditions on attendance at meetings or events, including requiring appointments or another appropriate adult to be present;
- a requirement for contact with a particular member of staff to be routed through a senior leader;
- a temporary restriction on access to specified areas of the school site;
- consideration of barring the individual from school premises;
- seeking advice or support from the Local Authority, HR, legal advisers or other relevant professionals; and
- contacting the Police or other appropriate authority where conduct may constitute an offence or there is an immediate safety concern.

The school is not required to progress through each response in order. Serious incidents may require immediate protective action.

10. Restricting or barring access to school premises

School premises are private property. Parents and carers normally have an implied licence to enter the premises for legitimate purposes such as dropping off or collecting younger children, attending appointments and school events, subject to the school's rules.

Where aggressive, abusive, insulting, threatening or other unacceptable behaviour creates a risk to pupils or staff, the school may consider restricting or withdrawing that implied licence. Any decision will be made in accordance with DfE guidance and, for a maintained school, with appropriate Local Authority advice or involvement.

Except where immediate temporary action is necessary to protect safety, the individual will be informed in writing of the proposed restriction or bar and given an opportunity to make representations. Where an immediate temporary bar is imposed, the person will be given an opportunity to present their views before a longer-term decision is made.

Any continuing restriction or bar will be confirmed in writing, will explain the arrangements for necessary communication with the school and for the child's arrival/collection where relevant, and will be reviewed within a reasonable period. A restriction on a parent's access to the premises does not prevent the school from maintaining appropriate communication about their child.

A person who enters or remains on school premises without permission may be treated as a trespasser. Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 may apply where a person who is on school premises without lawful

authority causes or permits a nuisance or disturbance. The school may seek Police or Local Authority assistance where appropriate.

11. Supporting staff following an incident

The federation recognises its responsibility to support staff who experience abuse, intimidation, harassment or violence. The Headteacher or appropriate senior leader will consider immediate safety, wellbeing and practical support, recording and reporting requirements, whether risk assessments or working arrangements need to change, and whether HR, occupational health, trade union, Local Authority or Police support is appropriate.

Staff will not be expected to manage serious or repeated bullying or harassment by parents or carers alone.

12. Equality and reasonable adjustments

The federation will apply this policy fairly and consistently and will have regard to the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments will be considered where required, including adjustments to communication or meeting arrangements. An adjustment does not require the school to accept threatening, abusive, discriminatory or unsafe behaviour.

13. Confidentiality and information handling

Information about incidents will be shared only with those who need it for safeguarding, management, employment, legal, governance or other legitimate purposes. Records will be retained in accordance with the school's data-protection and records-management arrangements.

Where serious or repeated incidents indicate a wider risk to staff or pupils, appropriate anonymised information may be reported to the Governing Body as part of its strategic oversight of safeguarding, health and safety and staff wellbeing.

14. Related policies

- Complaints Policy;
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy, including cyberbullying;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Technology Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Data Protection Policy; and
- Whistleblowing Policy.

15. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher will monitor the implementation of this policy and significant or repeated incidents. The Governing Body will review the policy at least annually, or sooner where legislation, guidance or school circumstances require amendment.

Appendix 1 – Indicative staged response to unacceptable conduct

The following framework may be used to support consistent decision-making. It is not a rigid sequence and serious incidents may require immediate escalation.

Level	Example response	Possible action
1 – Low-level / isolated	Behaviour falls below expectations but does not create an immediate safety risk.	Informal reminder; clarify expectations; record locally if appropriate.
2 – Repeated / significant	Repeated disrespectful contact, shouting, abusive correspondence or behaviour affecting staff or school operations.	Written warning; meeting; named contact; communication arrangements; incident recording.
3 – Serious / threatening	Threats, intimidation, harassment, discriminatory abuse, aggressive confrontation or behaviour creating a safety risk.	Immediate safety measures; senior leadership involvement; Local Authority/HR/legal advice; access restrictions; Police consideration where appropriate.
4 – Ongoing or exceptional risk	Serious or repeated conduct continues despite intervention, or there is a significant ongoing risk.	Consider barring from premises in accordance with DfE guidance; formal review arrangements; Police/legal action where appropriate.