



Independent School for Girls Aged 2 to 18
and Boys Aged 2 to 11

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Harrogate Ladies' College family of Schools:

Highfield Pre School, Highfield and College

SLT Responsibility: Joanna Fox

Governor Committee Review: F & GP

Review Cycle: Biennial

PRINCIPAL: Joanna Fox, BA (OU), PGCE (Anglia Ruskin).
Clarence Drive • Harrogate • North Yorkshire • HG1 2QG **T:** +44 (0)1423 504543 **E:** enquire@hlc.org.uk **www.hlc.org.uk**

REGISTERED OFFICE: Harrogate Ladies' College, Clarence Drive, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 2QG.
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Since 1893



Parent Code of Conduct

This policy applies to the Harrogate Ladies' College Family of Schools - Highfield Pre School, Highfield and College - hereafter referred to as "the School".

Policy Statement

The School aims to provide an all-round education for its pupils based on a set of values which enshrine the concept that everything that goes on within the School should be for the benefit of its pupils. The School believes it should provide its pupils not just with paper qualifications, which are, of course, important and necessary, but with a set of attitudes and qualities which will prepare them for the world in which they live and work. These values and aims are set out in the documents *Harrogate Ladies' College's Values* and *Harrogate Ladies' College's Aims*.

The School is open to all pupils and their families irrespective of their race, religion, nationality, cultural or linguistic background. While Highfield Pre School, its pre-prep section, and Highfield, its prep department, are co-educational, College, the 11-18 secondary section is for girls only.

Why do we need a Parent Code of Conduct?

Our staff, pupils and parents/carers are a community working together to give our children the best education we can provide. We recognise a child's education is most impactful and fulfilling when parents and the School work together in the best interests of the child. While we appreciate there can be challenges during a child's time at school, we will always look to do our best for each and every pupil, of whatever age.

In return, we expect parents and guardians to maintain a constructive relationship with the School. In our Parent Agreement Terms and Conditions, which all parents sign and agree to on entry to the School, we set out the expectations we have of parents/guardians. This Parental Code of Conduct expands upon that to ensure everyone in the School community understands the expectations we have and how we can work together in a positive way to support our children's learning, whilst fulfilling the School's Values and Aims.

In particular, we ask that, in all your dealings with the School, you look to maintain the core values of:

- trust
- honesty
- respect for all
- respect for the environment
- treating every pupil as an individual
- allowing pupils to grow and develop their potential, free from fear and bullying

and that there is a partnership between home and School; and that teachers, and the wider School staff, are able to educate in an atmosphere of learning and co-operation.

We are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body and we believe in developing positive relationships with our parents and guardians. The School and our parents recognise educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents and carers, class teachers

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and the whole school community. As part of that partnership, our parents 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.

We know that from the outset, when we develop open, courteous and honest dialogues, we can all work together to provide excellent academic opportunities and the pastoral care we are known for.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about their expected conduct. This is so the whole school community can continue to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

We hope the examples of unacceptable behaviour are obvious and uncontroversial, and we hope you can help us to enforce them, so everyone in the HLC community feels safe and respected at all times.

Aims

To ensure parents, guardians and visitors treat each other, and members of our School community with respect.

Guidance and Expectations

We expect parents, carers and visitors to:

- respect the caring ethos of our school;
- understand that both teachers and parents/carers need to work together for the benefit of their children;
- demonstrate that all members of the school community are treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and behaviour;
- seek to clarify their child's version of events with the school's in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue;
- correct their child's behaviour especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour;
- approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern;
- avoid using staff as threats to admonish children's behaviour.

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment the school will not tolerate parents, carers and visitors exhibiting poor behaviour, such as the following:

- disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, office area or any other area of the school grounds including sports matches;
- using loud or offensive language, swearing, cursing, profane language or displaying temper - this includes racial or homophobic language;
- acting in an intimidating way towards any member of the school staff or volunteers including the use of rude or aggressive hand gestures such as shaking or holding a fist towards another person;
- threatening actual bodily harm to a member of school staff, Governor, visitor, volunteer, fellow parent/carer or pupil regardless of whether or not their behaviour constitutes a criminal offence;
- damaging or destroying school property;
- abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication to a member of School staff, Governor, visitor, fellow parent/guardian or pupil;
- defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils, parents/carers or staff at the school on any social media sites - any concerns you may have about the school must be made by using the appropriate procedures (see Complaints Policy), so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned;
- driving without due care and attention on site, parking in unallocated zones and unauthorised parking on the School site;

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Parent Code of Conduct

- the use of physical aggression towards another adult or child - this includes the physical punishment of your own child on School premises;
- approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this 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 consequences;
- smoking (excluding during official school functions), vaping and consumption or being under the influence of alcohol (excluding during official school functions) or other drugs whilst on school property, or accessing the School site whilst intoxicated or under the influence of drugs;
- bringing dogs or other pets being on to school premises without supervising them at all times.

This is not an exhaustive list, but seeks to provide illustrations of poor behaviour. Whilst the use of such behaviour is unacceptable in all circumstances, the School has a duty of care to protect the children in our care from being exposed to such behaviour (whether or not directed at them).

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 person from entering the School grounds.

We trust parents and guardians will support the School with the implementation of this policy and thank you for your continuing support.

Inappropriate use of Social Media

The School makes use of social media to enable parents and guardians to receive and respond to messages and information regarding School events and positive contributions to the School's social media, such as Instagram, are welcomed.

Social media websites can, however, be used to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, and in some cases other parents/carers or pupils. If misused, the School community can be negatively affected, with the potential to amplify misleading information and undermine the School's messaging and brand. This policy sets out clear procedures for how we expect parents and guardians to conduct themselves on social media and when using messenger apps such as WhatsApp, Facebook or Instagram.

The Governors and Principal of the School considers the negative use of social media websites as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community. We take very seriously any inappropriate use of social media by a parent or guardian to humiliate or criticise publicly the School, another parent, member of staff, Governor or child.

Any concerns parents or guardians may have about the School must be made by using the appropriate procedures (see Complaints Policy) so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren being educated at the School is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be

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Parent Code of Conduct

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 the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such comments immediately (see Acceptable Use Policy).

In serious cases the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such 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/carer 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.

We would expect that parents/carers would make all persons responsible for collecting children or visiting the site on behalf of parents/carers to be aware of this policy.

The School considers the following examples to be inappropriate uses of social media (please note, this list is non-exhaustive and is intended to provide examples only):

- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the School, or any of the children, parents, staff or Governors of Harrogate Ladies' College family of schools, on WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram or other social media sites;
- Making false, vexatious allegations against members of the School community or recklessly repeating gossip/unsubstantiated allegations;
- Identifying or posting images/videos of children;
- Bringing the School into disrepute;
- Emails circulated or sent directly with abusive or personal comments about staff, other parents, Governors or children;
- Using social media to challenge School policies publicly, or discuss issues about individual children or members of staff;
- Threatening behaviour, such as intimidating staff, or using foul language; and
- Breaching School security procedures.

At our School, we take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will deal with any reported incidents appropriately.

What Happens if Someone Breaches the Parental Code of Conduct Policy?

In the event of any parent, guardian or visitor of the School breaking this code, proportionate action will be taken as follows:

- In cases where the unacceptable behaviour is considered to be a serious and potentially criminal matter, the concerns will, in the first instance be referred to the Police. This will include all cases or threats of violence and actual violence to any child, staff or Governor of the School. This will also include anything that could be seen as a sign of harassment of any
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member of the School community, such as any form of insulting social media post or any form of social media cyber bullying. In cases where evidence suggests that behaviour would be tantamount to libel or slander, then the School may refer the matter to the School's solicitors for further action.

- In cases where this policy has been broken but the breach was not a libellous, slanderous or criminal matter, then the School will send a formal letter to the parent/guardian/visitor with an invitation to a meeting.

If a parent/guardian refuses to attend the meeting, the School will issue a written instruction asking them to cease the behaviour causing concern.

If a visitor refuses to attend the meeting, the School will issue a written instruction asking them to cease the behaviour causing concerns and want that, if they do not, they may be issued with a ban to prohibit them from entering the School grounds in order to safeguard our community. The duration of the ban will be dependent upon the situation.

In the non-compliance with a banning order, the School would work with the Police or other relevant authorities to enforce any orders, or take such further action as appropriate.

Termination of a Contract Due to a Breach of the Parent Code of Conduct Policy

There is an expectation that parents and guardians will behave courteously, reasonably and with respect shown to staff, pupils and Governors at the School. If parents/guardians engage in aggressive, abusive, dishonest or obscene behaviour or language towards staff or other members of the School's community, this may constitute a fundamental breach of their agreement and contract with the School. As per Clause 8.13.3 of the Parent Agreement Terms and Conditions, serious misconduct may result in termination of this agreement and removal of the pupil by the Principal, with or without notice (in the case of notice, this would be one full term). Regard will always be given for the wellbeing and best interests of the pupil.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed and updated biennially by the Principal. The Governors (F and GP Committee) also review this policy according to the review cycle.

Version Control

Date of last review of this policy	August 2025
Date for next review of this policy	August 2027
Policy owner (SLT)	Principal

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Parent Code of Conduct



Policy owner (proprietor)	Dame Francine Holroyd
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