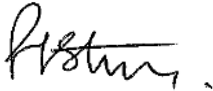


Policy on Managing Conflict with Parents/Carers or Visitors to the School

Our vision for Barncroft Primary School is to be a hive of learning where everybody challenges themselves and is nurtured to become confident and respectful members of the community with the skills they need to achieve their dreams

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1. Statement of principles

The ethos of Barncroft Primary School encourages close links with parents and the Community. The staff and governors believe that all 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 behavior is unacceptable.

2. Behaviour

Types of behavior 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 e.g. standing very close to her/him.
- The use of aggressive hand gestures.
- Threatening behavior.
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person.
- Swearing.
- Using abusive/offensive language.
- Pushing/shoving.
- Hitting, slapping, punching and/or kicking.
- Spitting
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, transgender or other derogatory 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/or the Police being informed of the incident.**

3. Procedure to be followed

If the 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 behavior 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 continues, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a parent or carer may be banned by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors from 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 first instance warn (see Template letter 1) the parent that they may need to ban them and seek reassurance about future behavior. 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 (see Template letter 2) 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.

Remedy available for a breach of a ban

Once a ban is issued by the school, should a parent ignore the ban and come onto the school site, they are trespassing. **Section 547 (1) of the Education Act 1996 (EA)** makes it an offence for a person who is on school premises without lawful authority who: *“causes or permits a nuisance or disturbance to the annoyance of persons who lawfully use those premises (whether or not any such persons are present at the time) is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale”* (up to £500).

Section 547 (2) EA 1996 – school premises include playgrounds, playing fields and other premises for outdoor recreation

Section 547 (3) EA 1996 – If a police constable has reasonable cause to suspect that any person is committing or has committed an offence under this section, he may remove him from the premises in question.

The Police can therefore remove anyone from the school site that is the subject of a ban and that parent could be charged with an offence.

Parents who make complaints and also display unacceptable behaviour

If the parent has made a complaint to the school about an issue and also displays inappropriate behaviour, the two issues should be dealt with separately. The banning letter to the parent should advise why the parent has been banned (i.e. their abusive behaviour) and the complaint dealt with as a separate issue in accordance with the school's complaints policy.

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.

LETTER TEMPLATE 1
WARNING BANNING LETTER

Dear [name]

I refer to your conduct on school premises on [date and time] when you [insert details of incident, its effect on staff, pupils and other parents].

I must inform you that the school will not tolerate conduct of this nature on its premises and will act to defend its staff and pupils.

You should be aware that section 547 (1) of The Education Act 1996 makes it an offence to trespass upon school premises and cause a nuisance or disturbance. Such behaviour may also lead to measures being taken in accordance with the Anti Social Behaviour legislation.

The purpose of this letter is therefore to warn you that should there be a repetition of this behaviour, consideration will be given to banning you from the school premises and/or using the powers set out above.

However, I trust that this was an isolated incident and that we can now continue working together to ensure that [child's name] is able to make maximum use of his/her educational opportunities at the school.

Yours

LETTER TEMPLATE 2

BANNING LETTER

Dear

I was disappointed to hear from members of staff of the incident of [time, date].

I am informed that [insert details of incident and its effect on staff, pupils and other parents].

Behaviour of this kind is unacceptable, particularly in the presence of young children to whom I have a duty to ensure feel safe and secure whilst on school premises. [Having taken into account that this is not the first time there has been unacceptable behaviour by you which has been reported to me], I have now withdrawn permission for you to enter the school premises. You may come to the school gate where [insert child's name] will be greeted by a member of staff and assisted to settle into the school day.

I will review your ban from the premises on [insert date] and if your behaviour between now and then has been acceptable, I will consider lifting the ban. In the meantime, should you wish to make representations to me as to why this ban should not continue in force, you can do so in writing to me. I will take into account any apology for your behaviour and any undertaking that there will be no repetition.

If you enter the school site during your ban, you will be trespassing. You should note that Section 547 (1) of the Education Act 1996 makes it an offence to cause a nuisance or disturbance on school premises whilst trespassing. I am prepared to invoke these powers to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils and adults on school premises, with the assistance of the Police if necessary.

I hope that today's incident is an isolated one and that we can continue to work together to ensure that [insert child's name] has a positive educational experience at this school.

Yours