



Straits Primary School

The conduct of parents/carers and other adults while on school premises

Straits Primary School governing body acknowledges that abusive, threatening or violent incidents at work present a risk to the health and safety and well-being of staff and pupils and recognise the obligations of the organisation to minimise these risks.

We have an 'open door' policy at Straits Primary School and are proud of the welcome we give to parents and other visitors. We recognise the significance of the partnership of parents and school in high quality education. We expect all of our staff to treat all parents and visitors with respect and expect this respect to be reciprocated.

The vast majority of our parents enjoy a positive and mutually supportive relationship with school staff. This policy will clarify the school's position and give guidelines for any action if, on the unfortunate and rare occasions, this relationship breaks down.

Definition

Any incident, in which a member of staff or pupil is abused, threatened or assaulted by another person.

This includes:

- Verbal abuse whether written or oral.
- Threat where this is judged likely to turn into actual violence.
- Serious or persistent harassment (including racial or sexual harassment).
- Threat with a weapon.
- Major or minor injuries and fatalities.

Violence is not considered to be an acceptable part of any job, nor is it the duties of any employee to accept violent or abusive behaviour. We recognise the potentially damaging effects of these on individuals, their work performance and the school as a whole, and are committed to combating it.

The aims of this policy are:

- To reduce the risks to staff and pupils from violence and abuse.
- To fulfil legal and other obligations by ensuring the safety of staff and pupils.
- To protect staff and pupils from all forms of abuse whenever possible and provide staff with after-care should violence occur.
- To ensure that everyone in the organisation is aware of and fulfils their responsibility for safety from abuse at work.

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents and visitors in our school. The term 'staff' includes school employees, volunteers and workers employed by contractors.

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment the school cannot tolerate parents, carers and visitors exhibiting the following:

- Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, office area or any other area of the school grounds.
- Using loud/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying temper.
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to a member of school staff, governor, visitor, fellow parent/carer or student regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.
- Damaging or destroying school property.
- Abusive or threatening e-mails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the students/parent/staff on social media sites. Concerns about the school must be made through

the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, Headteacher or the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- Smoking and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on school property.
- Dogs being brought on to school premises.

We expect parents, carers and visitors to:

- Respect the caring ethos and values of our school.
- Understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that all members of the school community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and behaviour.
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.
- Correct own child's behaviour especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behaviour or unsafe behaviour.
- Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern.

The school is committed to ensuring that the following measures take place:

- Monitoring incidents of abuse to staff.
- Communication of the policy to ensure that everyone is aware of it and their responsibility with respect to it.
- Allocation of specific roles and responsibilities in support of the policy.
- Sanctions in the event of abusive or violent to an employee of the school.
- Aftercare procedures to be made available.
- Reporting of incidents of violence and abuse.
- Reporting of hazards, risks or problems that individuals identify or become aware of in the course of their work.

Procedures

If an incident (as defined in this policy) occurs, then:

1. The incident will be reported to the head teacher or, in his absence, other senior member of staff.
2. The head teacher will judge the severity of the incident and then decide on the course of action.
3. The person involved will write an account of the incident and date and sign the document. The head will keep a copy of this.
4. The offending person(s) will be invited into school to discuss the incident with the head teacher. (The head will secure his own safety for this interview and will often be accompanied by another senior member of staff.)
5. If the person(s) refuses to discuss the incident a letter will be sent again inviting them to discuss the incident.
6. The head teacher, in liaison with the governing body, may then take the decision to ban the person from the premises. This will be informed by letter. Arrangements will be made for the dropping off and collection of children from school.
7. If this ban is unenforceable the police may be called and advice sought from the legal department of the Local Authority.

If the offending person agrees to discuss the incident in person, the following will occur:

1. A discussion held with regards to the 'trigger' for the unacceptable behaviour and how this matter can be resolved.
2. An agreement will be sought that this type of behaviour will not happen again.
3. The offending person should understand that the meeting constitutes a warning and that any further offence may result in a ban from the premises.
4. The governors will be informed of actions taken. When and how this information is passed on will be at the discretion of the head teacher.

At all times:

- Staff must seek to secure their own safety. They must not speak alone to aggressive or potentially aggressive parents or other adults (This will include parents' evenings). If any member of staff is concerned on any level about talking to parents or other adults they should arrange for someone else to be present.
- Staff must behave in a professional and politely dignified manner.
- All incidents must be written down and reported.
- The police should be called if any member of staff feels in danger or a person or persons will not leave the premises.
- Members of staff should seek to avoid confrontation with known aggressors.
- All staff must be vigilant as they may need to act on behalf of a colleague.
- Staff involved in an incident will be treated sensitively and will be given any support felt necessary. If a physical injury has taken place the staff member will be given first aid and then taken to a doctor or in extreme cases an ambulance will be called.

Controlling access to school Premises: based on "Controlling access to school premises - Guidance to help schools understand what they should do to remove someone who is on the premises without permission" - Published 27 November 2018, **Department for Education**

Schools are private property. People do not have an automatic right to enter. Parents have an 'implied licence' to come on to school premises at certain times, for instance:

- for appointments
- to attend a school event
- to drop off or pick up younger children

Barring individuals from school premises

Trespassing is a civil offence. This means that schools can ask someone to leave and take civil action in the courts if someone trespasses regularly. Schools can bar someone from the premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or pupils. It's enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened.

The school should tell an individual that they've been barred or they intend to bar them, in writing. Letters should usually be signed by the headteacher, though in some cases the local authority, academy trust or proprietor may wish to write instead. The individual must be allowed to present their side.

A school can either:

- bar them temporarily, until the individual has had the opportunity to formally present their side
- tell them they intend to bar them and invite them to present their side by a set deadline
- After the individual's side has been heard, the school can decide whether to continue with barring them. The decision should be reviewed within a reasonable time, decided by the school.

The Department for Education (DfE) does not get involved in individual cases.

Removing individuals from school premises

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a person who is on school premises without legal permission to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance.

To have committed a criminal offence, an abusive individual must have been barred from the premises or have exceeded their 'implied licence', then also have caused a nuisance or disturbance. If a school has reasonable grounds to suspect that someone has committed an offence, then they can be removed from the school by a police officer or a person authorised by the appropriate authority such as the:

- governing board
- local authority
- proprietor of that school

Inappropriate use of Social Media

Social media platforms are being increasingly used to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, head teachers, school staff, and in some cases other parents/students. The Governors consider the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community. Any concerns parents or visitors may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any student or parent/carer of a child/ren being educated in the school is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on social media sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site and in some cases the police. All social network sites have clear rules about the content, which can be posted, on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. The school will also expect that any parent/carer or student removes such comments immediately.

In serious cases the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will take and deal with this as a serious incident of school bullying.

Please also refer to our:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Lone Working policy
- Behaviour and Child on Child abuse policy
- Site Security policy
- Complaints policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Signed by:

Chair of Governing Body:

Date:

Head teacher:

Date:

Agreed at the Full Governing Body Meeting on:



Straits Primary School

Appendix: model letters

Dear

I have received a report regarding your conduct when on our school site on (enter date and time).

[Add summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, students, other parents.]

We believe staff, parents and children are entitled to a safe and protective environment in which to work. Behaviour that will cause harassment, alarm or distress to users of the premises is contrary to the aims of the school. I must inform you that we will not tolerate conduct of this nature on our premises and I am therefore informing you that should the school staff have any further concerns about your behaviour, formal procedures will be followed.

Yours sincerely
Headteacher

Dear

I have received a report regarding your conduct when on our school site on (enter date and time).

[Add summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, students, other parents.]

We believe staff, parents and children are entitled to a safe and protective environment in which to work. Behaviour that will cause harassment, alarm or distress to users of the premises is contrary to the aims of the school. I must inform you that we will not tolerate conduct of this nature on our premises.

The Headteacher has already contacted you on _____. On the advice of the Headteacher I am therefore informing you that should the school staff have any further concerns about your behaviour you will be asked not to enter the premises and you could be prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500.

Yours sincerely
Chair of Governors

Dear

I have received a report regarding your conduct when on our school site on (enter date and time).

[Add summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, students, other parents.]

We believe staff, parents and children are entitled to a safe and protective environment in which to work. Behaviour that will cause harassment, alarm or distress to users of the premises is contrary to the aims of the school. I must inform you that we will not tolerate conduct of this nature on our premises and therefore are withdrawing permission for you to enter the school grounds.

The withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises takes effect from (enter dates).

Yours sincerely
Chair of Governors