

Going to the pub with your children? You may have to watch your drink consumption.

Wetherspoons pubs are limiting parents to two alcoholic drinks each if they have their children with them.

The rule came to light when the Robert Pocock pub in Gravesend, Kent, put up a poster publicising it.

The chain said its guideline for staff applied in its pubs nationwide, and was designed to deter “unruly behaviour” by children left unsupervised.

As far as Wetherspoons is concerned, a child is anyone under the age of 16.

It has been a crime since 1902 to be drunk in charge of a child under the age of seven in a public place. The offence can be punished by a fine or up to a month in jail.

Protection from harm

The poster at the pub, which has since been taken down, read: “As part of our licensing it is our responsibility to ensure that we are protecting children from harm.”

“Therefore adults in charge of children will be allowed to have one alcoholic drink and a further alcoholic drink with a sit-down meal.”

The ruling has led to comments on social media.

One patron tweeted, external: “Sounds like this particular pub is trying to crack a nut with a sledgehammer and solve a minor issue with big policy change. How about instead Wetherspoons invest to make the space enjoyable for children too?”

But customers at the Mannamead pub in Plymouth were more supportive.

Kevin Appleby said he “wouldn’t be offended” if he were denied a third drink if at the pub with his children. He said that while “you can’t tell parents how to parent”, the guidance is “rather relevant as you don’t want kids running around”.

Jackie Taylor told the BBC it is “absolutely” right of the pub to send out such advice as “children should be looked after.”

“Parents should be responsible and actually to give them a limit of two drinks is wise,” she added.

A Wetherspoons spokesman said: “The manager took the decision to put the poster in the pub to emphasise to customers that she would not allow parents to drink while their children were running round uncontrolled in the pub.

“The notice had a positive effect, with mostly good feedback.”

Wetherspoons added: “There is a guideline, though not a policy, that we will serve the adult amaximum of two alcoholic drinks with their meal.

“The reason is that we don’t want children being unruly in the pubs and parents thinking they can continue to drink while this happens.”

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3. News
4. News
5. UK

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