



POLICY ON MANAGING VIOLENT AND ABUSIVE VISITORS

Statement of principles

The governing body of Abbot's Lea School encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes students benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one.

The vast majority of parents, carers and others for vast majority of time, whilst 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 – in person, in writing, in public or on social networking sites, aggression, verbal and/or physical abuse or slanderous remarks towards members of school staff or the wider school community may occur.

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.

All members of staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse, and, in an extreme case, all have a right to appropriate self-defence.

Managing violent and abusive visitors

We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff at all times.

This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

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

- Shouting at members of the school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- Physically intimidating a member of staff (e.g. standing very close to them)

- The use of aggressive hand gestures
- Threatening behaviour
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Swearing or using offensive language – directly, in writing, over the phone or via electronic communication. This includes slanderous comments made in the public domain and online whether directed at the staff member or said about them in the public domain
- Pushing
- Hitting (e.g. slapping, punching and kicking)
- Spitting
- Breaching the school’s security procedures.

This is not an exhaustive list; it seeks to provide illustrations of the range of such behaviour.

Unacceptable behaviour may also result in the employing body and/or the police being informed of the incident.

Procedure to be followed

At all times should situations deemed to be dangerous or illegal arise on the school premises, any member of staff, disregard of their job role, is empowered to call the police requesting the police intervention to help maintain public order.

In all other cases:

If a visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the following steps will be followed:

- Member of staff reports the matter to the Headteacher
- Headteacher will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation
- If it is appropriate, the school’s complaints procedures should be followed
- Where all relevant procedures have been exhausted and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a visitor (including a parent or care of an existing student) may be banned by the Headteacher from the school’s premises for a defined period of time.

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

1. The visitor will be informed, in writing, that they are banned from the school’s premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached e.g. police involvement or an injunction application may follow
2. Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating the matter has been reported to the employing body and the police will be included
3. The chair of governors will be informed of the ban
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for students being delivered to and collected from the school gates will be clarified.

Conclusion

The employing body may take action where behaviour is unacceptable, or there are serious breaches of a home-school code of conduct or health and safety legislation.

In implementing this policy, the school will, as appropriate, seek advice from the employing body's education, health and safety, and legal departments to ensure fairness and consistency.

The policy will be reviewed annually and/or following each incident where the policy needed to be used.