



Parents, Carers and Visitors Code of Conduct and Behaviour on School Premises Policy

Signed by:

Chair of Governors

Date:

Committee with oversight for this policy	Resources Committee
Policy to be approved by	Full Governing Board
Policy last ratified and adopted by Full Governing Body	December 2016
Policy / Document due for review	December 2019

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The vast majority of parents, carers and other visitors to our school are supportive of the school, its teachers, other members of staff, its students, their parents and other visitors, and act in a reasonable way, ensuring that the school is a safe, orderly environment in which students can learn. Occasionally, however, a negative attitude is expressed in an aggressive, verbally abusive or physically abusive way towards these members of the school community which is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The school requires its teachers and other members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations, attempting to defuse the situation wherever possible, and to seek the involvement of other members of staff as appropriate. However, all teachers and members of staff have the right to work without fear of harassment, violence, intimidation or abuse.

The school expects parents and other visitors to always behave in a reasonable way towards all members of the school community. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where the behaviour displayed falls below the standard the school expects and will not be tolerated.

The types of behaviour which are unacceptable and will not be tolerated are:

- shouting, either in person or over the telephone;
- using intimidating language or behaviour;
- using threatening language or behaviour;
- using abusive language or behaviour;
- using insulting language or behaviour;
- using aggressive or offensive hand gestures;
- shaking or holding a fist towards another;
- swearing;
- pushing, shoving or jostling;
- hitting, slapping, punching or kicking;
- spitting;
- any other behaviour likely to cause anybody witnessing it (including the recipient) alarm, distress or to fear that violence may be used against them or others.

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

PERMISSION TO ENTER AND BE ON THE SCHOOL'S PREMISES

Parents have “implied permission” to enter and be on the school’s premises for reasons relating to their child / children’s education. This means that parents are welcome to come to the school to drop off and collect their children, subject to any restrictions that may apply to vehicle access to the site, to speak to teachers and other members of staff about their children, or for meetings, parents’ evenings and social events. Parents do not have a legal right to enter or be on the school’s premises without a good reason.

In education law, the term “parent” includes the natural or adoptive parents of a student, as well as a non-parent with care of a student and a non-parent with parental responsibility of a student. For the purposes of this policy only, the term “parent” will also include a non-parent who does not have care of or parental responsibility for a student, but who is involved in looking after a student on a regular basis (for example, a childminder, non-resident partner of a parent or relative who takes the student to or from school, is involved with the care of the student in some other way, or a person whose emergency contact number we have been provided with).

Other visitors also have “implied permission” to enter and be on the school’s premises if they have a reason, for example a courier or delivery person, or a member of the public attending the school’s office to make enquiries about something. Members of the public without a good reason for entering or being on the school premises are trespassing.

WITHDRAWAL OF PERMISSION TO ENTER AND BE ON THE SCHOOL'S PREMISES

The school has the right to withdraw the “implied permission” for a parent or visitor to enter or be on the school’s premises if their behaviour while they were previously on the school’s premises was unacceptable. The withdrawal of the “implied permission” will be effective as soon as the parent or other visitor has been told that they must leave and are prohibited from returning, and will be confirmed in writing by recorded delivery if the home address is known. The full procedure that the school will follow is outlined in further detail below.

Once the “implied permission” has been withdrawn, the school will ask the police to remove the parent or visitor if they appear on the school’s premises. If the parent or visitor causes a nuisance or disturbance while they are on the school’s premises, they may also be prosecuted in the criminal courts under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996, be liable to pay a fine of up to £500.00 and have a criminal conviction recorded against them.

Where a parent has had their “implied permission” to enter and be on the school’s premises withdrawn, the school will, in appropriate cases, make alternative arrangements for the parent’s children to be dropped off and collected from the school, and in relation to parents’ evenings and other meetings.

OTHER CRIMINAL OFFENCES

In addition to the criminal offence under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 outlined above, unacceptable behaviour by a parent or visitor can also amount to several other forms of criminal offence.

VISITORS CODE OF CONDUCT

In addition to following the guidance set out in our Home-School Agreements, we expect visitors to:

- 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 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's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- Correct their own child's behaviour especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behaviour or unsafe behaviour.
- Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Avoid using staff as threats to admonish children's behaviour.

TYPES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

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

- Disruptive behaviour or disorderly conduct which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, office or any other area of the school grounds.
- Using loud/or offensive language, shouting, swearing, cursing, using profane language, attempting to physically intimidate, use of aggressive hand gestures or displaying temper.
- Threatening to harm a member of school staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or pupil regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Sending abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications.
- Defamation of the school or staff character on Facebook or other social networking sites.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on school premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of their actions towards your own children.
- Smoking and consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs on school premises.
- Dogs being brought on to school premises with the exception of assistance dogs.

We thank our visitors for observing this.

However, in a very small minority of cases, the behaviour of a few parents can cause disruption, resulting in abusive or aggressive behaviour towards staff, other parents or visitors.

This will not be tolerated. All members of the school community have a right to expect that their school is a safe place.

If the parent's behaviour is unreasonable, permission for them to be on the school premises may be withdrawn and they will become a trespasser.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment has been prepared to protect staff by ensuring:

- On home visits or parents evenings, teachers and teaching assistants will attend together.
- That individual consultations will take place in an area where staff may summon help if necessary.
- That two members of staff will see a parent together when it is thought that the consultation could be difficult.

Procedures

If an incident arises, the member of staff should follow these procedures:

- Ask the person to leave or invite them to a room away from a crowded area or classroom.
- Ask the Head (or Deputy) for support.
- In the event of violence or aggression, contact the police using 999.

After the Incident

The Head will

Ask the people who witnessed the incident to make witness reports in writing as soon as possible after the incident. (See attached Incident Report Form). Reports must be signed and dated.

Make it clear that the reports may be disclosed to the perpetrator and the witness should say whether or not they are prepared for this to happen.

Consider whether the person should be banned or given a warning letter.

The Head will discuss this with the Chair of Governors and keep her/him informed.

If a letter is thought appropriate, a letter will be sent to him or her.

If a ban is appropriate, the Head Teacher will give the parent an opportunity to make representations about this before finalising the ban. If the Head Teacher considers it unwise to allow the parent back on the premises at this time, s/he will impose a temporary ban for a week, to give the parent an opportunity to make representations in writing. As soon as this happens, the Head will write to the parent informing him/her of the decision to extend the ban or not to renew it after the initial week has elapsed.

If a ban is renewed after the initial week, the Head will impose any further ban for a fixed period of time and explain that she will review the ban at the end of that period.

LA Role

If the incident is of a serious and/or violent nature, the Head and Local Authority may agree that correspondence should be sent directly from the LA. In such circumstances the Head will contact the Education Helpline Coordinator and the procedures followed as stated in the last section.

Police Assistance

In the event of a parent (or other person) becoming aggressive or violent, schools **should not hesitate to contact the police using 999**. When the situation does not require immediate Police response, but there is prior knowledge of likely trouble, the Head Teacher may contact the local Police Station or the school's Police Liaison Officer for advice.

STEPS TO BE TAKEN IF AN INCIDENT OCCURS

STEP 1: VERBAL WARNING

The headteacher (or member of SLT) will speak to the person or persons perpetrating such an incident, privately. It will be put to them that such behaviour is unacceptable and an assurance will be sought that such an incident will not be repeated. It will be stressed on this occasion that repetition of such an incident will result in further more serious action being taken. If the headteacher has been subject to abuse this will be done by the Chair of Governors (or another appointed governor).

STEP 2: WRITTEN WARNING

If a second incident occurs involving the same person or persons, the headteacher will write to the adult(s) informing them once again that this conduct is unacceptable. As for Step 1, if the headteacher has been subject to abuse this will be done by the Chair or Governors or other appointed governor. NB: Any incidents of violent conduct would immediately proceed to step 5. At any stage, the school may report serious incidents of abusive and threatening behaviour to the Local Authority. The school has a statutory responsibility to report any racist or discriminatory incidents to the Local Authority (See Equality Policy). Any act of actual or threatened violence will be referred to the police immediately. See STEP 2 example letter.

STEP 3: FINAL WRITTEN WARNING

If a third incident occurs involving the same person or persons, the Chair of Governors or other appointed independent governor, will write to the adult(s) giving a final warning that this abusive and threatening behaviour is unacceptable, and that a repetition of this conduct will leave the governors no option but to take further action.

STEP 4: EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL PREMISES

If such an incident recurs or if an initial incident is considered serious enough, the Chair of Governors (or other appointed governor) would enforce an exclusion from school premises.

STEP 5: REMOVAL BY POLICE

If, following a decision to exclude a person from the school premises, that person persists in entering school premises, they may be removed by the police as a trespasser under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 and charged with an offence under the Public Order Act 1986.

All parents, even if excluded from school premises, are not excluded from the rights to access to school and have a right to seek an appointment to speak to school staff about their child's educational progress.

Step 2 Letter A – warning letter from Headteacher

Dear

Re: Your conduct on school premises on (insert date)

I refer to the incident that took place on school premises today (or insert relevant day) when you (insert details of the incident).

If the Headteacher did not witness the incident they may wish to use the following text: I have considered the witness accounts of the incident, (if relevant: including your own), and it would appear (insert details of incident).

Your behaviour falls short of the standard of conduct expected of those visiting the school. I must therefore warn you that if you are involved in a similar incident again, you will leave me with no alternative other than to ban you from coming onto the school site without my written permission.

I do hope that this will not be necessary and that I can rely on your cooperation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Step 2 Letter B

This is an example of a warning letter to be sent to a parent, carer or visitor who has caused a disturbance at the school. The actual wording may need to be varied according to the circumstances. It is advisable to discuss the matter with the LA before sending such a letter.

Dear

It has been reported to me that you have caused a disturbance on Woodlands school premises on (date).

We have spoken privately about your unacceptable behaviour in the past and you reassured me (or member of the SLT) that such an incident would not be repeated.

On this occasion, your behaviour has upset (who or a number of members of staff, pupils, etc) who were present.

(Optional) If you are unhappy about any aspect of your child's education then we can arrange to have a meeting at an appropriate time and place.

This letter serves as a written warning, in accordance with our Visitor Code of Conduct and Unacceptable Behaviour on School Premises Policy. I must inform you that any repetition of such behaviour could lead to an immediate withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises.

Should you wish to discuss the content of this letter, please make an appointment to see me via the school office.

Yours sincerely

cc: Chair of Governors

Step 2 Letter C – Ban from school premises for one week (or so) whilst obtaining the parent’s account and views from Head Teacher

Dear

Your conduct on school premises on (insert date)

I refer to the incident that took place on school premises today (or insert relevant day) when you (insert details of the incident).

If the Head Teacher did not witness the incident, the following text may be used: I have considered the witness accounts of the incident, (if relevant: including your own), and it would appear (insert details of incident).

Your behaviour falls short of the standard of conduct expected of those visiting the school. (Omit if this is a first incident – As you will remember, I have previously warned you about your behaviour when I wrote to you on (date)). I have considered the matter very carefully and have decided that you should not be allowed on to the school premises from now until (insert date). During that time I will review the situation. Before I make a final decision you may, if you wish, write to me to give me any further information you want me to take into consideration. You have until (insert date) to write to me.

If you need to speak to me or a member of staff about any matter, please telephone and I will make the necessary arrangements and confirm them to you in writing. You will not be allowed to come onto the school site unless you have a letter from me giving you authorisation.

If you do not comply with this ban, you will be guilty of causing a nuisance or disturbance on educational premises. This is a criminal offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996. If you were to commit this offence, you would be liable to prosecution in the magistrates’ court. If you were to be convicted, you would be liable to a fine and a criminal conviction.

I regret that I have had to take this action and hope that I can rely on your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Step 3 Letter A

This is an example of a warning letter to be sent to a parent, carer or visitor who has caused a disturbance at the school. The actual wording may need to be varied according to the circumstances. It is advisable to discuss the matter with the LA before sending such a letter.

Dear

I have received a report from the headteacher of Woodlands Primary School about your unacceptable conduct on (date).

(Provide a brief summary of the incident and its effect on staff and pupils)

I note that you have had a private conversation and a written warning about your conduct in the past.

I must inform you that the governors will not tolerate conduct of this nature and will act to defend school staff and pupils.

(Optional) If you are unhappy about any aspect of your child's education then you can arrange to have a meeting with the Headteacher at an appropriate time and place.

This letter serves as a final written warning, in accordance with our Visitor Code of Conduct and Unacceptable Behaviour on School Premises Policy. I must inform you that any repetition of such behaviour will lead to an immediate withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises.

Should you wish to discuss the content of this letter, please make an appointment to see me via the school office.

Yours sincerely

cc: Headteacher

Step 4 Letter A – Ban from school premises for specified period from Head Teacher

Dear

Your conduct on school premises (insert date)

I refer to the incident that took place on school premises on (insert relevant day) when you (insert details of the incident). In my letter dated (insert date), I referred to my intention to ban you from the premises and I invited you to make representations to me about this.

I have considered the points you have made to me and I have decided to proceed with the ban for a period of (insert number of weeks or an indefinite period), until (insert date), after which the ban will be reviewed by the Chair of Governors and myself. I will write to you again when this review is going to take place so that you may make written representations, which we will take into account. When we have made our decision, I shall write to you to inform you of it together with our reasons.

If you need to speak to me or a member of staff about any matter, please telephone and I will make the necessary arrangements and confirm them to you in writing. You will not be allowed to come onto the school site unless you have a letter from me giving you authorisation.

If you do not comply with this ban, you will be guilty of causing a nuisance or disturbance on educational premises. This is a criminal offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996. If you were to commit this offence, you would be liable to prosecution in the magistrates' court. If you were to be convicted, you would be liable to a fine and a criminal conviction.

I regret that I have had to take this action and hope that I can rely on your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Step 4 Letter B

This is an example of an initial ban letter to be sent to a parent, carer or visitor who has caused a disturbance at the school. The actual wording may need to be varied according to the circumstances. The matter must be discussed with the LA before sending such a letter.

At this stage, the ban takes effect immediately, but as the letter indicates, the parent must be enabled to make representations. A period of a week is recommended to allow for this, at the end of which the Chair of Governors should consider any representations made, then make a decision to either confirm the ban or discontinue it.

Dear

I have received a report from the headteacher of Woodlands Primary School about your unacceptable conduct on (date). (Provide a brief summary of the incident and its effect on staff and pupils)

I note that you have had a private conversation and a written warning about your conduct in the past.

I must inform you that the governors will not tolerate conduct of this nature and will act to defend school staff and pupils. On the advice of the Headteacher, I am therefore instructing you that until I have reviewed this incident, you are not to reappear on the school premises. If you do not comply with this instruction, I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises you may be prosecuted under section 547 of the Education Act 1996; if convicted under this section, you are currently liable to a fine of £500.

Special arrangements can be made for you to meet with the headteacher, if necessary, but this may only be with the written permission of the governors. The withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises takes effect immediately and will be in place for (insert days) school days in the first instance. I still need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm this decision. Before I do, I wish to give you an opportunity to write to me with any comments or observations of your own in relation to the report that I have received from the headteacher. These comments may be to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct.

To enable me to take a decision on this matter, please send me any written comments you wish to make by **(date 10 school days from 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 your case.

Yours sincerely

cc: Headteacher and LA

Step 4 Letter C – Unban from school premises from Head Teacher

Dear

Your conduct on school premises on (insert date)

On (insert date) I wrote to you informing you that I had temporarily withdrawn permission for you to come onto the school premises. To enable me to determine whether to confirm this decision for a longer period, I gave you the opportunity to let me have your written comments on this incident by (insert date).

I have not received a written response from you/I have now received a letter from you dated (insert date), the contents of which I have noted. (delete either sentence as appropriate).

(However) in the circumstances, (insert detail) I have decided to restore to you the permission to come onto the school premises, with immediate effect.

Nevertheless I remain very concerned at the incident which occurred on (insert date), and I must warn you that if there is any repetition of your behaviour on that occasion, I shall not hesitate to withdraw permission for you to come onto the premises again.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Step 4 Letter D

This is an example of a letter to state that a ban is being upheld. The actual wording may need to be varied according to the circumstances.

Dear

On (date) I wrote to inform you that on the advice of the headteacher I had withdrawn permission for you to come onto the premises of Woodlands Primary School. To enable me to determine whether to confirm this decision for a longer period, I gave you the opportunity to give your written comments on the incident concerned by (date). I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated (date), the contents of which I have carefully considered.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the headteacher's report, I have determined that the decision to withdraw permission for you to come onto school premises should be confirmed. I am therefore instructing that, until further notice, you are not to come onto the premises of the school without the prior knowledge and approval of the headteacher. If you do not comply with this instruction I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises of the school. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises, you may 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.

Even though we have taken this decision, the headteacher and staff at Woodlands remain committed to the education of your child(ren), who must continue to attend school as normal (insert for primary age children) under the arrangements set out in my previous letter.

This decision will be reviewed again (insert review date which should be a reasonable period and no longer than 6 months).

When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the withdrawal of permission to come onto the school premises, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you; and any evidence of your co-operation with the school in other respects.

If you wish to pursue the matter further you have a right to complain to a panel of school governors who have not been involved previously and who will consider the circumstances of the decision to withdraw permission for you to come on to the school site. You can make your complaint by writing to the Clerk to the Governors, c/o School.

(Where the incident has arisen in the context of a parental complaint against the school,

the following may be inserted) Finally, I would advise you that I have asked the headteacher to ensure that your complaint that (insert details) is considered under the appropriate stage of the school's parental complaints procedure. The school will contact you about this in due course.

Yours sincerely

cc: Headteacher and LA

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

This includes trespass, nuisance or disturbance on school premises, verbal abuse, sexual or racial abuse, threats, aggression, physical violence and intentional damage to personal property.

This form should be completed as fully as possible (please use a continuation sheet if necessary). For an incident involving or witnessed by a child, a member of staff should complete the form on their behalf. However, any discussion between one witness and another should not precede completion of the form, as this might lead to allegations of collusion.

Date of incident.....

Day of week

Time

1.Member of staff reporting incident

Name

Work address (if different from school address).

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Position

2.Personal details of person assaulted/verbally abused (if appropriate)

Name

Work address (if different from school address)/home address (if pupil).

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Job/Position (if member of staff).....

Dept/Section/Class

Age Sex

3.Details of trespasser/assailant(s) (if known)

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4.Witness(es) if any

Name

Address.....

Age (approx)..... Sex

Other information

Relationship between member of staff/pupil and trespasser/assailant, if any.

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5.Details of incident

Type of incident (eg if trespass, was the trespasser causing a nuisance or disturbance and how; if assault, give details of any injury suffered, treatment received etc).

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Location of incident (attach sketch if appropriate).

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Other details: describe incident, including, where relevant, events leading up to it; relevant details of trespasser/assailant not given above; if a weapon was involved, who else was present?

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Outcome: (eg Whether police called; whether trespasser was removed from premises under section 547; whether parents contacted; what happened after the incident; any legal action?).

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6.Other information (to be completed as appropriate)

Possible contributory factors.

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Is trespasser/assailant known to have been involved in any previous incidents YES/NO?

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Give date and brief details of (b) if known.

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Had any measures been taken to try to prevent an incident of this type occurring? If so, what? Could they be improved?

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If no measures had been taken beforehand, could action now be taken? If so, what?

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Name and contact details of police officer involved, and incident number or crime reference number, as appropriate.

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Any other relevant information.

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Signed

Dated