



St Mary's C of E Primary School Challenging Visitors Policy – Autumn 2018

Introduction

St Marys C of E Primary School will not tolerate physical or verbal abuse or aggressive behaviour directed towards any member of staff, a pupil, visitor or volunteer originating from a parent, carer or member of the public and will take appropriate action to calm and diffuse any situation that may arise in a fair and consistent manner.

Where conflict cannot be resolved or diffused or there is the possibility of imminent physical harm towards an individual or school property, the school reserves the right to call upon the Police to intervene. The school also reserves the right to consider banning an individual from school premises as a result of their abusive or aggressive behaviour.

Aims

- To protect all teaching and non-teaching staff and pupils, visitors and volunteers at St Mary's C of E Primary School from potential physical/verbal or emotional abuse.
- To defuse the potential conflict situation as far as possible.
- To deal fairly and fully with any complaint.
- To inform the complainants in a non-aggressive but firm manner of the results of any enquiry.
- To inform the complainant of their right of appeal to the Governing Body if a complaint is not resolved by the School (via a letter to the Chair of Governors).
- To ensure that, where a ban from the school premises is considered, it is fair, consistent and proportionate to the incident and that the correct procedure is followed.

Procedure

On the School Premises

If a parent, carer or member of the public begins to exhibit aggressive or abusive behaviour towards any member of staff, a pupil, visitor or volunteer whilst on the school premises, the nearest member of staff shall:

- Contact the most senior member of staff possible and inform them of the situation. Where possible the senior member of staff will attend and take charge of further actions. The complainant **MUST NOT** be allowed access to a staff member about whom they are complaining.

If it is safe to do so, the senior member of staff shall:

- Try to get the complainant to sit down quietly in a private situation (office etc.) invite another member of staff to join them. Leave clear access to the door, leaving the door open. If this is not possible, ensure the area is cleared of unnecessary people (pupils, staff or visitors) who could be at risk from harm should the situation escalate.
- Explain that what the complainant is saying is important, that the individual they are concerned about is not available but that the school wishes to hear what they have to say.
- Take notes whilst the complainant is speaking and shall check with the complaint both during and at the end of their statement to ensure that the information they have provided has been recorded correctly.
- Explain that the information they have provided has been taken seriously and will have to be passed to the Headteacher who will investigate and respond directly to them. Confirmation that the school has the complainant's correct contact details shall be obtained.



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- Explain that the investigation may take several days but that the Headteacher will contact them.
- Explain that if they are not satisfied with the reply from the Headteacher they are entitled to take their complaint to the Schools Governing Body.
- Offer a copy of the schools 'SCC – A brief guide to schools complaints' and the 'Responding to Concerns about Surrey County Council School's' leaflet held on the schools website.
- Try to get them to leave in a calm and quiet manner.

If at any stage matters start to get out of control:-

- i) the interview shall be terminated as politely as possible**
- ii) additional help shall be summoned**

In extreme cases (e.g. threatened or actual physical violence or assault, refusal to leave the premises etc.) the senior member of staff shall summon the Police immediately.

Over the Telephone

If a parent, carer or member of the public begins to exhibit aggressive or abusive behaviour (e.g. use of foul language or verbal threats) towards any member of staff during a telephone call, the member of staff shall:

- Calmly state the language used is unacceptable and that they will end the call if it continues.
- Try to establish the name and contact details of the complainant (and the nature of the complaint if possible) and state that the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will return their call as soon as possible.
- End the call. Make notes of what was said immediately on termination of the call and then report the incident to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.
- The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will contact the complainant to establish the nature of the complaint and try to resolve the issue.

Written Abuse

If a member of staff receives written correspondence (e.g. letter, e-mail or text) of a threatening or abusive nature from a parent, carer or member of the public, this shall be reported immediately to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher and a copy retained as evidence.

The receiving member of staff will not reply to the correspondence without first agreeing the response with the School's Leadership Team member (or, in preference, the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will respond on their behalf). Whilst the school will make every effort to resolve any issue raised by the complainant, consideration may also be given to involving the Police, especially where threats of violence have been made.

Banning an Individual from the School Premises

The school reserves the right to impose a temporary or permanent ban from the school premises on any parent/carer or member of the public who has demonstrated aggressive or abusive behaviour towards any member of staff, pupil, visitor or volunteer at the school. The decision shall be made by the Headteacher



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in consultation with the Chair of Governors and the length of any ban shall be appropriate to the nature and circumstances of the incident.

In the case of a parent/carer, prior to a ban being imposed (except in urgent situations), the Headteacher shall write to the individual indicating that a ban from the premises is being considered, stating the reasons for this and the date (usually 5 school days) by which any written representations by the individual should be received by the school before the decision is made.

In urgent situations, the Headteacher may impose an immediate **temporary** ban in writing and provide the parent/carer the opportunity to make written representations (within 10 school days) prior to formalising any extension to the ban.

Where the decision to impose a ban is made, notification of the ban shall be in writing and shall clearly state:

- The reason for the ban being imposed.
- The date of commencement of the ban.
- A date by which any written representation by the individual should be received by the school.
- A date for review of the ban and how this will be arranged (including any preparation that may be required by the school – e.g. a written apology).
- Provision to be made (if a parent or carer) for access to their child during the school day (e.g. should an emergency occur) and the process to be followed should the parent/carer wish to contact the school or need to attend meetings at the school.
- What action will be taken to remove the individual from the premises should the ban be breached*.

The **maximum** period before a review of a ban will be 20 school days. The banned individual will be invited to make written representations and to attend a review meeting (accompanied by a friend or relative if required) with the Headteacher and a panel of Governors (this may take place away from the school site if appropriate). The Governors Panel will review the ban and consider whether to lift it, make it permanent or continue it for a specified period.

The Headteacher may remove the ban at any time prior to the review date if appropriate resolution has been achieved. Any ban imposed will not prevent or affect the outcome of the schools investigation into any complaints raised by the individual concerned. These will be handled as per the 'Responding to Concerns about Surrey County Council Schools' literature.

Review and Monitoring

This Policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every three years. All incidences of aggressive or abusive behaviour directed towards staff, pupils, visitors or volunteers by a Parents/Carer or member of the public will be recorded and reported to the Governing Body to inform review of this policy.

*Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 states that any person unlawfully present on the premises and causing or permitting nuisance or disturbance to the annoyance of persons who lawfully use the premises is guilty of an offence, may be removed from the premises by a police constable or authorised person and is liable to be fined.

Policy written by: Katie Creedon (School Business Manager)

Next review due: Autumn 2019