

Gresham Primary School: Behaviour of Parents (including Carers) and School Visitors Policy

Date : December 2022

Next Review Date: December 2024

Statement of Principles

The governing body of Gresham Primary School actively encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes that students benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one.

The overwhelming majority of parents, carers 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 students. It is important that discussions between parents and staff be 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.

Parent/carers will only be seen with a prior appointment. All meetings held in school are by mutual consent. The school considers it unreasonable for a parent/carer to arrive at school and demand to see a member of staff during the school day. The appropriate member of staff will follow up any concerns with the parent in an appropriate and timely way.

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.

Violence, threatening behaviour and abuse against school staff or other members of the school community, including other parents and students, 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.

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 are:

- 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, eg standing unnecessarily close to a member of staff.
- the use of rude or aggressive hand gestures, including shaking or holding a fist towards another person.
- spitting.
- breaching the school's security procedures.

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 students from being exposed to such behaviour (whether or not directed at them.)

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

Parental/Visitor Access to the School Premises

Normally parents/carers (and those with parental responsibility), plus visitors, are granted what is known as "limited licence" to visit the grounds and buildings of a school. Where there are serious concerns regarding the conduct of a parent/visitor, and possible staff/student safety, the headteacher will:

- 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 "licence", say, through the addition of conditions.
- warn of the possibility of a "ban" (i.e. the withdrawal of their licence) 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/carer/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/carer or visitor may be banned by the headteacher 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/carer 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 local police.
3. The chair of governors will be informed of the ban.
4. As appropriate, arrangements for meetings at school regarding students, and arrangements for students being delivered to and collected from the school will be clarified.
5. Parents who have been banned from the school premises and continue to cause a nuisance will be deemed to have committed a Section 547 offence. They will be considered as trespassers. In these circumstances, the offender may be removed from school. This may be carried out by a police officer or person authorised by the governing body. Legal proceedings may be brought against the parent.

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 is in accord with the Public Order Act 1986.

This policy will be reviewed bi annually.

