

Keeping School Safe from Abuse, Threats and Violence Policy



Groveside
School

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Document History

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1. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The ethos of Groveside School encourages close links with parents and the community. Team Members and Governors believe 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 team or the wider school community.

The Governing Body expects and requires its members of the team 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 team members 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 school team members. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

2. BEHAVIOUR

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

- shouting at members of the school team members, parents or children either in person or over the telephone;
- physically intimidating a member of the school team, parent or child e.g. standing very close to her/him;
- the use of aggressive hand gestures;
- threatening behaviour;
- shaking or holding a fist towards another person;
- swearing;
- using abusive/ offensive language
- pushing;
- hitting, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking;
- spitting;
- racist, sexist, homophobic or transgender comments;
- 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.

3. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED

If a parent/carers or visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Headteacher or appropriate senior team member will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation, and if the unacceptable behaviour continues, terminate the meeting and ask the visitor to leave the premises. 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 Headteacher/Chair of Governors/Regional Director from the school premises for a period of time,

subject to review as defined in section 547 of the Education Act (1996). General tips for dealing with confrontation and aggression can be found in Appendix 1.

In imposing a ban the following steps will be taken:

1. The school may in the first instance warn the parent that they are minded to ban them and seek reassurance about future behaviour. If reassurance is not forthcoming, then the school will proceed as in 2 below including details of how long the ban will last. Depending on the severity of the offence, the school may impose an immediate ban as in 2 below.
2. The parent/carer will be informed, in writing, that they are 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 has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the local authority and the police will be included.
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

4. CONCLUSION

If a parent/carer/visitor is intimidating, threatening or aggressive towards any member of the school community any interaction will be terminated immediately, and the person will be instructed to leave the premises. Further action may be taken by the school.

The Local Authority and/or Outcomes First Group may take action where behaviour is unacceptable or there are serious breaches of our home-school agreement or health and safety policy. In implementing this policy, the school will, as appropriate, seek advice from the Outcomes First Group, to ensure fairness and consistency.

APPENDIX 1

General Tips for Dealing with Confrontation and Aggression

Groveside School is an SEMH school and pupils can struggle to manage their emotions. As a school, team follow the Trauma Informed and Neurodivergence Affirming Person Centred Behaviour Policy. This guidance is aimed to reduce the risk from parents or visitors to the school site. The risk from such incidents can be reduced by the simple precautions outlined below. Please note that this guidance is intended as advice only. It is not exhaustive and is not intended as the authorised Groveside School procedure that must be adopted.

- Always try to treat people with respect, regardless of their behaviour.
- Stay as calm as possible; it can keep tensions from escalating and may help defuse the situation.
- Try to avoid using the phrase “calm down” as this may suggest to the aggressor that the team member has failed to grasp the importance of the situation.
- Attempt to show empathy and concern. For example; by saying "I can see your frustration, and I'm frustrated too. Unfortunately, the expectations are..."
- Rather than insisting that you are right, and the other person is wrong, you should let the person know they see the situation differently. For example, you could say "I can see we don't see this the same way". You could also consider bringing in another person who could help.
- If a person is verbally abusive, you should tell them you will be able to help them better if they lower their voice and stop attacking.
- Do not promise or suggest outcomes which are not possible to get out of a difficult situation.
- In one-to-one situations where confrontation is thought to be a possibility, try to maintain a safe distance from the other person without appearing stand-offish e.g. sit nearest the door and if possible, at the other side of a desk.
- Fetching another colleague who may be able to assist in the discussion.
- Getting a drink for themselves and/or the other person.
- Requiring the use of the bathroom.
- Politely excuse themselves giving no reason.
- The team member may then return to continue the interview/discussion or bring a colleague or colleagues to assist or inform the person that the interview has been terminated.

Dealing with Physical Violence

Where it is suspected that violence might ensue the discussion or interview should be suspended or terminated immediately by the above means. However, should a physical assault actually occur:

- Attempt to get away from the attacker at the first available opportunity, preferably into another area where there are other people.
- Attempt to make as much noise as possible and shout for help.
- As a last resort, people are permitted by law to use reasonable force to defend themselves, but it is always best not to attempt to engage in physical or verbal confrontation with anyone.