



GLEBE SCHOOL

Parent Conduct Policy

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Legal framework

This policy has due regard to the following legislation:

- Education act 1996

This policy has due regard to guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE Controlling access to school policies

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Communications Policy
- Attendance and Absence Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Statement of principles

For the purposes of this policy, a 'parent' is any adult including parents, carers, visitors supporting parents or any other adult who makes contact with the school or its staff members regarding school matters. This policy has been written taking into account the DfE Guidance 'Controlling access to school premises' November 2018.

At Glebe School, we value the positive relationships forged with parents and visitors to the school. We encourage close links and with parents and the community and believe that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. Some of the school events where we encourage parents and carers to visit or be actively involved include:

- School fetes
- Joining the PTA (Parent Teacher Association)
- School performances such as the Christmas show
- Parent workshops and coffee mornings

Examples of school events where there is an expectation that parents or carers attend include:

- Parents evenings
- Annual Reviews
- Reintegration meetings following a fixed term exclusion
- Where the school has concerns around a pupil's conduct, mental health and wellbeing or any other factors that pose a health & safety to people in the school

To create a welcoming and safe learning environment, the school implements a specifically designed set of rules regarding behaviour and conduct, which parents are expected to act in accordance with.

We also strive to make our school a place where as adults, we model for pupils the behaviour we teach and expect. In general, we place a high importance on good manners, positive communication and mutual respect.

Expectations

Our school expects parents to:

- Act in accordance with this code of conduct at all times
- Support and reflect the school's ethos and values through their behaviour

- Set a good example to pupils through their behaviour and the way they interact with staff, pupils and other adults.
- Work together with staff members for the benefit of their child and to resolve any issues of concern
- Treat all trustees, staff members, pupils, other parents and any members of the school community with dignity and respect
- Where appropriate, clarify their child's version of events with the school to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue
- Correct their child's behaviour appropriately, particularly on the school grounds where it could otherwise lead to conflict or aggressive or unsafe behaviour
- Follow the school's parking rules and procedures for dropping-off and collecting pupils from school
- Parents are required to act in accordance with all relevant school policies and procedures at all times

Almost all parents, carers and visitors to Glebe School are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school. However, on very rare occasions the behaviour of a small number of parents falls short of what we expect. This sometimes manifests itself in aggression or abuse towards members of the school community. This can be in written communication (including social media), on the telephone or in face-to-face incidents.

In these situations, we expect members of staff to behave professionally, attempting to deescalate the situation where possible and seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. Staff who face these situations have licence to end any conversation (face to face or on the telephone). They should then refer the incident to a senior manager who will take appropriate action or invoke the provisions of this policy.

The overriding principle is, however, that all members of the school community have the right to work or be in school without fear of aggression or abuse from parents. The school has a requirement to protect staff and pupils from such aggression.

The progress and well-being of the parent's child(ren) will be fully considered. Actions taken against the parent will be reasonable and proportionate. The parent will have the opportunity to put their views forward at every stage. In the case of the imposition of conditions or a ban from school, robust review processes involving the chair of trustees and then the board of trustees are in place to ensure fairness.

1. Definition of unacceptable behaviour

We consider that aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language from a parent presents a risk to staff or pupils. Unacceptable behaviour is such that makes a member of staff or pupil feel threatened or when a child's welfare is being neglected. This can be through face-to-face contact, on the telephone or in written communication (including social media). The following is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour:

- Any kind of insult as an attempt to demean, embarrass or undermine
- Any kind of threat
- Use of foul, abusive or offensive language
- Raising of voice so as to be intimidating
- Physical intimidation, e.g. by standing very close to someone or the use of aggressive hand gestures
- Any kind of physical abuse

- Allegations which turn out to be vexatious or malicious
- Persistent harassment / obsessive behaviour patterns (through email, letters, face to face)
- Persistently arriving late to collect a child at the end of the day or after an after-school club
- Refusal to collect or make arrangements to collect a sick child based on the school's recommendations
- For pupils with medical needs: not sending medicines to school or updating medicines that have expired
- Writing or posting abusive, offensive or defamatory comments about an individual or the school, including on social media
- Displaying disruptive or other inappropriate behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the school's operations or activities
- Approaching another parent or pupil to discuss or reprimand them because of an issue between pupils
- Driving unsafely within the vicinity of the school
- Smoking near the school premises

2. The school's approach to dealing with incidents

If a parent/carer/visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the headteacher or appropriate senior staff will assess the level of risk before deciding on a future course of action. The course of action will be reasonable and commensurate with the assessed level of risk.

3. Risk Assessment

The head teacher will assess the risk in order to help make a decision about the level of response. In all cases the response will be reasonable and proportionate. The headteacher will consider the following questions:

- What form did the abuse take?
- What evidence is there?
- What do witnesses say happened?
- Are there previous incidents to take into consideration?
- Do members of staff/pupils feel intimidated by the parent's behaviour?
- Is there any evidence of provocation?
- How high is the assessed risk?

4. Recording of Incidents

Staff/pupils subject to abuse and witnesses will make written statements about incident(s) which will be kept in a file with subsequent letters. This should include:

- Date of incident
- Time of incident

- Name of person reporting incident
- Date incident reported
- Member of staff reporting incident
- Date incident recorded
- Name(s) of person(s) causing incident (where name(s) is/are unknown, provide other details of which may allow their identification)
- Status (es) (parents/carers/visitors/trespassers)
- Full description of incident (e.g. names of persons involved; location; nature of any injuries; attendance of emergency services)
- Names of any witnesses & statuses
- Initial action/outcome (e.g. informal conciliation; police intervention; warning or banning letter issued)
- Summary of subsequent actions taken by the school, including risk assessments

Relevant incidents include trespass, nuisance or disturbance on school premises, verbal abuse, sexual or racial abuse, threats, aggression, physical violence and intentional damage to property.

Where possible, the statement should be completed before any discussion between witnesses is possible, as this may lead to allegations of collusion.

This statement should be completed with as much detail as possible.

The completed statement should be passed to the headteacher for appropriate action and recording.

5. The school's response

Following the completion of the risk assessment, the headteacher will decide the level of action to be taken. Actions will include the following:

1. Clarify to the parent what is considered acceptable behaviour by the school

In some instances, it may be appropriate simply to ensure that the parent is clear about behaviour standards expected by the school. This could be explained by letter from the headteacher. This letter may contain a warning about further action if there are further incidents. Depending on the parent's response a meeting may then be held to discuss the situation and how this can be avoided in future.

2. Invite the parent to an informal meeting to discuss events

This could be helpful to discuss and diffuse the situation. The safety and well-being of those attending such a meeting must be carefully considered. Members of school staff will always be accompanied by at least one other colleague at any such meeting. Consideration should be given to the seating arrangements, and care taken to ensure exits cannot be blocked by a parent who could potentially become aggressive. The main points of discussion and any agreed actions should be noted, and a follow-up letter or email sent to confirm the school's expectations and any agreed actions.

3. Impose conditions on the parent's contact with the school and its staff

Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Parents of enrolled pupils have an 'implied licence' to come onto school premises at certain stated times:

- for appointments

- to attend a school event
- to drop off or pick up their child

It is for schools to define and set out the extent of such access. Parents exceeding this would be trespassing. Depending on the type, level or frequency of the unacceptable behaviour, the school may consider imposing conditions on the parent's contact with the school. These conditions may include (but are not exclusively):

- being accompanied to any meeting with a member of school staff by a member of SLT
- restricting contact by telephone to named members of the senior leadership team
- restricting written communications to named members of the senior leadership team
- restricting attendance at school events to those where the parent will be accompanied by a member of the senior leadership of the school
- restricting communication from the parent (e.g. blocking emails to certain addresses)
- restricting access to the school site by parents
- any other restriction as deemed reasonable and proportionate by the headteacher

In this case the parent will be informed by letter from the headteacher, the details of the conditions that are being imposed. The parent would then be given 10 working days from the date of that letter to make representations in writing about the conditions to the chair of trustees. The chair of trustees would then decide whether to confirm or remove the conditions. This would be communicated to the parent in writing within 10 working days of the date of the parent's letter.

If the decision is to confirm the conditions imposed, this decision will be reviewed by the board of trustees after approximately six months (and every six months after that, if appropriate). The parent will be invited to make written representation to the board of trustees. This and the evidence from the headteacher will be considered at a meeting of the full board of trustees. Trustees may decide to maintain, extend or remove the conditions. The decision of the review will be communicated to the parent by the clerk to the trustees within 10 days of the date of the meeting.

When deciding whether it will be necessary to maintain, extend or remove the conditions, trustees will give consideration to the extent of the parent's compliance with the conditions, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from him/her and any evidence of the parent's co-operation with the school in other respects.

4. Imposing a ban

Where other procedures have been exhausted and abuse, aggression or intimidation continues, or where there is an extreme act of violence then the school may consider banning the individual from school premises. This will include banning a parent from accessing school staff by written communication or telephone (the exception from this is where a child is unwell and cannot attend school or where there are welfare and safeguarding concerns to report. In such cases, the parent should still follow the school's absence reporting procedures. In cases of reporting safeguarding concerns, parents should refer to the school's child protection policy and/or contact the school safeguarding team at safeguarding@glebe.bromley.sch.uk).

In these circumstances, the individual would be advised in writing by the headteacher that a provisional ban is being imposed. The parent would then be given 10 working days from the date of that letter to make representations about the ban in writing to the chair of trustees.

The chair of trustees would then decide whether to confirm or remove the ban. This would be communicated to the parent in writing within 10 working days of the receipt of their letter. If the Chair's decision is to confirm the ban, parents in these circumstances will be offered an annual meeting about their child's progress, usually with a member of senior staff. This meeting may be online and is at the discretion of the headteacher.

A decision to impose a ban will be reviewed by the board of trustees after approximately six months (and every six months after that, if appropriate). The parent will be invited to make written representation to the trustees; this and the evidence from the headteacher will be considered at a meeting of the full board of trustees. Trustees may decide to remove the ban, extend the ban or impose conditions on parent's access to the school. The decision of the review will be communicated to the parent by the clerk to the board within 10 days of the date of the meeting.

In deciding whether to remove or extend the ban or impose conditions, trustees will give consideration to the extent of the parent's compliance with the ban, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from him/her and any evidence of the parent's co-operation with the school in other respects.

5. Removal from school

Parents who have been banned from the school premises and continue to cause a nuisance will be deemed to have committed a section 547 offence. They will be considered as trespassers. In these circumstances the matter will be reported to the police for them to take action.

6. Monitoring and review

This document will be reviewed on a biennial basis and any changes made will be communicated to all parents and staff at the school.