



## Dealing with unacceptable behaviour from parents policy

Ratified on: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Ratified by: L.Salton

Review date: July 2024

Written by Natalie Sefton

## Statement of Principles

This policy has been written taking into account the DfE Guidance 'Advice on school Security: Access to, and barring individuals from school premises' December 2012 as well as NAHT guidance on dealing with abusive parents, carers or relatives.

At St James's C.E. Primary School we value the positive relationships forged with parents, carers and visitors to the school. We encourage close links with parents and the community and appreciate that students benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. We also strive to make our school a place where as adults we model for students the behaviour we teach and expect. In general, we place a high importance on good manners, positive communication and mutual respect.

Almost all parents, carers and visitors to our school are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school. However, on very rare occasions the behaviour of a small number of adults falls short of what we expect. This sometimes manifests itself in aggression or abuse towards adults of the school community. This can be in written communication (including social media), on the telephone or in face-to-face communication.

In these situations, we expect members of staff to behave professionally, seeking the involvement of appropriate colleagues. Staff who face these situations have licence to end any conversation (face to face or on the telephone). They should then refer the incident to a senior manager who will take appropriate action or invoke the provisions of this policy.

The overriding principle is that all members of the school community have the right to work in school without fear of aggression or abuse. The board of governors has a requirement to protect staff and students from such aggression.

Actions taken will be reasonable and proportionate and the progress and wellbeing of the child will be fully considered. The adult concerned will have the opportunity to put their views forward. In the case of the imposition of conditions or a ban from school, robust review processes involving the Chair of Governors and then the governing body are in place to ensure fairness.

### **Definition of unacceptable behaviour:**

We consider that aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language from an adult presents a risk to staff or students. Unacceptable behaviour is such that makes a member of staff or student feel threatened.

The following is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour:

- Any kind of insult such as an attempt to demean, embarrass or undermine.
- Any kind of threat.
- Raising of voice as to be intimidating.
- Physical intimidation, for example, by standing very close to him/ her or the use of aggressive hand gestures.
- Use of foul or abusive language.
- Any kind of physical abuse.
- Allegations which turn out to be vexatious, untrue or malicious.

## **The school's approach to dealing with incidents:**

If a parent/ carer/ visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the head teacher or appropriate member of senior staff will assess the impact of that behaviour and decide on an appropriate course of action.

### **Assessment of impact:**

The head teacher will carry out an enquiry in order to help make a decision about the level of response. In all cases the response will be reasonable and proportionate. The headteacher will consider the following questions:

- What form did the behaviour take?
- Are there previous incidents to take into consideration?
- Do members of staff/ students feel threatened by the adult's behaviour? • What is the likelihood that the behaviour will be repeated?

### **Recording of incidents:**

Staff/ students subject to abuse and witnesses will make written statements which will be kept on file with subsequent letters. This file will be kept securely.

### **The school's response:**

Following an assessment of the inappropriate behaviour, the head teacher will decide on the level of action to be taken. Actions will include the following:

#### *1. Clarify to the parents what is considered to be acceptable behaviour by the school.*

In some instances, it may be appropriate simply to ensure that the adult is clear about behaviour standards expected by the school. This could be explained by letter from the head teacher. This letter may contain a warning about further action if there are further incidents. The adult will be invited to write to the head teacher with his/ her version of events within 10 working days. Depending on the adult's response a meeting may then be held to discuss the situation and how this can be avoided in future.

#### *2. Invite the adult to an informal meeting to discuss events.*

The safety and well-being of those attending such a meeting must be carefully considered. Members of school staff will always be accompanied by at least one other colleague at any such meeting.

#### *3. Impose conditions on the adult's contact with the school and its staff.*

Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Parents/ carers of enrolled students have 'implied licence' to come onto school premises at certain stated times. It is up to schools to set out and define the extent of such access. Adults exceeding this would be trespassing.

Depending on the type, level or frequency of the unacceptable behaviour, the school may consider imposing conditions on the adult's contact with the school. These conditions may include (but are not exclusively):

- Being accompanied to any meeting with a member of school staff by a member of the SLT.

- Restricting contact by telephone to named members of SLT.
- Restricting written communications to named members of the SLT.
- Restricting attendance at school events to those where the adult will be accompanied by a member of the SLT.
- Any other restrictions as deemed reasonable and proportionate by the head teacher.

In this case the adult will be informed by letter the details of the conditions being imposed. The adult would then be given 10 working days to make representations in writing about the conditions to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors would then decide whether to confirm or remove the conditions. This would then be communicated to the parent in writing within 10 working days of the date of the parents' letter.

If the decision is to confirm the conditions imposed, this decision will be reviewed by the governing body after approximately 6 months (and every 6 months after that, if appropriate). The adult will be invited to make written representation to the governors; this and the evidence from the head teacher will be considered at a meeting of the full governing body. The decision of the review will be communicated to the adult via the clerk to the governors within 10 days of the date of the meeting.

Governors will give consideration to the extent of the adult's compliance with the conditions, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from him/ her and any evidence of the adult's co-operation with the school in other respects.

#### *4. Imposing a ban.*

Where other procedures have been exhausted and aggression or intimidation continues OR where there is an extreme act of violence then the school may consider banning the individual from school premises. This will include banning an adult from accessing school staff by written communication or telephone.

In these circumstances, the individual would be advised in writing by the head teacher that a provisional ban is being imposed. The adult would then be given 10 working days from the day of that letter to make representations about the ban in writing to the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors would then decide whether to confirm or remove this ban. This would be communicated to the adult in writing within 10 school days of the receipt of their letter.

If the Chair's decision is to confirm the ban, parents in these circumstances will be offered an annual meeting about their child's progress, usually with a member of senior staff.

A decision to impose a ban will be reviewed by the governing body after approximately six months (and every 6 months after that, as appropriate). The adult will be invited to make written representation to the governors; this and the evidence from the head teacher will be considered at a meeting of the full governing body. Governors may decide to remove the ban, extend the ban or impose conditions on the adult's access to the school. The decision of the review will be communicated to the adult via the clerk to the governors within 10 school days of the date of the meeting.

When deciding whether it will be necessary to maintain, extend or remove the conditions, governors will give consideration to the extent of the adult's compliance with the conditions, any appropriate

expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from him/ her and any evidence of the adult's cooperation with the school in other respects.

*5. Removal from the school.*

Adults who have been banned from the school premises and continue to behave unacceptably 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 the school premises. This may be carried out by a police officer. Legal proceedings may be brought.

*6. Complaints policy.*

Any **parental** complaint that arises from incidents of unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with under the complaints policy.

## **Appendices**

### *Warning*

Model letter 1: This is an initial letter from the Headteacher to ensure the parent is clear about standards of behaviour expected by the school. This letter contains a warning about further action if there are other incidents. The letter invites a written response and suggests a meeting. *Imposing conditions on the parent's attendance at school events*

Model letter 2: This is a letter from the Headteacher informing parents of the school's decision to impose conditions on the parent's attendance at school events, pending review by the Chair of Governors

Model letter 3: Letter from the Chair of Governors informing parent of his decision to confirm or remove the conditions *Imposing a ban*

Model letter 4: Letter from Headteacher Informing parents of the school's intention to impose a ban on their attendance at school premises, pending review by the Chair of Governors

Model letter 5: Letter from the Chair of Governors informing parent of his decision to confirm or remove ban

### *Reviewing the decision to impose conditions or impose a ban*

Model Letter 6: Letter from clerk to governors requesting statement from parents to governing body for review of decision.

Model letter 7: Letter from clerk to the governors to confirm the outcome of further reviews of decisions where the imposition of conditions/ban has been extended or removed.

*Model Letter 1 Warning (sent by Headteacher)*

Recorded delivery

Dear

I have received a report about your conduct at the school on (enter date and time or details). This appears to fall far short of that we would expect of an adult on the premises of St James's C.E. Primary School.

(Add factual summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, pupils, and other parents.)

I must inform you that the governing body will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour towards members of the school community and will act to protect its staff and students from any form of abuse or intimidation. I should warn you that any future conduct of this nature could result in the school imposing conditions restricting your access to the school or banning you from contacting or attending the school altogether.

I wish to give you an opportunity to give me in writing any comments or observations of your own in relation to the report which I have received about your conduct. Please do so within 10 working days of the date of this letter. These comments may include any assurances you are prepared to give about your future good conduct. There is then an option for us to meet to discuss the situation and how it can be avoided in the future.

Details of our policy on dealing with unacceptable behaviour can be found on our website.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

cc: Chair

*Model Letter : 2 Imposing conditions on the parent's attendance at school events, pending review (sent by Headteacher)*

Recorded delivery I have received a report from the (name of staff) about your conduct on  
..... at

.....  
(add summary of incident and its effect on staff and pupils)

(You will recollect that I have already written to you about a previous incident on (date) warning you of the consequence of any further insulting or aggressive behaviour on your part)

I must inform you that the governors, in line with our policy, will not tolerate conduct of this nature on the school premises and will act to safeguard school staff and pupils and other adults.

I am therefore writing to inform you that I am imposing conditions on the contact you may have with school. These are as follows: (delete as appropriate)

- ☐ You must be accompanied to any meeting with a member of school staff
- ☐ You may not contact by telephone or in writing any member of staff. You may contact either myself or the deputy head teacher.
- ☐ You may not attend any events for parents except those where you will be accompanied by a member of the senior leadership of the school.
- ☐ Other as are reasonable and proportionate

The restrictions above are provisional until they have been reviewed by the Chair of Governors. Please consider them to be in force until you receive his confirmation.

The Chair of Governors will need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm or overturn this decision. You may, if you wish, send him in writing any comments or observations of your own within 10 working days of the date of this letter. These comments may be to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct. He will then write to you with the outcome of his decision.

If on receipt of your comments, the Chair of Governors considers that my decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of how the conditions will be reviewed by the governing body.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher cc:  
Chair

*Model Letter 3: Letter to confirm or overturn Headteacher's decision to impose conditions (sent by chair of governors)*

Recorded delivery

The head teacher wrote to you on (date) to detail concerns about an incident when your behaviour towards (name) fell short of what we would expect as a school. You will be aware that she has written to you previously about your behaviour towards staff.



I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated ....., the contents of which I have considered carefully.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose conditions on your contact with school should be confirmed. The conditions are as follows:

☐ (Copy conditions from HT's letter)

This decision will be reviewed by the governing body in approximately six months' time. The Clerk to the Governors will write to you in advance of the meeting to ask you to provide a written statement for their consideration. When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the application of conditions to attend 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.

OR

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose conditions on you should be overturned. You may hence attend school events as normal. However, should there be a repeat of inappropriate behaviour towards staff all of the above sanctions may be applied.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors cc:

*Model Letter 4: Imposition of a ban on contacting or attending the school, pending review (sent by Headteacher)*

Recorded delivery

I have received a report from the (name of staff) about your conduct on ..... at .....

(add summary of incident and its effect on staff and pupils)

You will recollect that I have already written to you about a previous incident on (date) warning you of the consequence of any further insulting or aggressive behaviour on your part.

I must inform you that the governors, in line with our policy, will not tolerate conduct of this nature on the school premises and will act to safeguard school staff and pupils and other adults.

I am therefore writing to inform you that I am recommending imposing a ban on you attending or contacting the school. This means you may not attend school for any reason whatsoever. You must not make contact with any member of staff by telephone or e-mail. You do, however, have the right to attend one meeting per year to discuss your child's progress. This meeting will be with me. I will contact you to arrange this at the time of the next Academic Review Day.

The restrictions above are provisional until they have been reviewed by the Chair of Governors. Please consider them to be in force until you receive his confirmation.

The Chair of Governors will need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm or overturn this decision. Please send him, in writing, any comments or observations of your own within 10 working days of the date of this letter. These comments may be to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct.

If on receipt of your comments, the Chair of Governors considers that my decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of how this ban will be reviewed by the governing body.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

cc: Chair of Governors

*Model Letter 5: Letter to confirm or overturn Headteacher's decision to impose a ban (sent by chair of governors)*

Recorded delivery

Dear

The head teacher wrote to you on (date) to detail concerns about an incident when your behaviour towards (name) fell far short of what we would expect as a school. You will be aware that she has written to you previously about your behaviour towards staff.

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated ....., the contents of which I have considered carefully.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose a ban on you should be confirmed. This means you may not attend school for any reason whatsoever. You must not make contact with any member of staff by telephone or e-mail. You do, however, have the right to attend one meeting per year to discuss your child's progress. This meeting will be with the head teacher or a member of the senior team.

This decision will be reviewed in six months' time by the governing body. The Clerk to the Governors will write to you in advance of the meeting of the governing body to ask you to provide a written statement for their consideration. When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the application of conditions to attend 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.

OR

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose a ban should be overturned. You may hence attend school events as normal. However, should there be a repeat of inappropriate behaviour towards staff all of the above sanctions may be applied.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors cc:

*Model Letter 6: Letter from clerk to the governors requesting parents' statement for review by GB (sent by clerk to governors)*

Recorded delivery

Dear

The head teacher wrote to you on (date) to detail concerns about your behaviour towards school staff/students fell short of what we would expect as a school. As a result of this incident, conditions were imposed on you/a ban was imposed.

This decision will be reviewed by the governing body at their next meeting on (date).

I am writing to ask whether you would like to make a written statement to governors for their consideration in making the decision whether to remove the restriction or extend it.

If you should wish to make a written statement, please can you e-mail it to me at (address) by (date – parents should be given 10 days to respond).

Yours sincerely

Clerk to Governors

cc: Headteacher