

Response to Unacceptable Behaviour of Parents and Carers – Policy



King Henry VIII 3-19 School Ysgol 3-19 Brenin Harri'r VIII

We believe in the limitless capacity for everyone to achieve great things

Effective from: November 2023

Approved by Governors: November 2023

Next Review Due: November 2024

Introduction

At King Henry VIII 3-19 School we value the positive relationships forged with parents, carers and visitors to our school. We encourage close links with parents and the community and believe that pupils 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 pupils the behaviour we teach and expect. In general, we place a high importance on good manners, positive communication and mutual respect.

The overwhelming majority of parents, carers and visitors to King Henry VIII 3-19 School are keen to work with us positively and are supportive of our school. However, on very rare occasions the behaviour of a very small number of parents and carers falls short of what we expect on behalf of the pupils, staff and whole school community. Unfortunately, this sometimes manifests itself in aggression or abuse towards members of the school community. This can be in written communication to or about the school (including on social media), on the telephone or in face-to-face incidents.

In these situations, we expect members of staff to behave professionally, attempting to defuse the situation where possible and seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. Staff who face these situations have licence to end any conversation (face to face or on the telephone). They will then refer the incident to a member of the Senior Leadership Team 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 or be in school without fear of aggression or abuse from parents and carers. The Governors and school have a requirement to protect staff and pupils from such aggression.

When seeking a resolution to this type of issue, the progress and well-being of the parent's child(ren) will be fully considered. Actions put in place will be reasonable and proportionate. The parent and carer will have the opportunity to put their views forward at every stage. In the case of the imposition of conditions or a ban from school, robust review processes involving the Governors are in place to ensure fairness.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our school about the expectations around the conduct of all parents and visitors connected to our school. We understand that everyday frustrations can cause misunderstandings and have a negative impact on our relationships. Establishing where this happens, that we remain committed to resolving difficulties in a constructive manner through open positive dialogue is essential. In this way we can continue to flourish and progress to achieve, in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

Our school already has a code of conduct for all our employees and this code is aimed at the wider school community so that all can see and understand the expectations on the behaviour of all those connected with the school. The policy aims to clarify the types of behaviour that will not be tolerated and seeks parental sign up to these expectations. The policy also sets out the actions the school can take should this code be ignored or where breaches occur.

Definition of unacceptable behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour is aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language from a parent or visitor that makes a member of staff or pupil feel threatened or is untrue and harmful to the school's reputation. We consider that such behaviour or language from a parent or visitor presents a real risk to staff or pupils. Such behaviour can be demonstrated through face-to-face contact, on the telephone, during virtual meetings or in written communication (including social media). The following is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour:

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's normal operation or activities anywhere on the school premises.
- Any inappropriate behaviour on the school premises.
- Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper.
- Threatening in any way, a member of staff, visitor, fellow parent, carer, or pupil.
- Damaging or destroying school property.

- Sending abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communications (including on social media) to anyone within the school community.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/parents/staff/governors at the school on social media or other sites
- The use of physical, verbal or written aggression towards another adult or pupil. This includes physical punishment of your own child on school premises.

Such behaviour may constitute a criminal offence and the school may report such offences to the Police as required.

Social Media

The internet provides a range of social media tools that allow users to interact with one another; from rediscovering friends on social networking sites such as *Facebook* to keeping up with other people's lives on *Twitter* and maintaining pages on internet encyclopaedias such as *Wikipedia*. While recognising the benefits of this medium for new opportunities of communication, this policy sets out the principles that pupils, staff and the wider school community are expected to follow when using social media. It is crucial that all stakeholders of King Henry VIII 3-19 School, including pupils, parents, staff and the public at large have confidence in the school. The principles set out in this policy are designed to ensure that the use of social media is responsibly undertaken and that confidentiality of pupils and staff and the reputation of the school are safeguarded.

Appropriate use of social networking sites

The School recognises that many parents and other family members will have personal social networking accounts, which they might use to discuss/share views about school issues with friends and acquaintances. As a guide, individuals should consider the following prior to posting any information on social networking sites about the School, its staff, governors, its pupils, or anyone else associated with the School:

- Is the social networking site the appropriate channel to raise concerns, or express these views?
- Would private and confidential discussions with the School be more appropriate, even the use of the school's complaints policy? e.g. if there are serious allegations being made/concerns being raised. Social media/internet sites should not be used to name individuals and make abusive comments about those people. Please contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have.
- Are such comments likely to cause emotional or reputational harm to individuals, particularly if the School has not yet had a chance to investigate a complaint?
- The reputational impact that the posting of such material may have to the School; any detrimental harm that the School may suffer as a result of the posting; and the impact that such a posting may have on pupils' learning.

Inappropriate use of social networking sites by parents

Although social networking sites may appear to be the quickest and easiest ways to express frustrations or concerns, it is rarely appropriate to do so. Other channels, such as private and confidential discussion are most appropriate, or the use of the school complaints policy.

The school considers the following examples to be inappropriate uses of social networking sites.

- Making allegations about the school, which will harm its reputation
- Making allegations about pupils at the School/cyber bullying;
- Making complaints about the School/staff at the School;
- Posting negative/offensive comments about specific pupils/staff at the School;
- Posting racist comments;
- Posting comments which threaten violence.

The School will always try to deal with concerns raised by parents in a professional and appropriate manner and understands that parents may not always realise when they have used social networking sites inappropriately. Therefore, as a first step, the School will usually discuss the matter with the parent to try and resolve the matter and to ask that the relevant information be removed from the social networking site in question. If the parent refuses to do this and continues to use social networking sites in a manner the School considers inappropriate the School may take further action in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

The school's approach to dealing with incidents

If a parent/carer/visitor behaves in an unacceptable way that is harmful to the school reputation or towards a member of the school community, the Headteacher or appropriate senior leader will assess the level of risk before deciding on a future course of action. The course of action will be reasonable and commensurate with the assessed level of risk.

Recording of Incidents

Staff and pupils subject to abuse and witnesses will make written statements about incident(s) which will be kept in a file with subsequent letters. This file will be kept by the office staff. Depending on an assessment of the risk of retaliation to witnesses or individuals, statements made by adults may be made available to the parent if they request it. This also applies to CCTV where available.

The School's response

Following the completion of the risk assessment, the Headteacher will decide the level of action to be taken. Actions will include the following:

1. Clarify to the parent what is considered acceptable behaviour by the school

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

2. Invite the parent to an informal meeting to discuss events

This could be helpful to discuss and diffuse the situation. 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. Consideration should be given to the seating arrangements, and care taken to ensure exits cannot be blocked by a parent who could potentially become aggressive.

The main points of discussion and any agreed actions should be noted, and a follow-up letter or e-mail sent to confirm the school's expectations and any agreed actions.

3. Impose conditions on the parent'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 and carers of enrolled pupils have an 'implied licence' to come onto school premises at certain stated times. It is for schools to define and set out the extent of such access. Depending of the type, level or frequency of the unacceptable behaviour, the school may consider imposing conditions on the parent'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 SLT
- Restricting contact by telephone to named members of the senior leadership team
- Restricting written communications to named members of the senior leadership team
- Restricting attendance at school events to those where the parent will be accompanied by a member of the senior leadership of the school
- Any other restriction as deemed reasonable and proportionate by the Headteacher.

In this case the parent will be informed by letter from the Headteacher the details of the conditions that are being imposed. The parent would then be given 10 working days from the date of that letter to make representations in writing or in person about the conditions to the Chair of the Governing Body. The Chair of Governing Body will, with support of a panel, then decide whether to confirm or remove the conditions. This would be communicated to the parent in writing within 10 working days of the date of the parent's/carer's letter.

If the decision is to confirm the conditions imposed, this decision will be reviewed by the School after approximately six months (and every six months after that, if appropriate). The parent will be invited to make written representation to the Governing Body. This and the evidence from the Headteacher will be considered at a meeting of the full Governing Body. Governors may decide to maintain, extend or remove the conditions. The decision of the review will be communicated to the parent by the clerk to the Governors within 10 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 parent'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 parent's co-operation with the school in other respects.

4. Imposing a ban

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

In these circumstances, the individual would be advised in writing by the Headteacher that a provisional ban is being imposed. The parent would then be given 10 working days from the date of that letter to make representations about the ban in writing to the Chair of Governors.

The Chair of Governors would then decide, with a panel, whether to confirm or remove the ban. This would be communicated to the parent in writing within 10 working days of the receipt of their letter.

If the 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 six months after that, if appropriate). The parent/carer will be invited to make written representation to the Governors; this and the evidence from the Headteacher will be considered at a meeting of the full Governing Body meeting. Governors may decide to remove the ban, extend the ban or impose conditions on parent's/carer's access to the school. The decision of the review will be communicated to the parent/carer by the clerk to the Governors within 10 days of the date of the meeting.

In deciding whether to remove or extend the ban or impose conditions, Governors will consider the extent of the parent's/carer's compliance with the ban, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from him/her and any evidence of the parent's co-operation with the school in other respects.

5. Removal from school

Parents and Carers who have been banned from the school premises and continue to cause a nuisance will be considered as trespassers. In these circumstances the offender may be removed from school. The school may need to contact the Police in this situation. Legal proceedings may be brought against this person.

6. Complaints policy

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

7. Monitoring by the Governing Body

This policy is reviewed annually by the Governing Body.

All actions taken under this policy are also monitored by the Governors. Details of incidents are reported to the Governors as part of the Headteachers Safeguarding report. Parents' names and details are not identified in the meeting.

Thank you

Thank you for abiding by this policy in our school. Together we create a positive and uplifting environment not only for the children but also all who work and visit our school.

Please note, parents and carers must make sure all family members or persons attending school site are aware of this policy.

Appendices

Reminder

Model letter 1: This is an initial letter from the Headteacher to ensure the parent or carer is clear about behaviour standards expected by the school.

Warning

Model letter 2: This letter contains a warning about further action if there are other incidents. The letter invites a written response and suggests a meeting with a senior leader.

Imposing conditions on the parent's attendance at school events

Model letter 3: 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 4: Letter from the Chair of Governors informing parent or carer of the decision to confirm or remove the conditions

Imposing a ban

Model letter 5: 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 6: Letter from the Chair of Governors informing parent or carers of the decision to confirm or remove ban

Reviewing the decision to impose conditions or impose a ban

Model Letter 7: Letter from the school requesting a statement from parents to the Governing Body for review of decision.

Model letter 8: Letter from the school to confirm the outcome of further reviews of decisions where the imposition of conditions/ban has been extended or removed.

Model Letter 1: Reminder (sent by Headteacher) – to be adjusted as necessary

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 what we would expect of a parent/carer of a pupil at King Henry VIII 3-19 School.

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

I write to remind you about the behaviour standards expected by the school. Our school is underpinned by a set of positive shared values including Respect, Harmony, and Kindness. These are co-constructed by pupils, families, and staff, to ensure that all our rights to be safe, feel safe, and to learn are achieved.

I wish to give you an opportunity to give me in writing any comments or observations of your own in relation to this report. 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 you to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the situation and how it can be avoided in the future.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Model Letter 2: Warning (sent by Headteacher) – to be adjusted as necessary

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 what we would expect of a parent/carer of a student or visitor at King Henry VIII 3-19 School.

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

I must inform you that the school will not tolerate aggression towards members of the school community and will act to protect its staff and pupils 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 you to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the situation and how it can be avoided in the future.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Model Letter 3: Imposing conditions on the parent's attendance at school events, pending review (sent by Headteacher) – to be adjusted as necessary

Dear

I have received a report from *(name of staff member)* 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 unacceptable / insulting or aggressive behaviour on your part)

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

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 (deputy headteacher) by email
- ✓ 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 a Governing Body panel. Please consider them to be in force until you receive their confirmation.

This panel, will need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm or overturn this decision. You may, if you wish, send to the Chair 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. The Chair will then write to you with the outcome of their decision.

If on receipt of your comments, the Governors confirm that my decision should be upheld, you will be supplied with details of how the conditions will be reviewed by the full Governing Body.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Model Letter 4: Letter to confirm or overturn Headteacher's decision to impose conditions (sent by chair of Governing Body) – to amend as necessary

Dear

..... wrote to you on (*date*) to detail concerns about an incident when your behaviour towards (name) fell short of what we would expect on behalf of the children, staff and the school community. You will be aware that s/he has written to you previously about your behaviour towards staff/ others.

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. We 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 / others all of the above sanctions may be applied.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governing Body

cc: Headteacher

Model Letter 5: Imposition of a ban on contacting or attending the school, pending review (sent by Headteacher) – to amend as necessary

Dear

I have received a report from the *(name of staff member)* 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 unacceptable/ 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 defend school staff and pupils.

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 a member of the senior leadership team. I will contact you to arrange this at the time of the next Parents' Evening.

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

The Governors panel, will need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm or overturn this decision. Please send to the Chair, 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 Governors panel will consider if my decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of how this ban will be reviewed by the Full Governing Body.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

cc: Chair of Governors

Model Letter 6: Letter to confirm or overturn Headteacher's decision to impose a ban (sent by chair of Governing Body) – to be amended as necessary

Dear

..... 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 s/he 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 a member of the senior team.

This decision will be reviewed in six months' time by the Full Governing Body. We will write to you in advance of the meeting of the Full 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 cooperation 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 Governing Body

cc: Headteacher

Model Letter 7: Letter from Governing Body requesting parents' statement for review by the Governors panel (sent by Governing Body) – to be amended as necessary

Dear

..... 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 Full Governing Body at their next meeting on *(date)*.

I am writing to ask whether you would like to make a written statement to Governing Body 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

Chair of the Governing Body

cc: Headteacher

Model Letter 8: Letter detailing outcome of Full Governing Body review (sent by Chair of Governors) – to be amended as necessary

Dear

I wrote to you on *(date)* to request a statement to enable Governors to review the school's decision to impose conditions/ban you from attending school premises.

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated, the contents of which were considered carefully by the Governors at their meeting on *(date)*.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report (and your letter), Governors have determined that the decision to impose conditions/ban you from attending or contacting school attend should be confirmed. The conditions of your attendance on site are as follows:

- ✓ 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 or (*named contacts*)
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Any other condition imposed

OR

- You must not attend any event in school except for an annual meeting about your child's progress. This meeting will be conducted by a member of the senior leadership team.
- You may not contact by telephone or in writing any member of staff.

This decision will be reviewed again in six months' time. 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 cooperation with the school in other respects.

OR

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Headteacher's report and your letter, Governors have determined that you should once again be allowed to attend parents' events as usual. All conditions have been removed. However, should there be a repeat of inappropriate behaviour towards staff this decision may be revoked.

Yours sincerely

Chair of the Governing Body

cc: Headteacher

Equality Statement

This school recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals and we will work actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting good relations and mutual respect within our community and between pupils, parents / carers, staff, governors and partners.

We will also work to create equal access to support, for everyone, irrespective of ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh, BSL or any other language, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.