



POLICY ON MANAGING ABUSIVE, AGGRESSIVE OR VIOLENT VISITORS

Status and review cycle;	Non-statutory and every three years
Responsible group:	The Trust
Implementation date:	July 2019
Next Review Date:	July 2024

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Statement of principles

One of the core Christian values of The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust (DGAT) is that of dignity. This value should be demonstrated in all our interactions and relationships and communications will be respectful, courteous and professional.

DGAT encourages all schools to develop and maintain close links with its parents/carers and the community. We all believe children benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive and mutually respectful one. Most parents, carers and others, whilst visiting our schools, are equally keen to work with us and are supportive of and respectful towards our schools.

From time to time it is necessary for parents and schools to deal with issues relating to children or incidents. It is important that discussions between parents/carers and staff are conducted in a calm and respectful manner. In most situations this is what happens, but on very rare occasions, aggression and verbal and/or physical abuse is directed towards members of school staff or members of the wider school community.

The Trust board and local governing bodies expect staff members 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.

Managing abusive, aggressive and violent visitors

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

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

- shouting, swearing or using offensive language at members of the school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- many emails and/or phone calls which amount to harassment and /or intimidation, despite the school's best efforts to address a situation
- physical intimidation of a member of staff, for example standing very close to them, pushing or poking
- the use of aggressive hand gestures, for example shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- behaviour that is deemed to be threatening
- inappropriate activity on social media in relation to members of staff
- hitting (e.g. slapping, punching and kicking)
- spitting
- breaching the school's security procedures.

This is not an exhaustive list; it seeks to provide illustrations of the range of unacceptable behaviours.

Unacceptable behaviour may also result in the Trust board and/or the police being informed of the incident.

Guidance for staff

A staff member must report any matter of intimidation, aggression, abuse or violence to the Headteacher. If the member of staff is in a meeting with an aggressive, abusive or violent visitor they should calmly and professionally outline that they are unable to continue the meeting in the current circumstances and report this immediately to the headteacher or other senior member of staff.

At all times, should situations deemed to be dangerous or illegal arise on the school premises, any member of staff, irrespective of their job role, is empowered to call the police requesting intervention to help maintain public order and / or personal safety. The headteacher must be informed immediately.

Responses to unacceptable visitor behaviour

If a visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the headteacher and local governing body can:

- initiate a conversation with the visitor seeking to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation.
- write to the visitor describing the misconduct, explaining its impact on the school and stating its unacceptability
- impose a 'limited license' to visit the grounds and buildings identifying conditions attached to being on school property
- warn, in writing, of the possibility of a ban from the school's grounds and buildings if the misconduct is repeated

Where all relevant procedures have been exhausted and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a visitor (including a parent or care of an existing pupil) may be banned by the headteacher from the school's premises for a defined period.

In imposing a ban, the following steps will be taken:

1. The visitor will be informed, that they are banned from the school's premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached e.g. police involvement or an injunction application may follow. The letter will include the length of the ban and the date of any review.
2. Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating the matter has been reported to the police will be included.
3. The chair of governors and the CEO of the Trust will be informed of the ban.
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for children being delivered to and collected from the school gates will be clarified.
5. If the period of the ban covers the time when Parents' Evening will be held, special arrangements will be made for the parent to have opportunity to meet with the teacher in appropriate conditions.

If it is appropriate, the school's complaints procedures should be used.

Conclusion

In implementing this policy, the school will, as appropriate, seek advice from the Trust Central Officers from a legal and health and safety perspective to ensure fairness and consistency.

This Policy will be reviewed every three years and/or following each incident where the policy is be used.