

SHANKLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Managing Violent and Abusive Adults Policy

Policy Control Details			
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Prepared by:	Helen Brown	Signature	Date
Approved for issue by:	Gareth Pearson	Signature	Date
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Responsibility for review:	Performance Improvement Committee		

Shanklea Primary School

Managing Violent and Abusive Adults Policy

Summary

Day to day access to school is within the control of the Head Teacher, Mrs Brown. Normally parents/carers (and those with parental responsibility) are granted "limited licence" to visit the ground and buildings. All people on school property, visitors and staff, are expected to adhere to acceptable standards of behaviour, treating all others with respect.

Where incidents occur in which standards are breached, the school 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 individual, 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. withdrawal of their licence) if the misconduct is repeated;
- Impose a ban with a review after a fixed period;
- Impose a ban without review.

It is possible for the Head teacher to initiate any of these actions on their own authority, but it is less likely to lead to personal confrontation if the more serious sanctions are initiated by the Governing Body or Local Authority, as appropriate.

Introduction

Shanklea Primary School strives to be an orderly, safe place, where relationships between staff and visitors, especially parents/carers, demonstrate mutual respect and recognition of shared responsibility for pupils' welfare and educational progress. Parental involvement is an important factor in educational success and in dealing with emerging problems at an early stage.

However, on occasion, the behaviour of a few individuals can cause severe disruption or worse, resulting in abusive or aggressive behaviour towards staff, pupils, or other members of the school community.

Violence, threatening behaviour and abuse against school staff or other members of the school community must not be tolerated. All members of the school community have a right to expect that school is a safe place in which to work and learn. There is no place for violence, threatening behaviour or abuse at Shanklea Primary School. Where such behaviour does occur, the Local Authority (LA) will play a proactive role in taking all possible action to deal with it, in response to the wishes of the school. The Local Authority is responsible for protecting the health and safety of their staff and pupils in school.

In certain circumstances, this will mean the LA taking the lead in initiating action on the school's behalf with the school's support, and in other circumstances the LA is expected to support the school in action initiated by the school.

At all times the common purpose remains clear: to achieve zero tolerance of violence, threatening behaviour or abuse in school, and to ensure all members of the school community, and all visitors to the school, can be confident that they are operating within a safe environment.

In the first instance, school will ask the LA for advice on the appropriateness of the remedies available and where possible the LA should take the lead in initiating action. In circumstances where power does not lie with the LA (e.g. under the criminal law) the LA is expected to support and advise the school, removing as much of the burden from them as possible.

Statement of Principles

The governing body of Shanklea Primary school encourages close link 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 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 staff, parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of 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, 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, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking;
- Spitting;
- Breaching the school's security procedures.

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

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

Dealing with incidents

In the event of possible staff misconduct, disciplinary procedures as specified by Northumberland County Council will be followed.

If a parent/carer behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the head teacher or appropriate senior staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school's complaints procedures should be followed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a parent or carer 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/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.
2. 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.
3. The chair of governors and LA will be informed of the ban.
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

The Banning Process

The Head Teacher will need to assemble the full facts before proceeding, making sure that all those involved in any incidents, or witnesses to those incidents, make a full written record as soon as possible.

Crucial elements:

- Write to individual concerned to record in detail the incident and why it is unacceptable;
- Explain that the LA/governing body will consider banning the individual, giving them a period in which they may respond in writing giving their version and why they should not be banned;
- Tell the individual when a decision will be made.

The length of a ban

The ban should be finite in length, as only the most serious misconduct would justify an indefinite ban.

The duration needs to be sufficient to convey a clear message about the seriousness of the associated misconduct, but not so long as to be disproportionate. The aim should always be to restore "normal" relations as soon as reasonably practicable.

Even if a ban is permanent, it should be reviewed periodically, taking account of subsequently demonstrated patterns of behaviour.

What does a ban achieve?

- It confirms to the individual that the school will not tolerate misbehaviour;
- Shows the school takes the health and safety of its staff, visitors and pupils seriously;
- It provides a key element in making it easier to use legal remedies to prevent repeated misconduct, including the use of S547 of the 1996 Education Act to enable Police removal and possible prosecution of those on school premises without permission;
- It may form the basis for an application for an injunction to curtail repeated instances of misbehaviour.

Parental Rights

Every attempt should be made to maintain normal communications with parents/carers including giving them the opportunity to participate in elections for parent governors, say.

Even where a parent/carer has been banned from the school premises, they retain the right to an annual consultation in relation to the educational progress of their child/ren. However, the school may determine who will be present at the meeting (e.g. a senior member of staff might accompany the class teacher) and its location (e.g. it may well be arranged off site).

The interest of the child should continue to be paramount.

A copy of the school incident report form is attached as Annex A. It will assist with the recording of any incidents of abuse, threatening behaviour or violence against any members of the school community. A record of an incident will help in the collection of evidence where necessary, such as when proceedings are being brought against an alleged assailant. Available photographic evidence of any injuries or damage, or relevant CCTV footage, can also be helpful. Recording details of incidents will also help in reviewing the school's policy, and should ideally inform future risk assessments.

If there is an injury to staff from an assault, the employer may need to report the injury to the health and safety executive (HSE) under the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), as amended in 2012.

Section 547, Education Act 1996

Section 547 makes it an offence for a trespasser on school premises to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance, and allows for the removal and prosecution of any person believed to have committed the offence. The penalty for a person convicted of the offence is a fine of up to £500.

A parent/carer of a child attending the school normally has implied permission (limited licence) to be on the school's premises at certain times and for certain purposes but if their behaviour is unreasonable this permission may be withdrawn and they will become a trespasser.

A person who nevertheless persists in entering the school premises and displaying unreasonable behaviour may be removed and prosecuted under Section 547.

The LA may take the lead in authorising the removal of a person believed to be causing or permitting a nuisance or disturbance and may bring proceedings against them. Where the head teacher wishes this to happen the LA would be expected to do this. In all situations, the police are authorised to remove someone from school premises and to bring proceedings for an offence under this section.

Conclusion

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 Authority's education, health and safety and legal departments, to ensure fairness and consistency.

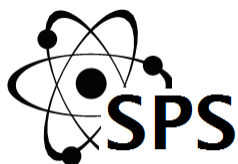
Annex A. Incident Report Form

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.

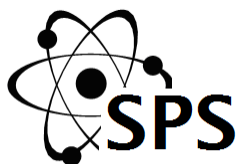


INCIDENT REPORT FORM

This form should be completed as fully as possible, using a continuation sheet if necessary, then returned to the Headteacher

Date of incident	Time of incident
Name of person reporting incident	
Date incident reported	Time incident reported
Member of staff recording incident	
Date incident recorded	Time incident recorded
Name(s) of person(s) involved in the incident (where name(s) is/are unknown, provide other details 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)	

(Continue on next page as required)



INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Full description of incident (continued)

Please indicate if a continuation sheet has been attached **Yes/No**

Names of any witnesses

Statuses

(where name(s) is/are unknown, provide other details
(parents/carers/visitors/trespassers)
which may allow their identification)

Full name

Signature

Date

Time