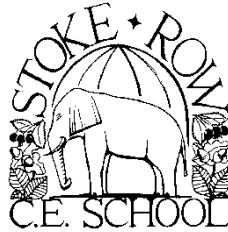


# Stoke Row CE School



## Managing Abusive Parents, Carers & Visitors Policy

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### Document Approval Record

Committee	Finance, Health & Safety
Chair of Committee	Kerrie Blaker
Approval Date	14 <sup>th</sup> November 2017
Review Date	November 2020
Annual?	N

These policies are all created in line with the Christian foundation of this school which is expressed through our five core values and our view that every child is unique and valued.

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## 1 Introduction

The ethos of Stoke Row CE Primary School encourages close links with parents and the community. The staff and governors believe 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 the school. 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. 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. We expect parents, carers and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff.

This policy is based on guidance detailed in the NAHT G104 Managing Violent and Abusive Visitors to School.

## 2 Principles:

- Day to day access to a school is within the control of the head teacher.
- Normally parents/carers (and those with parental responsibility) are granted limited access to the grounds and buildings of a school at school drop off and school pick up.
- Violence, threatening behaviour and abuse against school staff or other members of the school community will not be tolerated

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

- shouting at members of the school staff, either in person or over the telephone;
- physically intimidating a member of staff, eg standing very close to her/him;
- the use of aggressive hand gestures;
- threatening behaviour;
- shaking or holding a fist towards another person;
- swearing;
- pushing;
- hitting, eg slapping, punching and kicking;
- spitting;
- racist, sexist, homophobic or transgender comments;
- breaching the school's security procedures.

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

## 3 Practice

### **Prevention is better than cure:**

1. In the majority of cases, parents/carers become angry when they feel an injustice has occurred against their child. This often happens following an incident and the child is able to speak to their parent, often giving a one-sided and frequently inflamed view of events. It is better therefore for the member of staff directly involved to communicate the facts home *before* the pupil has chance to do this.

2. If there is a risk of confrontation, try to ensure pupils are not in the vicinity, even children of the angry parent
3. Diffusing the anger. It takes a strong will and thick skin but where possible, consider the following:

### **L.E.A.P.**

- **Listen.** Be active and try to look genuinely interested. Try to not interrupt – most parents want to vent all the way. Tell them you will make notes, to show them you're attentive. Lay down a ground rule: you will listen, but expect to do it in a calm environment otherwise the meeting will end immediately
  - **Empathise:** Even if the parent is wrong and misguided, their feelings are real. An occasional "I can see you're upset" or "I'm sorry you feel we've made the wrong decision" will help.
  - **Ask:** "Is there anything else you want me to know?"
  - **Problem solve:** suggest some resolution or at least a time-scale to seek out a resolution. Give a time frame and promise to report back.
4. If things are difficult, offer to make a cup of tea, get some water etc...the 3 minute break may serve to calm you and the parent down.

### **If the parent does not calm down, is shouting/abusive/swearing etc...**

5. If the unacceptable behaviour continues, in the first instance it may be useful to call upon a colleague to help mediate. "Before this continues, I'm going to ask a colleague to step in to help resolve the matter, give me a few minutes, please".
6. If the unacceptable behaviour continues, then the meeting should be terminated and the parent asked to leave. It is enough in law for the member of staff to feel threatened. If the parent refuses to leave, then dial 999.
7. **Always fill in incident report form**, if you have been treated in a manner which is unacceptable. The form is available in the staff room and can be found in **Appendix A**. The completed

form should be passed to the head teacher, for appropriate actions and recording.

#### **4 Remediation Procedures (including Barring Process)**

The governing body is responsible for protecting the health and safety of staff and pupils. Where there is a breach of such procedures the head teacher needs to respond in a measured way, depending on the seriousness of any inappropriate conduct e.g.

- initiate a meeting/dialogue with the individual;
- write to the visitor, describing their misconduct, explaining its impact on the school and stating its unacceptability;

If the situation cannot be resolved through discussion and mediation and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a parent or carer may be banned by the Chair of Governors from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review as defined in section 547 of the Education Act (1996)

In imposing a ban the following steps will be taken:

1. The head teacher will assemble the full facts, making sure that all those involved in any incidents, make a full written record as soon as possible.
2. The school may in the first instance write to the parent that they are minded to ban them and seek reassurance about future behaviour.

The letter will include;

- detail about the incident and why it is unacceptable.
- a date by which the parent or carer may respond in writing giving their version and why they should not be banned.
- Information as to when and how a decision will be made.

If reassurance is not forthcoming, then the school will proceed as in

3 below including details of how long the ban will last. Depending on the severity of the offence, the school may impose an immediate ban as in 3 below.

3. The parent/carer will be informed, in writing, that she/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.
4. Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the local authority and the police will be included.
5. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

## **5 Conclusion**

If a parent/carer/visitor is intimidating, threatening or aggressive towards any member of the school community any interaction will be terminated immediately and the person will be instructed to leave the premises. Further action may be taken by the school.

The local authority 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 Local Education Authority, to ensure fairness and consistency.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

Relevant incidents include trespass, nuisance or disturbance on school premises, verbal abuse, sexual or racial abuse, threats, aggression, physical violence and intentional damage to property.

Where possible, the form should be completed before any discussion between witnesses is possible, as this might lead to allegations of collusion.

This form should be completed as fully as possible please, using a continuation sheet, if necessary. For any incident involving or witnessed by a pupil or parent/carer/visitor, a member of staff should complete the form on their behalf.

The completed form should be passed to the head teacher, for appropriate action and recording.

**Date of incident** (may be different to reported and recorded date)

**Time of incident**

**Name of person reporting incident** (may be different to staff recording incident)

**Date incident reported** (may be different to incident and recorded date)

**Member of staff recording incident**

**Date incident recorded** (may be different to incident and reported date)

**Name(s) of person(s) causing incident**

(where name(s) is/are unknown, provide other details of which may allow their identification)

**Status (es)** (parents/carers/visitors/trespassers)

**Full description of incident** (e.g. names of persons involved; location; nature of any injuries; attendance of emergency services)

**Names of any witnesses**

**Statuses**

**Initial action/outcome** (e.g. informal conciliation; police intervention; warning or banning letter issued)

**Summary of subsequent actions taken by the school, including risk assessments.**

**Linked incidents** (if any)



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