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Anti-harassment Policy - managing aggressive behaviour by parents and visitors to our schools

Statement of principles

CfBT Schools Trust (CST) encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes 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.

CST 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 and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of our school staff. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

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

- shouting at members of the school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- physically intimidating a member of staff
- the use of aggressive gestures
- threatening behaviour
- racist, sexist, homophobic or transgender comments
- insults or swearing
- damage to personal property
- hitting, e.g. pushing, slapping, punching and kicking
- spitting
- breaching the school’s security procedures
- aggressive and threatening phone calls or emails
- aggressive or threatening behaviour towards staff or their families via social media

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

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

Procedure

If a parent/carer or visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Headteacher or appropriate senior staff member will usually seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the Concerns and Complaints procedures should be followed. Where all procedures have been exhausted and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of negative behaviour, 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 usually be taken:

1. The parent/carer or visitor will be informed, in writing, that she/he may be banned from the premises, and what will happen if the ban is breached, e.g. that police involvement or an injunction application may follow. The parent/carer or visitor will be given the opportunity to make written representations.
2. Further to a written response not being received or after consideration of a response (or where the incident was very serious), the parent/carer or visitor may 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.
3. Where an assault or other serious incident has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the police will be included.
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

Monitoring and Review

All situations which may or do lead to a ban from the school site will be reported by the Headteacher to the relevant Education Director and Trust Legal Lead. Education Directors will monitor the school's use of banning from the school site over the course of each year.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trust every two years.