



Holbrook Academy

Dealing with Abusive Parents/Carers and Visitors

Date Approved	December 2019
Signed	Louise Cullen Chair of Governors
Date of Next Review	Autumn 2021

This policy takes account of the Academy's public sector equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with students even where this is away from the Academy, for example at an activity centre or on an educational visit.

1. Principles

Holbrook Academy actively encourages close links with parents/carers and the community. It believes that students 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/carers and the school to deal with problems relating to particular students. It is important that discussions between parents/carers and staff are conducted in a calm and respectful manner. In the vast majority of such situations this is what happens, but on rare occasions, aggression and verbal and or physical abuse is directed towards members of school staff or members of the wider school community.

Holbrook Academy 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.

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

We expect parents/carers 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.

2. Definition of unacceptable behaviour

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and which will not be tolerated in relation to members of staff, and other members of the community are:

- shouting, either in person or over the telephone
- swearing, either in person or over the telephone/email
- constant emails and/or phone calls which amount to harassment and intimidation, despite the school's best efforts to address a situation
- Inappropriate electronic activity including publishing abusive or inappropriate content with regards to the school, teachers or students on social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter or in email communication
- hitting, slapping, punching, kicking or pushing
- physically intimidation, eg standing unnecessarily close to her/him
- the use of rude or aggressive hand gestures, including shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- spitting
- breaching the school's security procedures

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 Academy is particularly concerned to protect its students from being exposed to such behaviour (whether or not directed at them).

Unacceptable behaviour may result in the Police being informed of the incident.

3. Parental/Visitor Access to the School Premises

Normally parents/carers (and those with parental responsibility), plus visitors, are granted what is known as “limited licence” to visit the grounds and buildings of a school.

Where there are serious concerns regarding the conduct of a parent/carer or visitor, and possible staff/student safety, the Headteacher may:

- initiate a meeting/dialogue with the individual
- write to the visitor, describing their misconduct, explaining its impact on the school and stating its unacceptability
- vary the person’s “licence”, say, through the addition of conditions
- warn of the possibility of a “ban” (i.e. the withdrawal of their licence) if the misconduct is repeated
- impose a ban with a review after a fixed period
- impose a ban without review

4. Procedure to be followed

If a parent/carer/visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, a detailed record of the conversation or incident involving the parent/carer or visitor should immediately be passed to the Headteacher. The Headteacher and/or appropriate senior staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the Academy’s Complaints Procedure should be followed by the parent/carer

<http://holbrookacademy.org/259-ha/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Complaints-Procedure-Amended-January-2021.pdf>).

Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where the circumstances otherwise require it, a parent/carer or visitor may be banned by the Headteacher from the Academy premises for a period of time, subject to review.

In imposing a ban the following steps will be taken:

1. The parent/carer/visitor will be informed, in writing, that s/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, eg that Police involvement or an injunction application may follow.
2. Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the local Police.
3. The Chair of Governors will be informed of the ban.
4. As appropriate, arrangements for meetings at school regarding students, and arrangements for students being delivered to and collected from the school will be clarified.

5. Conclusion

In implementing this policy, the Academy will, as appropriate, seek advice from the Police, and/or the Local Authority if necessary, to ensure fairness and consistency.