



HCAT

**Managing Parents
and Visitors
Conduct Policy**

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| Version Number | Version Description | Date of Revision |
|----------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1 | Original | September 2020 |
| 2 | Reviewed and Rebranded | November 2024 |
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HCAT Managing Parents and Visitors Conduct Policy

1. Introduction

The main aim of this policy is to provide a safe environment by minimising the risk of such incidents (whether they involve pupils, parents or others) and enabling incidents which do occur to be quickly and effectively dealt with. Where a partnership has been established, policy and procedures for dealing with violence, threatening and abusive behaviour by parents should be developed within the context of this.

The Board of Trustees encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and School is a positive one.

Most parents, carers and others visiting our Schools are keen to work with us and we are fortunate to have a very supportive parent body. Our parents and carers recognise that education of children is a process that involves partnership between parents, carers, teachers and the school community. Our Parents/Carers will understand the importance of being positive role models and having a good working relationship with the school to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. Therefore, we continue to welcome and encourage Parents/Carers to participate fully in the life of our 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 Board of Trustees 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.

2. Expectations

We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of School staff.

We expect Parents, Carers and Visitors to:

- Respect the School values and its caring ethos
- Act as positive role models by demonstrating respect towards other individuals and the school building and setting a good example in both speech and conduct
- Understand that both Teachers and Parents need to work together for the benefit of the students
- Seek advice from School staff to clarify a child's version of events with the school view to help resolve a situation
- Ensure the behaviour of their child/children is acceptable in all public places and the community

The aim of the policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors about the expected conduct. 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;
- Abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication
- physically intimidating a member of staff, e.g. standing very close to her/him;
- the use of aggressive hand gestures;
- threats of actual bodily harm or physical aggression to Staff, Governors, Visitors, other Parents/Carers or Students;

- harassment
- Disruptive behaviour which interferes/threatens to interfere with any activity within School / College;
- swearing; Offensive language, swearing, use of profane language, displaying anger/aggression
- pushing;
- hitting, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking;
- spitting;
- smoking and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on School / College premises.
- breaching the School / College's security procedures, accessing the premises without permission from relevant staff.
- Damaging or destroying School / College property.
- Recording conversations or meetings with staff without permission from the Principal / Head of School / College. Any sharing of recordings will breach GDPR regulations, in which case the School / College will seek legal advice.
- Offensive, derogatory or defamatory comments regarding the School / College or any of the Students/Parent/Staff on Facebook or other social media sites. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the relevant member of staff, so they can be dealt with effectively.
- Approaching a student to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this student towards their own child
- Dogs being brought on to premises (guide dogs are an exception)

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

If any of the above behaviour occurs on the school site, we may deem it is necessary to contact the appropriate authorities and if necessary, ban the offending adult from entering the school grounds. Please note - gross misconduct may result in an immediate ban from school premises.

We would expect that parents would make all persons responsible for collecting students aware of this policy.

Staff members must report any incidents to their line manager in the first instance. This must be followed up with a verbal and written statement.

3. Procedure

If a parent/carer behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Head of School 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 of School from the School premises for a period of time, subject to review. In some instances, acts may result in an immediate ban without warning.

In imposing a ban, the following steps will be taken:

- 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
- Where an act has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the local authority and the police will be included
- The CEO / Trust Board will be informed of the ban
- Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the School / College gate will be clarified.

4. Risk Assessment

This does not need to be a complicated process, but simply involves raising a number of questions to which you want answers.

A risk assessment should:

- identify and assess the risks;
- determine appropriate actions;
- implement the actions;
- monitor the results; and
- provide feedback.

It is good practice to ask staff directly about the extent of problems that they are aware of as part of the process of assessing risk. It is also helpful to consult School health and safety representatives about possible risks.

This should identify what the risks are (e.g. abuse, threatening behaviour, violence, and from whom), and who is likely to be at risk (e.g. reception staff, teachers). Identifying what the risks are and who is at risk are the crucial initial steps before considering how to manage these risks and how they can be minimised. In some cases, potential violence can be reduced and even prevented if members of staff have the skills to spot conflict before it leads to aggression and to use techniques to reduce aggression before violence occurs.

It is recommended that members of staff are offered personal safety training, which can help in:

- reducing violent attacks by parents and others;
- enabling staff to defuse aggression and prevent situations escalating;
- teaching staff to recognize verbal and nonverbal precursors to aggression and use techniques to calm a potential assailant;
- improving staff confidence in dealing with aggression and the resulting stress; and
- minimising the risk of an attack causing injury.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has produced guidance on risk assessments which is on its website.

5. The Banning Process

The Head of School 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 parent/carer/intruder to record in detail the incident and why it is unacceptable;
- explain that the Trust will consider banning the parent, giving the parent a period in which they may respond in writing giving their version and why they should not be banned;
- tell the parent when a decision will be made.

6. 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 is 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 a parent that the school will not tolerate misbehaviour.
- shows the school takes 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 use of S547 of the 1996 Education Act to enable Police removal and possible prosecution of those on School / College premises without permission;

- it may form the basis for an application for an injunction to curtail repeated instances of misbehaviour.

7. Parental Rights

Every attempt should be made to maintain normal communications with parents/carers. Even where a parent/carer has been banned from the school premises, they retain their 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 interests of the child should continue to be paramount.

8. Conclusion

The CEO / Trust Board may take action where behaviour is unacceptable or there are serious breaches of health and safety legislation.

In implementing this policy, the School / College will, as appropriate, seek advice from the Multi Academy Trust Health and Safety and Legal departments, to ensure fairness and consistency.

This Policy will be reviewed biannually.