



MANAGING AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR FROM PARENTS AND VISITORS POLICY

MAULDEN LOWER SCHOOL

MARCH 2024

REVIEW DATE: SPRING 2025

Rationale

The governing board of Maulden Lower School encourages close links with parents and the community. We believe that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one.

The vast majority of parents, carers and other visitors to 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 board 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, carers 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.

Definition of violence

The school will follow definitions used by the HSE for the purposes of this policy.

The HSE defines work-related violence as: 'Any incident, in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.' This can include verbal abuse or threats as well as physical attacks, and violence towards a member of staff's property.

The HSE defines an incident as: 'An unwanted, unplanned event that has the potential to cause harm/injury.'

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

- Shouting at members of the school staff, either in person or over the phone
- Physically intimidating a member of staff e.g. standing very close to them
- The use of aggressive hand gestures
- Threatening behaviour

- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Swearing
- Pushing or shoving
- Hitting e.g. slapping, punching or kicking
- Spitting
- Breaching the schools' 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.

Any incident of unacceptable behaviour will be logged internally and reported to the governing board.

Procedures to be Followed

If a parent, carer or visitor behaves in an unacceptable manner towards a member of the Maulden Lower School staff, the Head Teacher or appropriate member of the SLT will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school's complaints policy 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, carer or visitor may be barred by the Head Teacher or Governing Board for period of time, subject to review.

The following support will be provided for a member of staff subjected to work-related violence:

- Debriefing – A discussion will take place with the staff member's line manager or the headteacher as soon as possible to understand their experience and how they may be affected
- Time off work – Where necessary, the member of staff will be provided time to recover from the experience. An assessment will be made to see if specialist counselling may be required.
- Legal help – In serious cases, legal assistance will be considered.
- Guidance and training – Additional guidance and/or training will be considered for the staff member to help them feel more confident in responding to a further work-related violence incident.

Any pupils who were also affected by an incidence of violence, including as witnesses, will be spoken to by an appropriate member of staff to identify where support may be required to help them deal with their experience.

Record keeping and reporting incidents

All staff will be made aware of the importance of reporting all incidences of work-related violence, including threats and verbal abuse, to their line manager or the headteacher. Incidents will be recorded in a work-related violence book in the headteacher's office. Information recorded will include:

- When and where the incident occurred.
- An account of what took place.
- Details of the victim(s), the assailant(s) and any witnesses.
- An assessment of the severity of the incident and its outcome.
- Any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident.

Following an incident of violence towards staff, the headteacher will review, in liaison with the SLT, any relevant school procedures to consider if lessons can be learnt to reduce the likelihood of future incidents and understand where increased vigilance may be appropriate.

In line with RIDDOR, the HSE will be notified in the event of an act of physical violence resulting in the death, specified injury, or incapacity for normal work for seven or more days of a member of staff.

Barring individuals from the premises

Where an individual's aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language poses a risk to staff or pupils, or makes them feel threatened, the school will consider barring the individual from the premises. The school takes a zero-tolerance approach to violence towards its staff and will always take the decision to bar an individual where this is necessary to assure the safety of its staff and pupils.

The school will inform the individual that they've been barred, or of the school's intent to bar them, in writing – the letter will be signed by the Head Teacher. The individual will be allowed to present their side. The school will determine, considering the specific circumstances of the case and the risk posed, whether it is appropriate to bar the individual temporarily, until they have had the opportunity to formally present their side, or if they will first invite them to present their side by a set deadline.

After the individual's side has been heard, or if no response is received, the school will decide whether to continue with barring them. The decision will be reviewed within a reasonable time to be determined by the governing board considering the specific circumstances of the case.

If an individual who is barred from the premises ignores the ban and causes a nuisance or disturbance, the school will contact the police to have them removed.

Conclusion

The Local Authority may take action where behaviour is unacceptable or there are serious breaches of our Home-School Agreement 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.

Links to other policies

- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Home-School Agreement

This policy statement has been endorsed by the Governing Body, and will be reviewed on an annual basis

Policy reviewed and updated: Signed Date

Policy ratified and updated: Signed Date