

Policy on dealing with unacceptable behaviour by parents/cares and visitors on school premises

Learning, Pride, Perseverance, Safety: LPPS leads to Success!



Lawns Park Primary School

Approved by:	Governors	Date: February 2022
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Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:	February 2025
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1. Statement of principles

The ethos of Lawns Park Primary School encourages close links with parents, carers and the community. The staff 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. From time to time it is necessary for parents and the school to deal with problems relating to particular pupils. It is important that discussions between parents and staff are conducted in a calm and respectful manner.

In the vast majority of such situations this is what happens, but on very rare occasions, aggression and verbal or physical abuse is directed towards members of school staff or members of the wider school community. This policy intends to deal with these rare situations.

The governing body expects and requires members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations, and attempt to defuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement of other colleagues when appropriate. However, all members of staff have the right to work without fear of violence and/or abuse.

Violence, threatening behaviour and abuse against school staff or other members of the school community, including all the parents and pupils, will not be tolerated. All members of the school community have a right to expect that their school to be a safe place in which to work and learn. There is no place for any form of abuse, threatening behaviour or violence in our school.

We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff and the wider school community at all times. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

A copy of this procedure will be published on the school's website.

2. Unacceptable behaviour

It is not possible to list every type of behaviour that is deemed unacceptable. However, the examples below are types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable, and will not be tolerated:

- Verbal intimidation - for example shouting or swearing either in person or over the telephone
- Verbal abuse - for example speaking rudely or making negative personal comments
- Shouting at members of staff, parents or children in person or over the telephone
- **Any** form of physical contact
- Physical intimidation - example standing unnecessarily close to a member of staff or a child
- The use of a rude or aggressive gestures or body language; including pointing, shaking, or holding a fist towards another person
- Spitting
- Abusive, offensive or unacceptable language, for example swearing or use of discriminatory phrases or references
- Breaching the school's security procedures - all visitors to school must first report to the main reception area

- Constant e-mails and all phone calls which amount to harassment and intimidation despite the school best efforts to address the situation
- Regularly e-mailing staff and expecting responses at unreasonable times such as late at night or weekends. E-mail sent to the school office will be responded to within one working day wherever possible
- Inappropriate electronic activity including publishing abusive or inappropriate content with regards to the school, teachers or students on social networking websites such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter or in email communication

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

Whilst the use of such behaviour is unacceptable in all circumstances, the school is particularly concerned to protect its pupils from being exposed to such behaviour (whether or not directed at them).

In all cases the Headteacher will determine if an individual's behaviour has been unacceptable. The Headteacher will consider the impact the behaviour has on staff who are subject to the behaviour, irrespective of whether the intention was to cause offence or harm. All visitors to the school should be aware that the Headteacher has the right to make a judgment of what they believe has been unacceptable.

All incidents of unacceptable behaviour will be recorded, and the school's Chair of Governors will be informed.

Visitors should also be aware that occurrences of unacceptable behaviour may result in the police being called or informed of the incident.

3. Permission to enter the school premises

Parents, carers and those with parental responsibility, have 'implied permission' ('permission') to visit the grounds and buildings of school. This means that parents are welcome to come to the school to drop off and collect their children, to speak to teachers and other members of staff about their children, or for meetings, parent consultations, celebration of learning events, assemblies and social events. Parents do not have a legal right to enter or be on school premises without a good reason.

Other visitors also have 'implied permission' to be on the school premises if they have a reason. For example, a delivery person or a member of the public enquiring about something in the school office. Members of the public without a good reason for entering or being on the school premises are trespassing.

Where there are serious concerns regarding the conduct of parent / visitor, and possible staff/ pupil safety, the Headteacher can:

- Initiate a meeting and engage in dialogue with the individual;
- Write to the visitor, describing their misconduct, explaining its impact on the school and stating its unacceptability;
- Vary a person's access to the school, for example, through the addition of conditions;
- Warn of the possibility withdrawing implied permission (a "ban") if the misconduct is repeated;
- Impose a ban with a review after a fixed period.

4. Withdrawal of permission to enter and be on the school's premises

All visitors should be aware that the school has the right to withdraw the "implied permission" for a parent or visitor to enter or be on the school's premises if their behaviour while they were previously on the school's premises was unacceptable. The withdrawal of the implied permission will be effective as soon as the parent/visitor has been told that they must leave and are prohibited from returning. This will be confirmed in writing by recorded delivery, if the home address is known. The full procedure that the school will follow is outlined in further detail below.

Once the permission to be on school premises has been withdrawn, the school has a right to ask the police to remove the parent or visitor if they appear on the school's premises. If the parent or visitor causes a nuisance or disturbance while they are on the school's premises, they may also be prosecuted in the criminal courts under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996, be liable to pay a fine of up to £500.00 and have a criminal conviction recorded against them.

Where a parent has had their implied permission to enter and be on the school's premises withdrawn, the school will, in appropriate cases, make alternative arrangements for the parent's children to be dropped off and collected from the school, and in relation to parents' evenings and other meetings. The school has a duty to ensure that the parent is informed of their child's educational progress throughout their education.

5. Procedures to be followed in the event of unacceptable behaviour

Informal resolution

If a parent /carer / visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Headteacher (or appropriate) senior member of staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If the unacceptable behaviour continues the meeting will be terminated and the visitor asked to leave the premises. The incident will be recorded.

Step 1 – Warning letter from the Headteacher

The Headteacher will speak to the person (or persons) perpetrating such an incident privately. It will be put to the person that such behaviour is unacceptable, and an assurance will be sought that such an incident will not be repeated. It will be stressed on this occasion that repetition of such behaviour will result in further, more serious action, being taken. This is likely to take the form of a ban on the visiting the school grounds. The Headteacher will write to the individual informing them that this conduct is unacceptable.

If the reassurance is not forthcoming, or the behaviour is considered so serious that the safety of members of staff and/or the school community may be compromised, the Headteacher has a right to proceed to Step 2 of the procedure. Where the unacceptable behaviour amounts to a criminal offence, the parent/visitor's implied permission will be withdrawn immediately without warning under Step 2.

Step 2 – Headteacher's letter to withdraw implied permission

If there is a repeated occurrence of unacceptable behaviour involving the same person or persons, the Headteacher will write to the individual's concerned outlining why their behaviour is unacceptable. If the initial incident is considered very serious or of a criminal nature, this step would apply.

The individual would be informed, in writing, that their implied permission to enter the premises has been withdrawn, and they are effectively 'banned' from the school site.

This withdrawal will be subject to a review, and the timescales will be outlined in the letter. The letter will also outline what will be the consequences if they fail to comply. This could include referring the matter for Police advice or involvement.

Usually, the prohibition will initially last for **ten school days** from the date of the letter. The parent or visitor will be invited to provide written comments within **five school days** of the date of the letter. By the **tenth school day** from the date of the letter, the Chair of Governors will review the Headteacher's decision in accordance with Step 3 (whether or not any written comments have been received), having been provided with all documentation relating to the incident (and any previous incidents), the Headteacher's record of the decision and the reasons for it.

Step 3 – Chair of Governors review

The Chair of Governors will, within **ten school days** of the date of the letter notifying the parent/visitor of the Headteacher's decision to withdraw their implied permission to enter and be on the school's premises, review the decision made. Consideration will be given to all documentation relating to the incident (and any previous incidents), the Headteacher's record of the decision, the reasons for it, confirmation as to whether the parent or visitor has complied with the instruction, and any written comments received from the parent or visitor.

The Chair of Governors will decide if the Headteacher's decision to withdraw permission will be revoked, or if the withdrawal is to continue until the next review. The Chair of Governors will, by the **tenth school day** of the date of the Step 2 letter, write to the parent or visitor confirming their decision, stating their reasons.

Where the withdrawal is to continue, the letter will confirm the date of the next review, which will be for a period of between fifteen and thirty school days, or until the last day of the term or half term period, at the Chair of Governor's discretion, subject to **a maximum period of thirty school days**.

Where the decision has been made to continue with the withdrawal of permission, the parent or visitor will be invited to provide further written comments **at least five school days** before the date of the next review. These comments should be restricted to the parent or visitor's conduct since the decision was last confirmed or any new consequences of the decision and should not repeat comments provided previously which the Chair of Governors will already be in possession of.

Step 4 – Further reviews of the decision

Where the Headteacher's decision was confirmed by the Chair of Governors under Step 3, or the decision has previously been confirmed under Step 3, the Chair of Governors will carry out a further review of the decision by the review date.

Consideration will be given to all documentation relating to the incident (and any previous incidents), the Headteacher's record of the original decision, the reasons for it, confirmation as to whether the parent or visitor has complied with the instruction since the last review, any written comments provided by the parent or visitor previously, the record of the Chair of Governors' previous review, and any further written comments received from the parent or visitor following the last review.

The Chair of Governors must consider whether, in view of the length of time that the parent or visitor has been prohibited from entering or being on the school's premises, and in light of the parent or visitor's conduct since their implied permission was withdrawn, and in consideration of any genuine assurances given in their written comments as their future conduct, it is now appropriate to revoke the decision to withdraw their permission to enter and be on the school's premises.

The Chair of Governors will, by the review date, write to the parent or visitor confirming whether the decision has been further confirmed or revoked, stating their reasons.

Where the withdrawal decision has been further confirmed, the letter will confirm the date of the next review, which will be for a period of between fifteen and thirty school days, or until the last day of the term or half term period, at the Chair of Governor's discretion, subject to a maximum period of thirty school days.

Where the decision has been further confirmed, the parent/visitor will be invited to provide further written comments at least five school days before the date of the next review. These comments should be restricted to the parent or visitor's conduct since the decision was last confirmed or any new consequences of the decision. These comments should not repeat comments provided previously which the Chair of Governors will already be in possession of. The procedure under Step 4 will be followed in relation to all further reviews.

6. Prohibiting third parties from entering and being on the school's premises

The procedure outlined above relates to parents and visitors who had a valid reason for entering and being on the school's premises. Sometimes, members of the public enter the school's premises when they have no good reason for doing so (for example, they do not have children registered as students at the school, and they are not delivering items or making valid enquiries at the school's office).

Such people do **not** have implied permission to enter and be on the school's premises and are therefore trespassing. This means that, if they are causing a nuisance or disturbance on the school's premises, they can be prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996. In those circumstances, the school will inform the third party that they are trespassing and ask them to leave the school's premises and, in appropriate cases, call the police and support any prosecution for criminal offences which follows.

Although third parties do not have implied permission to enter and be on the school's premises, for the avoidance of doubt, where the address of the third party is known, the Headteacher will write to the third party warning them of the consequences of reappearing on the school's premises.

7. Complaint's procedure

Where complaints are received in relation to withdrawing implied permission to enter the school premises, these will be dealt under this policy.

In implementing this policy, the school will, as appropriate, seek advice from the local authority to ensure fairness and consistency.

Review Date: November 2023