



POLICY FOR DEALING WITH VIOLENCE, THREATENING BEHAVIOUR AND ABUSE AGAINST TRUST STAFF OR OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

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Change Log

Date	Changes to Policy
Summer 2024	The role of the Ethos and Advisory Committee for making representation and appeal.
Autumn 2023	Example list of unacceptable behaviours updated. Decisions about withdrawal of permission to be on site is delegated to the Headteacher. Included that perception of threatening behaviour is a reason for a ban on school site. Any incidents of unacceptable behaviour will result in a temporary withdrawal of permission to be onsite until the aggressor makes representation. Where a withdrawal of permission is challenged, representation is made to Ethos and Advisory Committee. Process for making representation to the Ethos and Advisory Committee clarified. The role of the Ethos and Advisory Committee in the event of representation is outlined.

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Standards.....	3
3. Standards: Parent & Visitor Code of Conduct (Annex E)	3
4. Decision Making.....	4
Annex A: Incident Report Form	7
Annex B: Recorded Delivery.....	9
Annex C: Recorded Delivery.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Annex D: Recorded Delivery.....	11
Annex E: Parent Code of Conduct.....	12
Annex F: Recorded Delivery Warning Letter	Error! Bookmark not defined.

1. Introduction

The Trust has a duty of care to pupils, parents, staff, and all those who visit our School Trust sites. The Trust is committed to the wellbeing and protection of all staff and does not accept **any form of unacceptable behaviour** which is directed towards staff or pupils. **It is enough for a member of staff or pupil to feel threatened physically, verbally or via social media posts** – perceptions of victims would be enough.

We expect parents, families and visitors to be respectful of protected characteristics including but not limited to race, gender, sexuality, religious identity, age, disability and sexual orientation of staff and other children.

The Trust takes a **zero-tolerance approach**, and all incidents will be dealt with by senior leaders in a timely manner. This policy sets out how the academy will respond to unacceptable behaviour and perceived unacceptable behaviour by visitors and parents on the academy site, off site and through online channels. For unacceptable behaviour from students and staff the relevant standards are set out in separate policies.

Parents and families recognise that educating children is a process that involves a partnership between parents, class teachers and the school community. Families 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 and carers to participate fully in the life of our academies.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, families and visitors to our academies about their expected conduct. This is so we can continue to enable children to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

2. Standards

The Academy will take reasonable steps to promote appropriate behaviour on school sites. This will include setting our values and expectations in relation to conduct on our websites, in posters at the school site and providing training to leaders about how to manage difficult situations. Parents and visitors will be given timely reminders regarding acceptable behaviour to always support positive interactions. Separate duties apply in relation to health and safety law which are covered in separate policies.

3. Standards: Parent & Visitor Code of Conduct (Annex E)

To ensure that all parents, families and visitors understand the expectations of conduct, the Code of Conduct will be displayed in all schools and regularly communicated to the school community in newsletters, websites etc. Staff may use it to support any conversations or meetings with parents.

Please see Annexe E.

Guidance:

To further support understanding of what may be considered unacceptable behaviours this policy sets out some guidance. This is listed below but it should be noted that it is not an exhaustive list, but helps illustrate examples of unacceptable behaviour.

We expect parents, families and visitors to:

- Understand that both teachers and parents and families need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that all members of the school community should be treated with kindness respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and behaviour as well as their behaviours off site and online, including social media accounts.
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events alongside the school's view to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- To commit to following the academy Complaints Policy in the event of a concern that has not been addressed.
- Correct their own child's behaviour on the school site where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behaviour or unsafe behaviour. This may include off site behaviour.
- Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern and to commit to following the academy Complaints Policy in the event of a concern that has not been addressed.
- Not use staff as threats to admonish children's behaviour.
- Not use social media or online platforms to address concerns or grievances about the school or staff.
- To enter all communication with the academy and its staff in a polite, kind and respectful manner being mindful that it is enough for perceptions of threatening behaviours to cause action to be taken.
- To support a kind, caring ethos where the school values are upheld by holding yourself to the highest standards.

To support a peaceful and safe school environment the school will not tolerate parents, families and visitors exhibiting the behaviours and actions set out below:

It is enough that staff can feel that they are intimidated or threatened by a variety of circumstances, not simply physical or actual verbal assault, which includes:

- Threatening behaviour
- Gesturing
- Online abuse – including social media accounts.
- Abusive telephone calls, letters, emails, website entries and other school communication channels
- Swearing, shouting insults, offensive language etc
- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, office or any other area of the academy grounds.
- Abusive or threatening comments or behaviour related to race, gender, ethnicity, disability or how a person chooses to identify themselves (Equality Act protected characteristics).
- Threatening to harm a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or pupil regardless of whether the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence or not.
- Comments, actions and gestures of a sexual or perceived sexual nature.
- Comments, actions or gestures which are or perceived to be racist.
- Unacceptable behaviour which is non-verbal.
- Damaging or destroying property – either school or of a member of staff or pupil.
- Breaching the academy's security procedures.
- Sending abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications.
- Approaching staff offsite and outside of the school day in an abusive or threatening manner.
- Defamation of the Trust, academy or staff character on social media and online platforms.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on academy premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of their actions towards your own child/ren.
- Smoking, vaping and consumption of alcohol or other drugs or illegal substances.

Should any of the above behaviour occur on the academy premises, offsite or online the academy will follow the actions detailed in the Policy dealing with **Violence, Threatening Behaviour and Abuse against Trust Staff or Other Members of the Trust Community**.

We trust and expect that parents, families and visitors will reflect the policy in their behaviours in all matters linked the academy, onsite, off site and online.

5. Reporting Incidents

All staff will take responsibility for the safety of colleagues, across the Academy. Staff are responsible for reporting any incidents of unacceptable behaviour onsite, offsite and online to protect colleagues, pupils and visitors. All staff will take responsibility for reporting any incidents to the Headteacher.

Any staff who witness unacceptable behaviour should make a factual record of any such behaviour. This applies to any parents or visitors who report any unacceptable behaviours that they may have witnessed. A form is available at **Annex A**.

Headteachers should also consider any additional support for anyone who has been the victim of actual or perceived unacceptable behaviour.

If there are any grounds to consider the risk to the safety of anyone on the school site then the Police will be contacted immediately, this is also the case where online abuse takes place. The Academy will fully support any action by the Police and any staff in raising issues with the Police when they feel unsafe. The Trust will also consider all potential legal options to ensure that all visitors and staff are safe.

4. Decision Making

Any instances of unacceptable behaviour perceived or actual, on any Academy or Trust site must be taken seriously and fully addressed. This also applies to unacceptable behaviour that is online or takes place off site and is directed to or at members of Trust staff. It is important to note that the perception of the victim, not the aggressor, remains important and underpins actions that are taken.

Unacceptable behaviour could include:

- Shouting or aggressive tones at other people on the school site.

- Threatening words, gestures or other behaviour.
- Comments or remarks related to any of the protected characteristics e.g. race, gender, disability etc.
- Comments of a sexual or perceived sexual nature.
- Comments which are or perceived to be racist.
- Unacceptable behaviour which is non-verbal.
- Ongoing bullying behaviour targeted at a single member of staff.
- Damaging words or behaviour online, including social media.
- Personal remarks and comments about staff online.
- Threatening, aggressive comments or behaviour which takes place off site and outside of school hours.
- Repeated and targeted threats, gestures, accusations and comments intended to intimidate, bully, threaten or damage the reputation of staff.
- Physical violence or threats of physical violence
- Damage or a threat of damage to the Trust site or property
- Other inappropriate behaviour such as inappropriate activity on social media, which includes promoting posts which they may not be the author of.

Where there is unacceptable behaviour which is not of a criminal nature then this will still be taken seriously and with a zero-tolerance approach and leaders will consider restricting communication with a person or restricting their access to a school site. This decision is the decision of the Headteacher in the academy or Line Manager if on a Trust site.

When deciding to restrict communication or access to an academy site consideration should be given to any special circumstances or protected characteristics (such as disability) as part of any decision making.

Further, Headteachers should refer to the DfE Guidance available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/controlling-access-to-school-premises/controlling-access-to-school-premises>

In the event of unacceptable behaviours, perceived or real, the Headteacher will issue the aggressor with a letter (ANNEX B) which will temporarily prohibit the aggressor from entering the school site and surrounding grounds.

The aggressor will have 7 school days to make representation to the school.

If upheld the Headteacher will issue a letter (ANNEX C) containing a ban from the school site and surrounding grounds for a reasonable amount of time but no longer than 1 term. Dependent on the incident, it may include how the parent/carer is able to contact the school, how the school will respond and any other relevant restrictions which protect the staff working within the Trust.

During the ban the parent/carer or visitor will not be allowed onsite to drop off or collect children from school and the parent/carer or visitor will need to make alternative arrangements. In exceptional circumstances and considering the behaviour the Headteacher may make alternative arrangements with the parent or carer which protects all staff and children. This is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

The length of the ban is at the discretion of the Headteacher. This will be detailed in writing and a letter will be sent to the home address (ANNEX C).

Whilst all Headteachers seek to maintain positive relationships with all parents/carers and visitors, it may, in exceptional circumstances be necessary to issue a permanent ban to an aggressor.

The letter will set out, clearly, the incident, the reason for the ban and the expectations of any future behaviour required.

Once the site ban has ended a letter will be sent with an invite back onto site (ANNEX D).

5. Making Representation After Withdrawal of Permission to be on Site.

If the parent or visitor is dissatisfied with the decision made by the Headteacher they can make representation to the local Ethos and Advisory Committee.

This should be done in writing within 7 days of the final ban letter being issued. It should set out the events, decisions and any concerns that are raised. The letter should be addressed to Chair of Ethos and Advisory Committee, and it can be delivered or emailed to the child's academy or the academy where the incident took place.

The role of the Ethos and Advisory Committee is an appeal process where they will review the representation and decide whether to uphold the decision.

After submitting representation to the Ethos and Advisory Committee they will respond with 15 working days.

Annex A: Incident Report Form

This includes verbal abuse and threats, aggression, physical violence and intentional damage to personal property. This includes perceived threats and aggression by the victim.

This form should be completed as fully as possible (please use a continuation sheet if necessary). For an incident involving or witnessed by a pupil, 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

Time

1. Member of staff reporting incident: Name and Position

2. Name and details of person assaulted/verbally abused or victim of perceived threat. (if appropriate):

3. Details aggressor (if known)

4. Details of Witness(es) if any: name and address if not school staff.

5. Details of incident and type of behaviour: location; time; relevant lead up events; additional persons involved.

6. 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)

7. Other information (to be completed as appropriate)

a) Possible contributory factors

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

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

g) Any other relevant information

Name of person completing the report:

Date :

Please return to Headteacher immediately.

Annex B: Recorded Delivery Temporary Ban Pending Representation (Action 1)

Dear [NAME]

I am writing in respect of your conduct which took place at [LOCATION] on [DATE AND TIME]. Specifically, it has been reported that you [SET OUT DETAILS IN SUMMARY FORM OF INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR]

This behaviour is unacceptable. The Academy has a duty of care to students, staff and all visitors to the school site. Everyone on the school site should be treated with respect.

In light of your inappropriate behaviour, I have made the decision to temporarily withdraw permission for you to be on school site in the form of a ban. This ban takes place immediately. This means that you must not enter the school site for any reason.

You will be unable to enter the school site to either pick up or drop off your child and will need to make alternative arrangements.

You have the right to make representations in respect of this decision and I will review this decision in light of any representations that you wish to make.

Such representations must be made in writing within 7 school days of the date of this letter and sent to [GIVE EMAIL OR OTHER ADDRESS]. Any representations made after this date will be recorded but will not be considered.

Delete as appropriate

[IN CASES OF THREATS/VIOLENCE/OTHER CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR] Your conduct has also been reported to the Police. If you make any threat or any other behaviour which puts anyone at risk it will be reported to the Police and the Academy will consider any legal options it has against you in order to keep students, staff and visitors safe.]

Yours faithfully,

NAME
Headteacher XXXX Academy

Annex C: Recorded Delivery Ban Decision After Representation (Action 2)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wrote to you on (give date) withdrawing permission for you to come onto the premises of (insert name) until further notice. In that letter I advised you that I would take steps to review this decision and consider any additional evidence and representations from yourself and decide as to whether the ban should be upheld and for how long.

I have now completed the review which did consider your representation/ I have now completed the review and it was noted that you did not submit representation.

I have determined that the behaviour was a breach of the Code of Conduct/ I have determined that the breach was not a breach of the Code of Conduct.

(Give a summary of reasons.)

I therefore advise that the instruction that you are not to come onto the premises of (insert name) academy for a period of (enter number of weeks or months that total no longer than 1 term). At the end of the ban period, you will receive a letter inviting you back on site on the (SPECIFY DATE).

This ban means that you will be unable to enter the school site at pick up and drop off times and you will need to make alternative arrangements, even if it is inconvenient. In exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate for me to make alternative arrangements with you if the safety of staff and pupils is not at risk. This should be viewed as exceptional rather than an expectation and is at my discretion.

If you are dissatisfied with this decision, you have a right to make representation to the Ethos and Advisory Committee via the school office. The Ethos and Advisory Committee will review the representation and decide whether to uphold the decision. Please address any letters to 'Chair of Ethos and Advisory Committee'. You have 7 school days to make representation after the ban begins.

Yours faithfully,

NAME
Headteacher XXX Academy

Annex D: Recorded Delivery End of Ban

Dear Parent

On (insert date) I wrote to you withdrawing your permission to be on the academy site in the form of a site ban which was in place until (XXX).

I am writing to inform you that this ban is now coming to an end, and I look forward to welcoming you back on site on XXXX.

I would appreciate it if you would take a moment to read the attached policy which sets out the expectations of kind and acceptable behaviour when on the academy site.

I look forward to working with you positively as we move forward for the benefit of your child's education.

Yours faithfully

NAME
Headteacher XXX Academy

Annex E: Parent Code of Conduct

Welcome To Our Academy

We you to our Academy where the safety and security of pupils, staff and visitors is our highest priority.

All members of our community have the right to be treated kindly and with respect and to work and be cared for in a safe and supportive environment. We expect parents, families and visitors to be respectful of protected characteristics including but not limited to race, gender, sexuality, religious identity, age, disability and sexual orientation of staff and other children.

Nowhere in this Academy will we tolerate aggressive, threatening, intimidating, or bullying behaviour. It is enough for the victim of any such behaviours to feel threatened or perceive the behaviour as threatening or intimidating. This applies to behaviour off site and online, including social media accounts. Parents, families and visitors must always adopt a respectful manner.

Any unacceptable behaviour will result in your permission to be on site being withdrawn and could result in a ban from entering the school site for a period, up to one term. This could include the police being informed and may result in prosecution.

We welcome our community into our academy, and we want to build positive relationships and we would hope that we never need to take such action. We ask that you embrace our school values and treat each member of staff, pupil, visitor and fellow parent with kindness, friendship and respect.

There is not an exhaustive list of behaviours. We deem unacceptable behaviour to be both real and perceived and it may fit broadly into the categories below. The voice of the victim will outweigh the voice of the aggressor.

- Threatening behaviour
- Gesturing
- Online abuse, including via social media
- Abusive telephone calls, letters, emails, website entries
- Swearing, shouting insults, offensive language etc
- Smoking, vaping, taking illegal substances, drinking alcohol
- Physical aggression, including damaging property
- Behaviours offsite as well as on site.

We thank you for helping us create a safe, happy and welcoming space for our children, staff, families and community.

The children and staff of XXXXXXXX Academy