



Keeping our academies safe: Managing unacceptable behaviour by visitors - Policy

Leadership, please also see: Keeping schools safe from abuse, threats and violence guidance for school leaders

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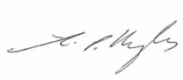
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Introduction

The Harmony Trust encourages close links with parents, carers and the wider community. It believes that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. The vast majority of parents, carers and others visiting our school are keen to work with us and are supportive of our academies. However, on the rare occasions when a negative attitude towards the school is expressed, this can result in aggression, verbal and or physical abuse towards members of school staff or the wider school community. It can be in person, in written form, by telephone or online.

The Trust 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, carers and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

At all times the common purpose remains clear: to achieve zero tolerance of violence, threatening behaviour or abuse in schools or online, and to ensure all members of the school community, and all visitors to the school, can be confident that they are operating within a safe environment.

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

- Shouting at members of the school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, e.g. standing very close to her/him
- The use of aggressive hand gestures
- Threatening behaviour
- Shaking or holding a fist or finger towards another person
- Swearing
- Pushing
- Hitting, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking
- Spitting
- Racist or sexist comments
- Breaching the school's security procedures
- Aggressive and threatening phone calls or emails.
- Aggressive or threatening behaviour towards staff or their families via social media
- Ongoing harassment or intimidation of staff in person, writing, by telephone or online

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

Unacceptable behaviour may result in the Trust central team and the police being informed of the incident.

Procedure to be followed

If a parent, carer or visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Principal/Head of Academy or appropriate senior member of staff will assess the situation and where possible seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school'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, parent, carer or visitor may be banned by the Principal/Head of Academy from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review.

Options for the Principal/Head of Academy

After evaluating all available information, and any other relevant factors, there are several actions the Principal/Head of Academy may wish to take. These can include:

- Inviting the parent, carer or visitor to a meeting to discuss events
- Clarifying to the parent, carer or visitor what is considered acceptable behaviour by the school
- Forming strategies to manage future situations of potential conflict
- Withdrawing permission for the parent, carer or visitor to enter the school site and/or buildings
- Calling for police assistance
- Legal proceedings (for extreme acts or where other measures have been put in place and not adhered to)

Banning from the site

This should only be undertaken when there is extreme behaviour or persistent events of unacceptable behaviour.

In imposing a ban the following steps will be taken:

1. The parent, carer or visitor will be informed, in writing, that they are 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 assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the Trust and the police will be included.
3. The chair of Trustees will be informed of the ban
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

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, carer or visitor that the school will not tolerate misbehaviour
- Shows the school 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 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/carers has been banned from the school premises, they retain their right to an annual consultation in relation to the educational progress of their child/ren. However, the school 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 be arranged off site).

Legal proceedings

Where individuals persist in coming onto the school site even when permission to do so has been withdrawn, it is possible for legal proceedings to be pursued. The options include:

- Prosecution under section 547 of the Education Act 1996
- Appropriate behaviour contracts
- Anti-social behaviour orders (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

- Restraining orders (Protection from Harassment Act 1997)
- Prosecution for criminal damage/assault

Offensive content online

Where online content is upsetting / inappropriate and the person(s) responsible for posting is known, there will be a discussion to explain why the content is unacceptable and the person will be asked to remove it.

If the person responsible has not been identified, or will not take the material down, the school will contact the host (i.e. the social networking site) to make a request to get the content taken down. The material posted may breach the service provider's terms and conditions of use and can then be removed. Screen capture of the material that includes the URL or web address will be taken where possible.

In cases of actual/suspected illegal content, the academy will contact the police.

Record keeping

There will be clear and detailed records of all events. Any witness statements (where appropriate) and notes of any subsequent meetings held to discuss the events should also be retained. Notes should be signed and dated. This will be kept in line with GDPR requirements.

Support for employees

If a member of staff is unfortunate enough to be one of the very small, minority subject to serious physical and/or verbal abuse there are a variety of sources of potential support available to them. In such circumstances the immediate and ongoing support of colleagues will be invaluable.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people based on their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote and encourage equality in our academies.

Data Protection Statement

The procedures and practice created by this policy have been reviewed in the light of our Data Protection Policy.

All data will be handled in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Data Audit For This Policy					
What ?	Probable Content	Why ?	Who ?	Where ?	When ?
Managing unacceptable behaviour by visitors policy	Name, address, personal information related to the incident,	Required to be retained as part of internal processes	Principal / SLT, Trust central team, staff or other representative as required. Police, legal team where relevant	Kept on file at academy (and Trust central where appropriate)	Held on file until child leaves school.

As such, our assessment is that this policy :

Has Few / No Data Compliance Requirements	Has A Moderate Level of Data Compliance Requirements	Has a High Level Of Data Compliance Requirements
	✓	

Conclusion

The Trust itself may take action where behaviour is unacceptable or there are serious breaches of our home-school code of conduct or health and safety legislation.

In implementing this policy, the school will, as appropriate, seek advice from the Trust and legal team, to ensure fairness and consistency.

This Policy is based on the NAHT Model Policy and guidance and will be reviewed biannually.

Appendix A

Poster to be displayed in school



We welcome visitors to our school.

We will act to ensure it remains a safe place for pupils, staff and all other members of our community.

If you have concerns, we will always listen to them and seek to address them.

Please be aware, however, that abusive, threatening or violent behaviour will not be tolerated in this school.

Visitors behaving in this way are likely to be removed from the premises and prosecuted.