

HCAT

Managing Parents and Visitors Conduct
Policy 2020



HCAT Policy on managing aggressive behaviour from parents and visitors to Schools within our Trust

Statement of principles

The governing body of Mapplewell Primary School / College encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and School / College is a positive one.

The vast majority of parents, carers and others visiting our School / College are keen to work with us and we are fortunate to have a very supportive parent body. Our parents and carers recognise that education children is a process that involves partnership between parents, carers, teachers and the School / College community. Our Parents/Carers will understand the importance of being positive role models and having a good working relationship with the School / College to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. Therefore, we continue to welcome and encourage Parents/Carers to participate fully in the life of our School / College.

However, on the rare occasions when a negative attitude towards the School / College is expressed, this can result in aggression, verbal and or physical abuse towards members of School / College staff or the wider school community.

The governing body expects and requires its members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations and attempt to defuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. However, all members of staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse, and the right, in an extreme case, of appropriate self-defence.

We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of School / College staff.

We expect Parents, Carers and Visitors to:

- Respect the School / College values and its caring ethos
- Act as positive role models by demonstrating respect towards other individuals and the School / College building and setting a good example in both speech and conduct
- Understand that both Teachers and Parents need to work together for the benefit of the students
- Seek advice from School / College staff to clarify a child's version of events with the School / College view to help resolve a situation
- Ensure the behaviour of their child/children is acceptable in all public places and the community

The aim of the policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors about the expected conduct. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

- shouting at members of the School / College staff, either in person or over the telephone;
- Abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication
- physically intimidating a member of staff, e.g. standing very close to her/him;

- the use of aggressive hand gestures;
- threats of actual bodily harm or physical aggression to Staff, Governors, Visitors, other Parents/Carers or Students;
- harassment
- Disruptive behaviour which interferes/threatens to interfere with any activity within School / College;
- swearing; Offensive language, swearing, use of profane language, displaying anger/aggression
- pushing;
- hitting, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking;
- spitting;
- smoking and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on School / College premises.
- breaching the School / College's security procedures, accessing the premises without permission from relevant staff.
- Damaging or destroying School / College property.
- Recording conversations or meetings with staff without permission from the Principal / Head of School / College. Any sharing of recordings will breach GDPR regulations, in which case the School / College will seek legal advice.
- Offensive, derogatory or defamatory comments regarding the School / College or any of the Students/Parent/Staff on Facebook or other social media sites. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the relevant member of staff, so they can be dealt with effectively.
- Approaching a student to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this student towards their own child
- Dogs being brought on to premises (guide dogs are an exception)

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour.

If any of the above behaviour occurs on the School / College site, we may deem it is necessary to contact the appropriate authorities and if necessary, ban the offending adult from entering the School / College grounds. Please note - gross misconduct may result in an immediate ban from School / College premises.

We would expect that parents would make all persons responsible for collecting students aware of this policy.

Staff members must report any incidents to their line manager in the first instance. This must be followed up with a verbal and written statement.

Procedure to be followed

If a parent/carer behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the School / College community, the Principal / Head teacher / Head of School or appropriate senior staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the School / College's complaints procedures should be followed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a parent or carer may be banned by the Principal / Head teacher / Head of School from the School / College premises for a period of time, subject to review. In some instances, acts may result in an immediate ban without warning.

In imposing a ban the following steps will be taken:

1. The parent/carer will be informed, in writing, that she/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, e.g. that police involvement or an injunction application may follow
2. Where an act has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the local authority and the police will be included
3. The CEO / Trust Board will be informed of the ban
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the School / College gate will be clarified.

Conclusion

The CEO / Trust Board may take action where behaviour is unacceptable or there are serious breaches of health and safety legislation.

In implementing this policy, the School / College will, as appropriate, seek advice from the Multi Academy Trust Health and Safety and Legal departments, to ensure fairness and consistency.

This Policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed G.Padfield

Chair of the Trust Board

Date

School / College policy for dealing with incidents

The main aim of this policy is to provide a safe environment by minimising the risk of such incidents (whether they involve pupils, parents or others) and enabling incidents which do occur to be quickly and effectively dealt with. Where a partnership has been established, policy and procedures for dealing with violence, threatening and abusive behaviour by parents should be developed within the context of this.

Conducting a risk assessment

This does not need to be a complicated process, but simply involves raising a number of questions to which you want answers.

A risk assessment should:

- identify and assess the risks;
- determine appropriate actions;
- implement the actions;
- monitor the results; and
- provide feedback.

It is good practice to ask staff directly about the extent of problems that they are aware of as part of the process of assessing risk. It is also helpful to consult School / College health and safety representatives about possible risks.

This should identify what the risks are (e.g. abuse, threatening behaviour, violence, and from whom), and who is likely to be at risk (e.g. reception staff, teachers). Identifying what the risks are and who is at risk are the crucial initial steps before considering how to manage these risks and how they can be minimised. In some cases, potential violence can be reduced and even prevented if members of staff have the skills to spot conflict before it leads to aggression and to use techniques to reduce aggression before violence occurs.

It is recommended that members of staff are offered personal safety training, which can help in:

- reducing violent attacks by parents and others;
- enabling staff to defuse aggression and prevent situations escalating;
- teaching staff to recognize verbal and nonverbal precursors to aggression and use techniques to
- calm a potential assailant;
- improving staff confidence in dealing with aggression and the resulting stress; and
- minimising the risk of an attack causing injury.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has produced guidance on risk assessments which is on its website.

The Banning Process

The Principal / Head teacher / Head of School will need to assemble the full facts before proceeding, making sure that all those involved in any incidents, or witnesses to those incidents, make a full written record as soon as possible.

Crucial elements:

- write to parent/carer/intruder to record in detail the incident and why it is unacceptable;
- explain that the Trust will consider banning the parent, giving the parent a period in which they may respond in writing giving their version and why they should not be banned;
- tell the parent when a decision will be made.

The length of a ban

The ban should be finite in length, as only the most serious misconduct would justify an indefinite ban. The duration needs to be sufficient to convey a clear message about the seriousness of the associated misconduct, but not so long as to be disproportionate. The aim should always be to restore “normal” relations as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Even if a ban is permanent, it should be reviewed periodically, taking account of subsequently demonstrated patterns of behaviour.

What does a ban achieve?

- it confirms to a parent that the School / College will not tolerate misbehaviour;
- shows the School / College takes health and safety of its staff, visitors and pupils seriously;
- it provides a key element in making it easier to use legal remedies to prevent repeated misconduct,

including use of S547 of the 1996 Education Act to enable Police removal and possible prosecution of those on School / College premises without permission;

- it may form the basis for an application for an injunction to curtail repeated instances of misbehaviour.

Parental Rights

Every attempt should be made to maintain normal communications with parents/carers. Even where a parent/carer has been banned from the School / College premises, they retain their right to an annual consultation in relation to the educational progress of their child/ren. However, the School / College may determine who will be present at the meeting (e.g a senior member of staff might accompany the class teacher) and its location (e.g. it may well be arranged off site.) The interests of the child should continue to be paramount.

Appendix 1

Incident report form

Relevant incidents include trespass, nuisance or disturbance on School / College premises, verbal abuse, sexual or racial abuse, threats, aggression, harassment, physical violence and intentional damage to property. Where possible, the form should be completed before any discussion between witnesses is possible, as this might lead to allegations of collusion. This form should be completed as fully as possible please, using a continuation sheet, if necessary. For any incident involving or witnessed by a pupil or parent/carer/visitor, a member of staff should complete the form on their behalf.

The completed form should be passed to the head teacher, for appropriate action and recording.

Incident Report form			
Date of incident		Time of incident	
Name of person reporting incident		Date incident reported	
Member of staff recording incident		Date incident recorded	
Name(s) of person(s) causing incident - (where name(s) is/are unknown, provide other details of which may allow their identification)			
Status(es) (parents/carers/visitors/trespassers)			
Full description of incident (e.g. names of persons involved; location; nature of any injuries; attendance of emergency services)			
Names of any witnesses Statuses			
Initial action/outcome (e.g. Informal conciliation; police intervention; warning or banning letter issued)			
Summary of subsequent actions taken by the School / College, including risk assessments			
Linked incidents (if any)			

Appendix 2

LETTER 1

Date

Address

Dear Parent/Carer,

At XXXXXXXXXX School / College we encourage Parents and Carers to play a pro-active and supportive role in their child's education, working alongside staff in a positive manner. We also have a duty of care for all Staff and Students and we strive to ensure they have a safe and protective environment in which to work.

I have received a report about your conduct on (enter date and time).

[Add summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, students, other parents.]

I am writing to inform you that the School / College will not tolerate conduct of this nature (on its premises) and will act to defend its Staff and Students. If the School / College staff have any further concerns about your behaviour, formal procedures will be followed.

Yours sincerely,

Associate Principal / Head of School (delete as necessary)

Appendix 2

LETTER 2

Date

Address

Dear Parent/Carer,

At XXXXXXXX School / College we encourage Parents and Carers to play a pro-active and supportive role in their child's education by working alongside staff in a positive manner. We also have a duty of care for all Staff and Students and we strive to ensure they have a safe and protective environment in which to work.

I have received a report about your conduct on (enter date and time).

[Add summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, students, other parents.]

We have already contacted you on _____. **On the advice of the Principal** I am, therefore, informing you that should the School / College staff have any further concerns about your behaviour, you will be asked not to enter the premises and you could be prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500.

Yours sincerely,

Associate Principal / Head of School (delete as necessary)

Appendix 3

LETTER 3

Date

Address

Dear Parent/Carer,

I have received a report from **the Vice-Principal** about your conduct on (enter date and time).

[Add summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, students, other parents.]

I must inform you that the School / College will not tolerate conduct of this nature on its premises and will act to defend its staff and students. I am, therefore, instructing that (for a temporary period) you are not to reappear on the premises of the School / College. If you do not comply with this instruction, we have no choice but to arrange for you to be removed from the premises and prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500.

The withdrawal of permission for you to enter the School / College premises takes effect straightaway. However, I still need to decide whether this decision will be permanent. Before I do so, I wish to give you an opportunity to give me in writing any comments or observations of your own in relation to the concerns raised by the School / College. To enable me to take a decision on this matter as early as possible, you are asked to send me any written comments you wish to make by (state date ten working days from the date of letter).

If on receipt of your comments I consider that my decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of how to pursue a review of the circumstances of your case.

Yours sincerely,

Principal / Head of School

