

Richard Cloudesley School

Community Acceptable Behaviour Policy

Summary

We believe staff, parents and children are entitled to a safe and protective environment in which to work. Behaviour that will cause harassment, alarm or distress to users of the premises is contrary to the aims of the school.

Aims of this policy

- That all members of the school community treat each other with respect.
- That adults set a good example to children at all times, showing them how to get along with all members of the school and the wider community
- That no members of staff, parents or children are the victims of abusive behaviour or open to threats from other adults on the school premises.
- Physical attacks and threatening behaviour, abusive or insulting language verbal or written, to staff, governors, parents and carers, children and other users of the school premises will not be tolerated and will result in withdrawal of permission to be on school premises.

Date approved by L&R committee:

November 2018

Date to be reviewed:

November 2020

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including parents, other professionals and volunteers. It refers to behaviour both in and out of school, for example home visits, out of hours events and bus drop offs. The term parents refers to parents and other carers.

A legal case in 1999, involving Wandsworth London Borough Council, established:

- 1. That the parent of a school child has a licence to enter the child's school premises.*
- 2. That the licence may be terminated, but that public law requires that the parent must first be given an opportunity to make representations about this.*
- 3. That failure to afford an opportunity to make representations would provide a defence against any subsequent proceedings for trespass (if the ban is breached)*

Statement of Principles

Richard Cloudesley School actively encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes that children benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one.

The vast majority of parents and others visiting our school are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school. From time to time it is necessary for parents and the school to deal with problems relating to particular children. It is important that discussions between parents and staff are conducted in a calm and respectful manner. In the vast majority of such situations this is what happens, but on rare occasions, aggression and verbal and or physical abuse is directed towards members of school staff or members of the wider school community.

Richard Cloudesley School 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.

Violence, threatening behaviour and abuse against school staff or other members of the school community, including other parents and children, will not be tolerated. All members of the school community have a right to expect that their school is a safe place in which to work and learn. There is no place for violence, threatening behaviour or abuse in our school.

We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff and the wider school community at all times. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

These principles also apply where our staff are working outside of school, for example, meetings off site, and including electronic forms of communication.

If you have a concern that cannot be resolved with a member of staff, you can make an appointment at the school office to discuss the issue with the headteacher.

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable, and which will not be tolerated in relation to members of staff, and other members of the community include:

- aggressive or rude behaviour that may lead to a member of staff being intimidated;
- raised voice or shouting, either in person or over the telephone;
- swearing, either in person or over the telephone/email;
- constant emails and/or phone calls which amount to harassment and intimidation, despite the school's best efforts to address a situation;
- inappropriate electronic activity including publishing abusive or inappropriate content with regards to the school, teachers or students on social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter or in email communication;
- hitting, slapping, punching, kicking or pushing;
- physical intimidation, e.g. standing unnecessarily close to her/him;
- the use of rude or aggressive hand gestures, including shaking or holding a fist towards another person.

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour. Whilst the use of such behaviour is unacceptable in all circumstances, the school is particularly concerned to protect its children from being exposed to such behaviour (whether or not directed at them).

Unacceptable behaviour may result in the police being informed of the incident.

Risk assessment

In the event of a parent behaving in an inappropriate way, each situation will need to be considered individually by the headteacher or a designated member of staff. The following factors should be taken into account as a risk assessment, before deciding on the most appropriate course of action:

- Has the parent been verbally aggressive/threatening/intimidating?
- Has the parent been physically aggressive/threatening/intimidating?
- What evidence is there? What do witnesses say happened?
- Does the parent have a known previous history of aggression/violence? (Information can only be sought from the police when an official complaint has been made).
- Do members of the school staff/community feel intimidated by the parent's behaviour?
- Have pupils witnessed aggressive/threatening/intimidating behaviour from the parent?
- Have pupils been approached inappropriately by the parent?
- Has the parent been abusive to school staff, pupils or visitors?
- Has the parent been persistently abusive to school staff, pupils or visitors?
- Was the parent provoked in any way prior to their behaviour and/or does the parent claim to have been provoked?
- Is there evidence of provocation?
- How frequently have the behaviours occurred?
- Is there a risk (low, medium or high) that the behaviour may be repeated?

Parental and visitor access to the school premises

Normally parents and other visitors, are granted permission to visit the site. Where there are serious concerns regarding the conduct of a parent or visitor, and possible staff or children safety, the headteacher can:

- initiate a meeting/dialogue with the individual;
- write to the visitor, describing their misconduct, explaining its impact on the school and stating its unacceptability;
- vary the person's 'permission to visit the school', say, through the addition of conditions;
- warn of the possibility of a 'ban' (i.e. the withdrawal of the permission) if the misconduct is repeated;
- impose a ban with a review after a fixed period;
- impose a ban without review.

Procedure to be followed

If a parent or visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the headteacher and/or appropriate senior staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school's complaints procedures should be followed by the parent. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where the circumstances otherwise require it, a parent or visitor may be banned by the Head teacher from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review.

In imposing a ban, the following steps will be taken:

1. The parent will be informed, in writing, that s/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 assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the local police;
3. The chair of governors will be informed of the ban;
4. As appropriate, arrangements for meetings at school regarding children, and arrangements for children being delivered to and collected from the school will be clarified.

Model letters can be found on the NAHT Guidance GI04 'Managing Violent and Abusive Visitors to Schools'

Conclusion

In implementing this policy, the school will, as appropriate, seek advice from the Local Authority if necessary, to ensure fairness and consistency.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

Date and time of incident	
Details of person(s) assaulted/verbally abused	
Name	
Address and telephone number	
Role	
Details of perpetrator	
Name	
Address and telephone number	
Relationship to the school	
Details of witness	
Witness 1: Name, contact details and relationship to school	
Witness 2: Name, contact details and relationship to school	
Witness 3: Name, contact details and relationship to school	

<p>Description of incident</p>	
<p>Location of incident (attach sketch of appropriate)</p>	
<p>Outcome (were police called, what happened after the incident)</p>	

Other information to be recorded as appropriate

Any possible contributory factors	
Is the perpetrator known to have been involved in any previous incidents? (if yes, give details)	
Were measures in place to try to prevent an incident of this type occurring? Could these be improved? If no measures were in place, could action be taken now?	
Name and contact details of police officer(s) involved Incident number/crime reference number	
Any other relevant information	

Form completed by (name and role)	
Date form completed	

Appendix B

Dealing with abusive telephone calls

Sometimes staff may have to deal with challenging, abusive, aggressive or threatening telephone calls. It is unacceptable for any member of staff to be subjected to such abuse but staff may not know how to handle such a telephone call. This guidance has been produced to assist staff if they are faced with such a situation.

To reduce the likelihood of callers becoming abusive staff should conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner and make every attempt to meet the needs of the caller. Staff should also have the confidence that it is acceptable to end an abusive telephone call.

Always

- remain calm and polite
- stay in control of the situation
- actively listen – repeat information back to the caller to test understanding of the issue and gain their agreement
- inform the caller they are trying to help them
- be positive and say what you can do
- be clear and avoid using jargon
- if necessary, apologise for an error and take action to put it right
- if you have to go and get some information, let the caller know why you are putting them on hold and do not leave them on hold for a long time - update them as necessary
- make notes of the conversation
- follow the procedure below if appropriate
- refer the caller to the headteacher, deputy etc.

Never

- respond in the same manner as an abusive caller
- take it personally
- allow yourself to be bullied
- slam the phone down.

Script for abusive telephone calls

When the caller starts to raise their voice/be abusive:

Mr/Mrs/Ms...please don't raise your voice/swear at me, I am not raising my voice/being rude to you. If you continue to raise your voice/be rude to me then I will be forced to terminate the call.

When the caller continues to raise their voice/be abusive:

Mr/Mrs/Ms.... I understand you are upset/frustrated however I am not prepared to continue to be shouted/sworn at so you can either call back when you have calmed down or if you prefer you can put your views in writing.

If, despite the two warnings above, the caller continues to raise their voice/be abusive:

Mr/Mrs/Ms.... I advised you earlier during this call about raising your voice/swearing and you have continued to do this, so I am afraid I am going to have to terminate this call. **Hang up.**

Further actions:

Make a written note of the telephone call or use the incident report form (Appendix A) and report the incident to the headteacher.