North Star

Unacceptable and Abusive Behaviour Policy for all Visiting Adults

Reviewed in Summer 2026
Next review Summer 2027

Introduction
The Local Governing Body of Rushall Primary and Oakwood School encourages close links with parents and the community. It believes 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 staff or the wider school community.

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.

However, all members of staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse, and, in extreme cases, the right to use appropriate self-defence.

We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable in person, on the telephone and via social media.

All of the above is applicable to the children and parents of our school. They have the right to come to school without the fear of aggressive and intimidating behaviour. All children and their families have the right to feel safe within our school.

At all times the common purpose remains clear: to achieve zero tolerance of violence, threatening behaviour or abuse in schools, and to ensure all members of the school community, and all visitors to the school, can be confident that they are operating within a safe environment.

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated towards school staff, other parents/visitors and children:

- Shouting, either in person or over the telephone
- Physically intimidating e.g. standing very close to her/him
- The use of aggressive hand gestures
- Threatening behaviour
- Shaking or holding a fist or finger towards another person
- Swearing
- Pushing
- Hitting, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking
- Spitting
- Discriminatory and aggressive comments, either in person, during phone calls or online (emails/social media, including WhatsApp groups)
- 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.

Procedure to be followed
If a parent/carer/visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Executive Headteacher/Head of School or appropriate senior member of 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/carer/visitor may be banned by the Executive Headteacher/Head of School from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review.

In imposing a ban the following steps will be taken:

1. The parent/carer/visitor 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.
2. 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.
3. The chair of governors/LA will be informed of the ban
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

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 that 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 the1996 Education Act to enable Police removal and possible prosecution of those on school premises without permission
- It may form the basis for an application for an injunction to curtail repeated instances of misbehaviour.

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).

Options for the Executive Headteacher/Head of School
After evaluating all available information, and any other relevant factors, there are several actions the Executive Headteacher/Head of School may wish to take.

Inviting the parent/carer/visitor to a meeting to discuss events
This could be helpful where a planned and structured meeting has either not been held before or has previously been productive. Skilled facilitators may need to be used. A full restorative meeting may be considered, but if it is not safe to bring all the parties together at a meeting, a restorative process can still take place through the exchange of information. The safety and well-being of those attending such a meeting must be carefully considered. It is strongly recommended that members of school staff should 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 sent to confirm the school's expectations and any agreed actions. Some parents may covertly record meetings and then seek to use the information obtained to support their case, and therefore schools should state explicitly that information obtained without permission will not be permissible.

Clarifying to the parent/carer/visitor 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 at a meeting, or by letter, however any verbal explanation should be followed by a written confirmation of the discussion and the standards of behaviour outlined.

Forming strategies to manage future situations of potential conflict
It is sometimes possible to identify situations of potential conflict and to plan for these in a way that minimises potential risks. For example, where a parent persistently engages in arguments with staff at the beginning or end of the school day, the parent could be informed that any discussions with school staff must be held by prior appointment. Alternatively, the parent may be asked not to approach the class teacher, but should instead arrange to meet the Executive Headteacher/Head of School (or other member of the senior leadership team), who will deal with their concerns. In more serious cases a further option may be to advise the parent that in future their concerns should be dealt with by written communication. Any such arrangements should be confirmed in writing to the parent.

Withdrawing permission for the parent/carer/visitor to enter the school site and/or buildings
In more serious cases of actual or threatened aggression/violence, or persistent abuse/intimidation, the Executive Headteacher/Head of School may need to consider whether it is safe for the parent to continue to come onto the school site or enter the buildings. **In such circumstances, it is strongly recommended that the Executive Headteacher/Head of School first consult with the trust's legal department.**

Cases of actual assault will be reported to the Police and local authority by completing a health and safety event report.

Calling for Police assistance
In an emergency, Police assistance should be sought. In cases where a ban is in place but is ignored and the person comes onto the school site, the police should be notified immediately. Staff will need to be aware of the ban and have agreed procedures in place should the person come onto the school site.

In situations where there is no immediate threat to staff, pupils, other members of the school community or the school's property, the Executive Headteacher/Head of School may still wish to make their local community police officer (e.g. neighbourhood support team, youth intervention officer) aware of the situation.

The Police could give consideration to warning the offender of formal action, which may include legal proceedings.

Legal proceedings
Where individuals persist in coming onto the school site even when permission to do so has been withdrawn, it is possible for legal proceedings to be pursued.

Record keeping
There will be clear and detailed records of all events which must be kept up to date. Any witness statements (where appropriate) and notes of any subsequent meetings held to discuss the events should also be retained. Notes should be signed and dated.

Any physical evidence should be bagged and labelled, and witnesses should be asked to make a record of exactly what they saw and heard at the earliest opportunity.

It is also advisable to ensure that in every case, even where a formal letter is not required, parents receive a written confirmation of the events and the Executive Headteacher's/Head of School's response.

If the Police are asked to deal with an incident as a criminal investigation, there are a number of actions that may thwart this process. Witness details should not be made known to suspected offenders or their families. Groups of witnesses or suspects should not be left together, or allowed to discuss what happened, before the police interview them. If in doubt always seek the advice of the police officer first.

Support for employees
If a member of staff is unfortunate enough to be one of the very small, minority subject to serious physical and/or verbal abuse there are a variety of sources of potential support available to them.

In such circumstances the immediate and ongoing support of colleagues will be invaluable.

Conclusion

The local authority itself may take action where behaviour is unacceptable or there are serious breaches of our home-school code of conduct or health and safety legislation.

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

This Policy is based on the NAHT Model Policy and guidance and will be reviewed annually.

Appendix A

Dealing with abusive telephone calls

Sometimes staff may have to deal with challenging, abusive, aggressive or threatening telephone calls. It is unacceptable for any member of staff to be subjected to such abuse but staff may not know how to handle such a telephone call. This guidance has been produced to assist staff if they are faced with such a situation.
To reduce the likelihood of callers becoming abusive staff should conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner and make every attempt to meet the needs of the caller. Staff should also have the confidence that it is acceptable to end an abusive telephone call.

- Always remain calm and polite
- Stay in control of the situation
- Actively listen – repeat information back to the caller to test understanding of the issue and gain their agreement
- Inform the caller they are trying to help them
- Be positive and say what you can do
- Be clear and avoid using jargon
- If necessary, apologise for an error and take action to put it right
- If you have to go and get some information, let the caller know why you are putting them on hold and do not leave them on hold for a long time. Update them as necessary
- Make notes of the conversation
- Follow the procedure below if appropriate
- Refer to the caller to the Executive Headteacher /Head of School
- Never respond in the same manner as an abusive caller
- Take it personally
- Allow yourself to be bullied
- Slam the phone down.

Script for abusive telephone calls

When the caller starts to raise their voice/be abusive:
Mr/Mrs/Ms...please don't raise your voice/swear at me, I am not raising my voice/being rude to you. If you continue to raise your voice/be rude to me then I will be forced to terminate the call.

When the caller continues to raise their voice/be abusive:
Mr/Mrs/Ms… I understand you are upset/frustrated however I am not prepared to continue to be shouted/sworn at so you can either call back when you have calmed down or if you prefer you can put your views in writing.

If, despite the two warnings above, the caller continues to raise their voice/be abusive:
Mr/Mrs/Ms.. I advised you earlier during this call about raising your voice/swearing and you have continued to do this, so I am afraid I am going to have to terminate this call. **Hang up.**

Further actions:
Make a written note of the telephone call or use the incident report form and report the incident to the Executive Headteacher/Head of School.

Appendix B

Abuse/bullying using cyber technology

Staff in schools may become targets of cyber abuse/bullying and, like other forms of bullying, it can have a significant impact on their health, well-being and self-confidence. Protecting staff from abuse is best done within a prevention framework, including whole school policies and appropriate practices.

Cyber abuse/bullying may consist of threats, harassment, embarrassment, humiliation, defamation or impersonation. It may take the form of general insults, or prejudice based abuse, e.g. homophobic, sexist, racist or other forms of discrimination. It may involve email, virtual learning environments, chat rooms, websites, social networking sites, mobile and fixed-point phones, digital cameras, games and virtual world sites.

Abuse using cyber technology can occur at any time and incidents can intrude into the victim's private life. The audience for such messages can be very large and can be reached rapidly. The content of electronically forwarded messages is hard to control and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for the victim to move on.

The North Star Federation endorses the decision to operate a zero tolerance policy towards direct or indirect harassment or assault against any member of staff, volunteers and governors. This includes the use of social media and other forms of electronic communications to facilitate the act.

Cyberbullying and the law

While there is not a specific criminal offence called cyberbullying, activities can be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including:

- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986
- The Defamation Acts 1952 and 1996

It is the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees. Incidents that are related to employment, even those taking place outside the hours or place of work may fall under the responsibility of the employer.

Effectively tackling abuse using cyber technology

The North Star Federation behaviour policies and procedures explicitly refer to and outline how the school will deal with cyber abuse/ bullying of both staff and pupils.
They include:

- Rules on the use of equipment software and network access provided by the school,
- The use of staff and pupil owned equipment and internet access routes, where they are used on school premises and within school hours, e.g. mobile phones, digital cameras and laptops acceptable behaviour including behaviour outside of school e.g. use of social networking services and other sites, with regard to harming others and bringing the school into disrepute.

Appendix C

Responding to incidents

Staff should never retaliate i.e. personally engage with cyberbullying incidents.

- Keep any records of abuse – texts, emails, voice mails, or instant messages. Take screen prints of messages or web pages. Record the time, date and address of the site.
- Inform the appropriate person e.g. Executive Headteacher/Head of School at the earliest opportunity.
- Where the perpetrator is known to be a current pupil or co-worker, this should be dealt with through the school's own behaviour management / disciplinary procedures.
- Monitoring and confiscation must be appropriate and proportionate - parents, employees and learners should be made aware in advance of any monitoring (for example, of email or internet use) or the circumstances under which confiscation might take place.
- A designated member of the leadership team should contact the Police where it appears that a law has been broken – for example, where death threats, assault, or racially motivated criminal offences are involved. Where a potential criminal offence has been identified, the school should ensure that any internal investigation does not interfere with police inquiries. School staff are of course able to report incidents directly to the police.

The Legal department at Walsall Council are available to offer support and advice.

Getting offensive content taken down

Where online content is upsetting / inappropriate and the person(s) responsible for posting is known, the quickest way to get material taken down is likely to be to ensure that the person who posted it understands why the material is unacceptable and to request that they remove it.

If the person responsible has not been identified, or will not take the material down, the school will need to contact the host (i.e. the social networking site) to make a request to get the content taken down. The material posted may breach the service provider's terms and conditions of use and can then be removed.

It is important to be clear about where the content is – for example by taking a screen capture of the material that includes the URL or web address. If you are requesting they take down material that is not illegal, be clear how it contravenes the site's terms and conditions. In cases of actual/suspected illegal content, the school should contact the police.

Appendix D

Incident report form

Relevant incidents include trespass, nuisance or disturbance on school premises, verbal abuse, sexual or racial abuse, threats, aggression, physical violence and intentional damage to property.

Where possible, the form should be completed before any discussion between witnesses is possible, as this might lead to allegations of collusion.

This form should be completed as fully as possible please, using a continuation sheet, if necessary. For any incident involving or witnessed by a pupil or parent/carer/visitor, a member of staff should complete the form on their behalf.

The completed form should be passed to the Executive Headteacher/ Head of School, for appropriate action and recording.

Date of incident	
Time of incident	
Name of person reporting incident	
Date incident reported	
Member of staff recording incident	
Date incident recorded	
Name(s) of person(s) causing incident (where name(s) is/are unknown, provide other details of which may allow their identification)	
Status(es) (parents/carers/visitors/trespassers)	
Full description of incident (e.g. names of persons involved; location; nature of any injuries; attendance of emergency services)	
Witnesses to the incident:	

Appendix E

Letter to be sent to parents/carers/visitors displaying unacceptable and abusive visitors (letter headed paper)

Date

Dear

At Rushall Primary School, all members of the school community have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse. We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of our school community. Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated towards school staff, other parents/visitors and children:

- Shouting, either in person or over the telephone
- Physically intimidating e.g. standing very close to her/him
- The use of aggressive hand gestures
- Threatening behaviour
- Shaking or holding a fist or finger towards another person
- Swearing
- Pushing
- Hitting, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking
- Spitting
- Discriminatory and aggressive comments, either in person, phone calls or online (emails/social media, including WhatsApp groups)
- Breaching the school's security procedures

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

I am writing to advise you that I have received a report about your conduct at the school on (enter date and time). (Add factual summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, pupils, and other parents.)

I must inform you that the Local Governing Body will not tolerate conduct of this nature on its premises and will act to protect its staff and pupils. Therefore, I am writing to advise you that an incident log has been completed and will be kept on record should further episodes of this type be reported and further action be necessary.

Yours faithfully,

Executive Headteacher/Head of School