

PARENTAL CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY



HARTFORD
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
HIGH SCHOOL

Mission Statement:

Our mission at Hartford Church of England High School is to provide an outstanding, inclusive and ambitious education for all. Children develop and thrive both within and beyond the classroom. They are known, with their talents embraced and promoted. They develop into young people who will make a substantial contribution to the world. They enjoy an education rooted in a shared set of Christian values that radiate the love and truth of Jesus Christ.

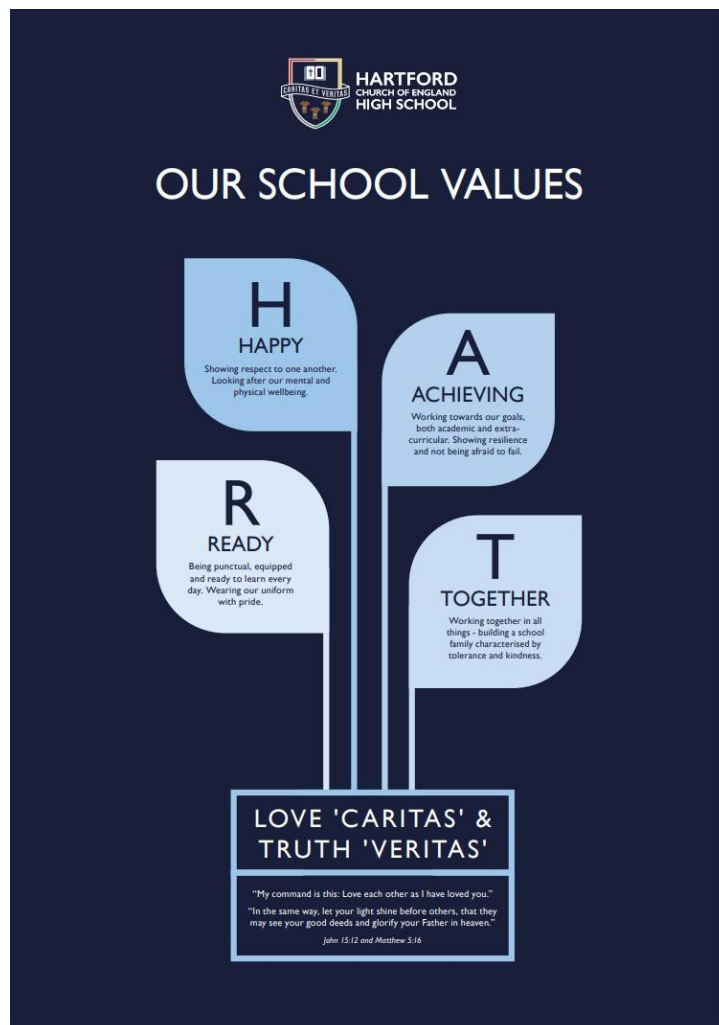
Everything we do at Hartford Church of England High School as students, staff, Governors and wider stakeholders, centres on the core values of our school:

Happy: Showing respect to one another. Looking after our mental and physical wellbeing.

Achieving: Working towards our goals, both academic and extra-curricular. Showing resilience and not being afraid to fail.

Ready: Being punctual, equipped and ready to learn every day. Wearing our uniform with pride.

Together: Working together in all things - building a school family characterised by tolerance and kindness.



"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

John 15:12 and Matthew 5:16

Equally, the educational offer at Hartford Church of England High School is based on the Church of England's four key principles for education:

- Educating for wisdom, knowledge and skills
- Educating for hope and aspiration
- Educating for community and living well together
- Educating for dignity and respect

The Parental Code of Conduct Policy for Hartford Church of England High School fully embodies our values, our mission statement and the key principles for education set out by the Church of England.

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1. Aims

At Hartford Church of England High School we are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent/carer body. Our parents/carers recognise that educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents/carers, staff, and the wider school community.

As a partnership, our parents/carers will understand the importance of a good working relationship to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons we continue to welcome and encourage parents/carers to participate fully in the life of our school.

2. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about the expected standards of conduct. This is so we can continue to underpin our values and school Christian ethos of Caritas et Veritas (Love and Truth) to maintain an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

3. Guidance

We expect parents, carers and visitors to our school to:

- Respect the caring ethos and values of our school.
- Understand that both staff and parents/carers need to work together for the benefit of the 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.
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school, in order to bring about a satisfactory solution to any issue.
- Correct their own child's behaviour, especially in public, where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour.
- Openly approach the school to help resolve any school related issues of concern.

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment, the school cannot tolerate parents, carers and visitors exhibiting the following:

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, reception area or any other area of the school grounds including extra-curricular activities.
- Using loud/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying temper.
- Threatening violence or assault to a member of school staff, Governor, visitor, fellow parent/carer or student, regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.
- 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 the school or any of the students/parents/carers/staff, at the school on any social media sites (Appendix 1).
- Photographing or recording a child, member of staff, fellow parent/carer, Governor without their permission.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of the child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal/safeguarding consequences).
- Smoking, vaping and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on school property.

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, even ban the offending adult from entering the school grounds.

Any concerns you may have about the school must be made through the appropriate channels by contacting the school via the mechanisms outlined in the school's Complaints Policy, which include emailing head@hartfordhigh.co.uk, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all parties. We will always wish to seek to resolve an issue at the earliest opportunity and informally where feasible.

We trust and thank that parents and carers will assist our school with the upholding of this Policy, and we thank them for their continuing support of the school. We would expect that parents and carers would make all persons responsible for collecting children from Hartford Church of England High School aware of this Policy.

Appendix I – Inappropriate Use of Social Media

Hartford Church of England High School has an official, online social media presence. As such, information about the school is shared widely with parents, carers and other stakeholders through Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and our own school website.

Each year, the school creates Facebook groups for parents and carers of students in the class of 2025 etc. These are safeguarded by the fact that parents and carers must sign up to be part of them by providing confidential detail (that only the school would have access to about their child).

Parents and carers should be aware that any other social media groups that are created in relation to Hartford Church of England High School are nothing to do with the school. As a result, the school cannot be held accountable for their contents, nor the verification of participants and owners of any such group.

Social media sites/applications are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Headteachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/carers and students. They are also being used to gain confidential information about children. Parents and carers should be extremely wary of signing up to any social media site that does not have an official organisation such as Hartford Church of England High School leading it. The Governors consider the use of social media/posts being used in a defamatory way about staff, students or parents/carers as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the school community.

Any concerns parents/carers may have about Hartford Church of England High School must be made through the appropriate channels by contacting the Head of Year, Heads of Department, a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned (in accordance with the school's Complaints' Policy).

In the event that any student or parent/carer of a child/ren being educated in the school is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or on any other forums, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on their site, and they provide robust mechanisms to report content or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or student removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any defamatory misuse of social networking and other sites. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

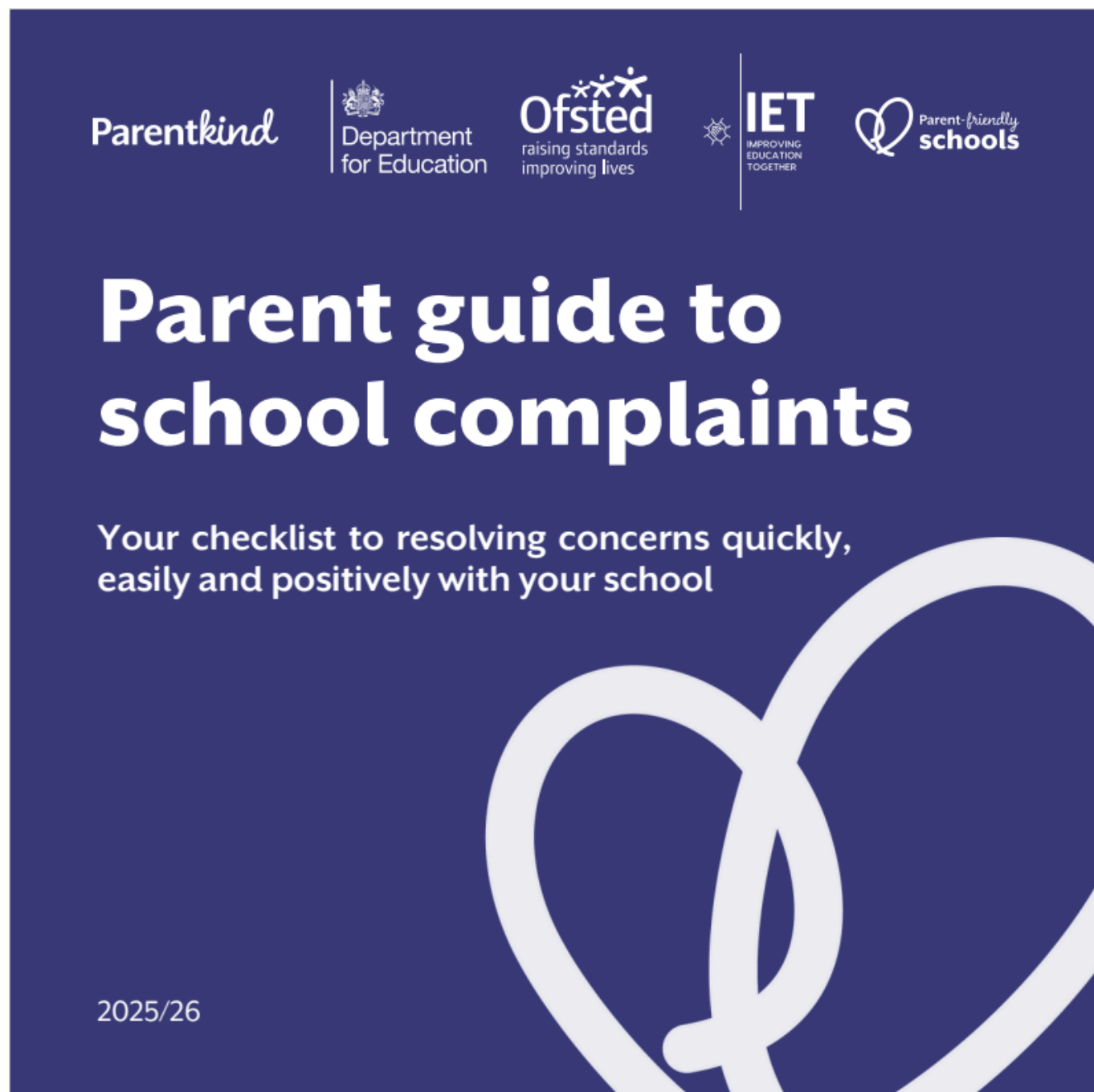
Appendix 2 – Persons Causing Nuisance / Disturbance on School Premises

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 provides that:

- School premises are private property and parents/carers have been granted permission by the school to be on school premises. However, in case of abuse or threats to staff, students or other parents/carers, school may ban parents/carers from entering school.
- It is also an offence for any person (including a parent) to cause a nuisance or disturbance on school premises. The police may be called to assist in removing the person concerned. School is not responsible for organising arrangements for children in the above circumstances. Parents/carers will need to provide alternative arrangements for bringing children into school.

Appendix 3 – Parent Guide to School Complaints

In January 2026, following concerns about the way in which school staff were being spoken about and treated, the Department for Education (DfE), Ofsted, Parentkind, Improving Education Together (IET) and parent friendly schools released a “*Parent guide to school complaints*”, which Hartford Church of England High School expects are parents/carers to follow when raising concerns regarding their child’s education. A copy of this guide can be found below.



Working together to resolve issues

Parents and schools share the same goal: supporting children's education. Sometimes questions or concerns arise. This guide gives you clear steps to share your views and resolve issues quickly and positively.

Why this matters

We know you value clear communication and want your feedback to make a difference.

When the process feels unclear or slow, it can be frustrating and leave you feeling unsure about what to do next. By giving you simple, transparent steps for raising issues, we aim to help you feel heard and supported.

How this guide helps

Most issues can be resolved quickly when you know who to speak to and what to expect.

This guide will support you to follow your school's complaint procedure. Our goal is to keep the focus on your child's education while building positive, supportive partnerships between you and the school.

Five steps to making a school complaint

When issues come up, you need to know how to raise these with the school to get an outcome that supports you and your child.

Relationships between parents and schools last for several years. Ensuring mutual trust and respect is essential to making them work in the best interests of your child.

Let's build parent and school partnerships based on our shared commitment to a great education for all. We know these matters are incredibly important to parents, but everything is founded on good intentions.

The best way to resolve concerns is through clear, respectful communication.





What kind of issue is it?

Complaints come in different shapes and sizes. The best first step is to identify what kind of issue it is, to make sure you can get the quickest action with your school.

Is it feedback?

You need to be heard

Sometimes you will want to share your voice with your school without needing them to respond, but you expect them to listen and take it on board. Feedback is often sought by schools who want to hear and adapt to parents' views.

Is it a concern?

You need an answer

Sometimes you have a worry or doubt over an important issue and you are looking for reassurance. Schools should take informal concerns seriously and make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

Is it a complaint?

You need action

Sometimes you are dissatisfied with the school's actions or lack of action. Your school will have a formal complaints procedure that is available to you (likely published on their website) with the steps you need to take to complain.



Who in the school do I go to?

Often issues can be best resolved by the person closest to your child. Who is best to hear your view at your school?

Discuss with their teacher/form tutor

Go to them first for anything that directly involves your child's classroom experience. Teachers know your child best and can usually sort things quickly.

Examples: homework, friendships, behaviour, day-to-day concerns.

Raise to a middle or senior leader

Take it here if the issue is wider than just one lesson, or if it can't be resolved by the teacher. Leaders have oversight across classes and can coordinate support.

Examples: bullying, additional support, repeated behaviour issues.

Escalate it with the headteacher

Go here for whole-school issues, serious concerns, or if earlier steps haven't worked. The head is responsible for the school and final decisions before governors are involved.

Examples: safeguarding, school policies, staff conduct, health and safety.

Remember - always check your school's complaint policy.



How do I raise my complaint?

Concerns are best resolved in discussion with your school. Complaints are best resolved when documented with your school. Follow these tips as you raise your issue.

Follow one level at a time

Start with a query aimed at resolving things quickly with those closest to your child, and only escalate if you truly need to.

Keep a record

Note when you've spoken to a teacher or leader, so you can show you have followed the right steps.

Suggest a clear outcome

Be clear on what you are looking for from the school and ensure it is realistic, so they can see if it is possible.

Start with the facts

Write down what happened, when, and who was involved. Be clear, relevant and avoid long stories.

Stay objective

Avoid accusations against individuals, direct your issue toward the processes or decisions that led to the issue.

Be positive

Make your complaint constructive, focused on solutions, and trust your school to listen.



When to expect a response?

Different schools have different policies for handling complaints. You can trust that they are following their policy as they look into your complaint.

Check the school's policy for timescales

Your school's complaints policy will be published on their website. Schools will normally outline how long they expect an outcome to take in that policy. Your school's policy should always be the best guidance to follow.

Ask for a written acknowledgement

If you have written a formal complaint to your school, they will usually acknowledge it quickly. Normally they will detail the timescales for investigating and responding to you and may ask for more details.

Complaint resolution times will vary

Complex complaints may take weeks of investigation. You may not always get updates, but trust that the school is following their policy, investigating and deciding the best action. You should always get a response to your complaint.

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Where to escalate a complaint?

Once you have fully followed your school's complaint procedure, you may still feel you need action from your school and there are a few ways that may apply to you. It's best to check who it should be escalated with to get it resolved quickly: contacting several people at once could slow things down.

Is it for your school's governing body or trustees?

To be considered if you are unhappy with the school's response. Schools will normally have an escalation process that allows parents to seek a further review of their complaint by a panel which may involve governors or trustees.

Is it for the Department for Education (DfE)?

To be considered if you are unhappy with the way your complaint has been handled or the school is preventing you from following the complaints process. In some circumstances, DfE can consider if the school has followed relevant statutory guidance and education law.

Is it for Ofsted?

Ofsted do not resolve disputes between parents and schools. They may keep your complaint on file for their next inspection but don't always provide a response to parents.

How complaints go wrong

Tensions can run high when you're concerned about your child, but some approaches make matters worse.

Using social media

Sharing your complaint on social media can be harmful to those involved and will not lead to a quicker resolution.

Building a crowd

Other parents may share your views, but your complaint should be specific to you and your child.

Targeting people

Making it personal to individual school staff members can take things too far, keep it to challenging school policy.

Behaving aggressively

Abusive and aggressive behaviour will never be tolerated by a school and can lead to consequences for you.

Only use AI with caution

AI doesn't always get it right when citing laws and can make a complaint more complex than necessary.

Lacking partnership

Having a good relationship with your school is important and it benefits all to move on after complaints are resolved.

The outcome of a formal complaint is often a resolution, where parents and the school have worked together to listen and take action to support the child's education.

Where parents act unreasonably

In extreme circumstances, there can be consequences for parents where there is bullying and harassing behaviour towards the school. If parents use abusive language, are threatening or use intimidation, the school could:

Pause complaints

Typically the first step is for the school to pause the complaints process until the unacceptable behaviour stops, and the school can resume the process.

Issue a verbal or written warning

This sets clear expectations for future conduct and the school may issue a communications plan to reduce risk of confrontation.

Ban parents from school grounds

In persistent or extreme cases of abusive behaviour, a school may take action by placing a ban on parents. The ban is usually issued in writing by the headteacher, though in some cases the local authority, academy trust or governing body may write one instead. Parents will have the right to appeal.

Powering positive partnerships between families and schools

This guide has been created to further support parents. Built with wisdom, research and care by expert partners and members of the Improving Education Together board (IET), led by the Secretary of State for Education.

- Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- The Catholic Education Service
- The Confederation of School Trusts (CST)
- GMB Union
- The Local Government Association (LGA)
- The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
- The National Education Union (NEU)
- National Governance Association (NGA)
- The Sixth Form Colleges Association (SFCA)
- Unison
- Community Trade Union
- NASUWT
- The Department for Education
- Ofsted

Get more insights, resources and support

Parentkind is on a mission to enrich the educational experience for every child - both at home and at school. We empower anyone with parental or educational responsibility with the knowledge, ideas and resources to give young people the very best start in life. As one of the largest federated charities in the UK, Parentkind has a network of 23,500 Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), parent councils and schools, and mobilises more than 100,000 volunteers to raise vital funds for schools.

www.parentkind.org

This guide is not legal advice and is subject to future change.

Parentkind


Department
for Education


Ofsted
raising standards
improving lives



IET
IMPROVING
EDUCATION
TOGETHER

 Parent-friendly
schools

Date approved by Governing Board: Date: 09/02/2026

Applicable from: Date: 09/02/2026

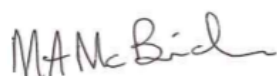
Signed by

Headteacher:



Date: Date: 09/02/2026

Chair of Governors:



Date: Date: 09/02/2026