

Frogwell Primary School

Safe and Happy – Supportive – Respectful – Aspirational - Inclusive

Parent/Carer and Visitor Behaviour Policy

Date of Policy: Term 1- 2025

Review Date: Term 1- 2026

Governor Responsibility: Full Governing Body

Governor Lead: Nigel Linacre

Nominated Lead Member of Staff: Imogen Woods

Status & Review Cycle: Statutory Annual

Rationale

All members of our school community are entitled to be able to work, study or visit without fear of verbal or physical assault, intimidation or harassment by parents/carers or visitors. It is the purpose of this policy to promote and support this entitlement and provide guidance to all school stakeholders as to how this might happen.

Aims

This policy aims to set out the expectations of conduct and behaviour for all parents, carers and visitors to ensure a safe and positive environment for all our staff and children.

Key principles

- The relationships between parents/visitors and the school are greatly valued; effective partnership working is critical to helping children achieve the best they can.
- All members of our community are required to act in a reasonable and respectful way, ensuring that the school is a safe, secure, and considerate environment.
- Frogwell Primary School aims to be a welcoming school where parents and carers can discuss worries or issues with staff for the benefit of their children; however, the school will take steps to restrict access in order to protect staff or other community members if the behaviour of community adults is unacceptable.
- All the points raised in this policy apply to aggressive or unacceptable behaviour in any forum, including in person, via email or other written means, by phone or via social media.

Expectations of parents, carers and visitors

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- respect and support the ethos, vision and values of our school
- work together with staff in the best interests of our pupils
- treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with language and behaviour
- seek a peaceful solution to all issues
- approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern at appropriate times and in keeping with the lines of responsibility within the school staff structure (e.g. discuss issues with the class teacher first rather than going straight to senior staff)
- actively supervise their children while on the school site at drop off/pick up times or during school events, including pre-school children
- appropriately correct their own child's behaviour (or those in their care) if needed while on the school site, especially where it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct

Permission to enter and be on the school's premises

Schools are private property. People do not have an automatic right to enter. Parents have an 'implied licence' to come on to school premises at certain times, for instance:

- for appointments
- to attend a school event
- to drop off or pick up younger children

Schools can bar someone from the premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or pupils. It's enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened (*Department for Education guidance 'Controlling access to school premises' November 2018*).

Parents and Carers are welcome to come to the school for normal day to day reasons, for example to drop off and collect their children, attend school meetings and events they have been invited to, subject to any health and safety restrictions that may apply at the time.

Procedures for dealing with harassing, abusive or aggressive parents/carers or visitors

Unacceptable behaviours

Behaviour by parents/carers or visitors which is aggressive, abusive, rude, threatening or intimidating will not be tolerated.

Such behaviour might include, but are not limited to:

- disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's operation or activities anywhere on the school premises at any time
- raising one's voice or shouting, either in person or over the telephone
- swearing
- offensive or discriminatory language
- attempting to physically intimidate, use of aggressive/offensive hand gestures or displaying temper
- using threatening, insulting or abusive language or behaviours
- using any form of discriminatory language including racist or homophobic remarks
- invading the personal space of another person, getting "in their face"
- wagging/pointing a finger towards someone's face
- shaking or holding a fist towards another
- preventing another person from leaving a room or 'blocking' their path to prevent them leaving/moving away
- pushing, shoving, grabbing or jostling
- spitting, hitting, slapping, punching, or kicking
- damaging or destroying school property
- approaching someone else's child to discuss or chastise them because of their actions towards your own children (such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- sending abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications
- sending emails or other communications that are intimidating in tone or of a frequency that is deemed to be harassing
- defamation of the school or any staff member on Facebook or any other social networking sites
- any other behaviours likely to cause anybody witnessing it (including the recipient) alarm, distress or to fear that violence may be used against them or others

Unacceptable / inappropriate use of social media sites by Parents and Carers

Frogwell Primary School has a comprehensive social media use policy to which all staff, governors and volunteers must adhere.

Social media websites are being used increasingly to "bad mouth" schools or fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, governors and in some cases, other parents or pupils. The Governing Board and Senior Leaders at Frogwell Primary School consider such use of social media as unacceptable and we believe that this can never be in the best interest of the children or the broader school community. Social media is not an appropriate forum for discussing or sharing concerns or grievances with or about the school overall or any of its pupils, staff or governors. Inappropriate social media posts cause great harm and distress to those being discussed and resolving these issues wastes staff time and diverts it away from our direct work with the children.

Any concerns parents / carers may have must be made through the appropriate school channels so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned. The child's Class Teacher is the person you should raise any concerns with in the first instance. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to progress the concern to the Assistant Headteacher who will try to help reach a resolution. Please see the school's Complaints Policy for further information about the correct ways to raise a concern or complaint.

Please note, discussions about individual children can only be held with those who have parental responsibility and/or in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.

In the event that any parent/carer of a child being educated in our school is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social media sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. School will also request that the individual responsible removes the offensive content immediately. In serious cases the school (and the Local Authority) will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social media and other sites. This extends to any other defamatory or libellous behaviour. Please also see our Social Media policy.

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person. By definition, it occurs among young people. When an adult is involved, it may meet the definition of cyber harassment or cyberstalking, a crime that can have legal consequences. This will be dealt with as a matter for the Police.

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child being educated in our school is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. School will also request that the individual responsible removes the offensive content immediately.

Actions school may take in the event of unacceptable parent/carer conduct

- School staff will make written reports of any incidents towards themselves or other community members of aggressive, rude, threatening, intimidating or otherwise unacceptable behaviour by parents/carers or visitors. Photographic evidence of any injuries or damage, or relevant CCTV footage will also be used if needed. These reports and evidence may be passed to the Governing Board and/or the police if necessary (see Appendix 1).
- For low-level incidents, the adult who has displayed unacceptable behaviour may be asked to meet with senior staff and/or governors and given a verbal warning about their conduct. A written record will be kept by the school of this verbal warning.
- After or instead of a verbal warning, the school and/or Governing Board may send the offending parent or visitor a written warning. This will remind the parent of school's expectations of adult behaviour, and explain the potential consequences if the offending behaviour continues or is repeated.
- The school may make use of its powers to restrict the access of parents/carers to the school site if their conduct is in breach of this policy. This can include removing the option to hold meetings in person and using only written communication as well as preventing physical access to the site to bring children to/from school. In these cases, it is the responsibility of parents /carers to make alternative arrangements to get their children safely to/from school.
- Serious incidents of unacceptable behaviour towards staff or other members of the community on the school premises may result in the Police being informed. The school reserves the right to take any necessary actions to ensure that staff and other members of the school community are not subjected to abuse.

Roles and responsibilities

Role of Parents/Carers

All parents/carers and visitors are expected to conduct themselves respectfully and without aggression or intimidation. The school recognises that there may be times where parents'/carers' emotions are heightened due to an issue about their child, but under no circumstances will abusive or aggressive behaviour towards staff be tolerated.

Parents/Carers should:

- Speak and behave with respect to staff, other parents/carers and children at all times, even if they are upset about something that has happened.
- Be very aware of their own language use and ensure they do not swear at any time on and around the school site, including when not talking directly to staff or children. Such language should not be used at all in a school environment, even between parents chatting while they wait.
- Stay away from the classroom windows and not attempt to look in to see what is going on; this is very distracting and disruptive for children and staff.
- Not enter the building at any time unless invited and escorted by a member of staff.

- Be aware that all incidents of aggressive, rude, threatening, intimidating or otherwise unacceptable behaviour by parents/carers will be recorded in writing and passed to the Governing Board or police as needed (see Appendices 1 and 2).
- Be aware that the school takes the welfare of its staff and children very seriously and will refer incidents of aggression or other unacceptable behaviour by parents/carers and visitors to the police without hesitation if this is needed.
- Be aware that where parents/carers display aggressive, threatening or intimidating behaviour towards staff, this may raise safeguarding concerns about the safety of their own children which would need to be reported to Children's Social Care.
- Never use any form of social media as a forum to air grievances about the school or staff members.
- Use the formal school procedures to raise concerns or complaints. The school Complaints Procedure is freely available on the school website at www.frogwell.co.uk
- Never approach other people's children to attempt to speak to them about or deal with an incident at school; parents must allow school staff to deal with issues in the appropriate way.
- Not smoke, vape, consume alcohol or drugs anywhere on the school site or attend any school event or meeting under the influence of any illegal substance.
- Not bring dogs onto the school grounds except registered assistance dogs. Dogs must not be left tied up unattended outside the fence.
- Find alternative times to speak to staff rather than at key times of day such as the start of school when they need to be focusing on the children. The best way to do this is to contact the school office to make an appointment.
- Not take photographs or videos or use video-calling apps such as FaceTime on the school site as this is a safeguarding matter, (restricted photographs are permitted at official school events but there must be no photography or video at drop-off or pick-up time within the school grounds).
- Be aware that the school has powers to restrict access to the school site if there has been unacceptable behaviour by parents/carers because it is private property. This can include removing the option to hold meetings and using only written communication as well as preventing physical access to the site to bring children to/from school.

Role of staff

- All staff are required to behave professionally when speaking to or communicating with parents, carers or visitors to the school. Staff must act as role models of the conduct we expect to see from other members of the community.
- If presented with a difficult situation, staff should attempt to defuse and de-escalate the situation safely wherever possible but must not put themselves in a position of risk. If necessary, the staff member will ask the parent/carer or visitor to leave.
- If the staff member cannot safely de-escalate the situation or feels unsafe they will remove themselves from the meeting or situation and request immediate support from another staff member (using the internal phone system or by verbally calling for assistance), or dial 999 for police support for serious incidents of aggression, threat or violence.
- When planning meetings with parents/carers or visitors, staff members should consider sensible and safe locations and times to avoid being isolated. Those staff members who work in satellite buildings should arrange for their meetings to take place in the main building. All staff members holding meetings with parents/carers or visitors should ensure these are known about by other staff. Short-notice or impromptu meetings should be held in the most public area possible.
- If a staff member is concerned that another member of staff may be unsafe or under threat, they should seek support on their behalf or intervene if safely possible.
- If a staff member feels they have been treated in an anti-social, aggressive or otherwise unacceptable manner by a parent/carer or visitor, they must complete a written record of the incident using the school form as soon as possible (see Appendix 1). A similar form should also be completed by staff who witness unacceptable behaviour towards another person (see Appendix 2).

Role of the Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for the health, safety and welfare/wellbeing at work of all employees. This includes bullying and harassment by members of the school community towards staff.

The Governing Board will:

- Receive and consider reports from the Headteacher to support their strategic oversight of staff wellbeing and safety, including monitoring patterns and trends and the impact of proactive preventative work to support staff welfare.
- Support the school's executive leaders to act against individual parents/carers or visitors who have behaved unacceptably, including banning from site or referral to the police if needed.
- Provide appropriate support to the school's executive leaders to enable them to support staff members affected by anti-social behaviour issues.

Appendix 1

Reporting form for incidents of anti-social behaviour by Parents/Carers towards staff members

Frogwell Primary School takes the wellbeing and safety of its staff very seriously and we are trying to take a clear stance against people who abuse or intimidate staff.

Please use this form to record any incidents where parents or other community adults behave in antisocial, aggressive, rude, threatening or intimidating ways. The form must be submitted to the Headteacher.

Staff name		
Date of incident		
Time of incident		
Name(s) of parent/community member(s) who behaved anti-socially, if known (If not known, please give info that might help identify them)		
Where did the incident happen?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In person – playground / outdoor area • In person – inside the building • In person – during an organised meeting • In person – other • In a virtual / online meeting • On the phone – “live” conversation • On the phone – in a voicemail • Via email • In a written hard copy letter • On social media • Other (please state) 	
Was the incident witnessed by any other staff? Give names	Yes – give names	
	No	
Was the incident witnessed by other parents / community members?	Yes – give names	
	No	
Was the incident witnessed by any pupils?	Yes – give names	

	No	
<p>Please give details of the incident, including the name of the parent concerned, any specific wording used by the perpetrator that caused distress or concern. Please include information about how the person's behaviour made you feel. Please include information about how the encounter ended, e.g. Was it resolved amicably? Did the person leave angry? etc.</p>		
<p>Senior staff follow up actions / notes</p>		
<p>Governing Board follow up actions / notes if applicable</p>		

Appendix 2

Reporting form for incidents of anti-social behaviour by Parents/Carers witnessed by staff members towards others

Frogwell Primary School takes the wellbeing and safety of its school community very seriously and we are trying to take a clear stance against people who behave in abusive or intimidating ways. Please use this form to record any witnessed incidents where parents or other community adults behave in anti-social, aggressive, rude, threatening or intimidating ways. The form must be submitted to the Headteacher.

Reporting staff witness name		
Date of incident		
Time of incident		
Name(s) of parent/community member(s) who behaved anti-socially, if known (If not known, please give info that might help identify them)		
Name of the person who the behaviour was directed towards (If not known, please give info that might help identify them)		
Where did the incident happen?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In person – playground / outdoor area • In person – inside the building • In person – during an organised meeting • In person – other • In a virtual / online meeting • On the phone – “live” conversation • On the phone – in a voicemail • Via email • In a written hard copy letter • On social media • Other (please state) 	
Was the incident witnessed by any other staff? Give names	Yes – give names	
	No	
Was the incident witnessed by other parents / community members?	Yes – give names	

	No	
Was the incident witnessed by any pupils?	Yes – give names	
	No	
Please give details of the incident, including the name of the parent concerned, any specific wording used by the perpetrator that caused distress or concern. Please include information about how the person's behaviour made you feel. Please include information about how the encounter ended, e.g. Was it resolved amicably? Did the person leave angry? etc.		
Senior staff follow up actions / notes		
Governing Board follow up actions / notes if applicable		