



# **Ripponden J&I School**

## **Visitor Policy and Managing Abusive Parents/Carers/Visitors**

At Ripponden J&I School, we welcome visitors and parents/carers into school for a variety of reasons.

When visitors come to school, we ask that they enter via the main office and sign in using our electronic system. You may be asked for ID, depending on the nature of your visit.

When you sign in using the electronic system, it displays a safeguarding notice. Please make sure you read this carefully and by signing in, you agree to adhere to this notice.

You will be given a visitors' lanyard. Please make sure you wear this at all times; you may be challenged if you don't wear one. At the end of your visit, please exit through the main entrance again, ensuring that you sign out and return the visitor lanyard.

### Policy on Managing Abusive Parents/Carers/Visitors to School

#### 1. Statement of Principles

The ethos of Ripponden J&I School encourages close links with parents 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. 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 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 staff. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

#### Behaviour

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

- shouting at members of the school staff, parents or children either in person or over the telephone;
- physically intimidating a member of staff, parent or child eg 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.

## 1. Procedure to be followed

If a parent/carer or visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Headteacher or appropriate senior staff 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 or Chair of Governors from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review as defined in section 547 of the Education Act (1996)

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 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.
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.

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 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, to ensure fairness and consistency.

January 2023 to be reviewed January 2024

## Strategies for dealing with difficult parents (or others) on the telephone

We all have a right to come to work without fear of being harassed or abused on the telephone. There are occasions where we need to have some trickier conversations and it is important that you feel supported to do this.

- ❖ Make sure, where possible and appropriate, you are in a room with someone else over hearing you.
- ❖ Always remain calm.
- ❖ If the person on the other end is becoming heated/angry/irate, calmly say "Please calm down" or "Please don't speak to me like that" or some other appropriate phrase.
- ❖ If the anger continues, say "I have already asked you to calm down/not speak to me like that etc. If you continue to do so, I will have no option other than to hang up the phone and end this conversation."
- ❖ Again, if it continues, say "I have already asked you twice now. You have left me no alternative but to end this conversation. Please call me back when you are calmer and we can discuss this matter appropriately"
- ❖ Then hang up.
- ❖ You may need to talk over the person, if they are that angry. This is fine, but make sure you warn them of hanging up.
- ❖ Make sure you then tell a member of the SLT what has happened and make a brief report of the altercation.
- ❖ Should parental behaviour continue like this, a member of the SLT will make contact and advise that we may look to ban a parent from communicating directly with staff.