

# Parkside Academy

## Parental Conduct Policy



Adopted by the Governing Body

May 2016

[Reviewed April 2018]

## **Rationale:**

At Parkside Academy, we value the positive relationships forged with parents and visitors to the school. We encourage close links with parents and the community and believe that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. We also strive to make our school a place where, as adults, we model for children the behaviour we teach and expect. As a school, we promote respect for all with whom we work and celebrate differences in a positive manner. We place a high importance on good manners, positive communication and mutual respect.

The vast majority of parents, carers and visitors to Parkside Academy 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 the school community. The governing body expects and requires 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.

**Nevertheless, all members of staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse and we expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards all members of school staff.**

This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

## **Expectations:**

- That adults set a good example to children at all times, showing them how to get along with all members of the school and the wider community
- That no members of staff, parents or children are the victims of abusive behaviour or open to threats from other adults on the school premises.
- Physical attacks and threatening behaviour, abusive or insulting language verbal or written, to staff, governors, parents and carers, children and other users of the school premises will not be tolerated and may result in withdrawal of permission to be on school premises.

## **Guidelines:**

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated towards any member of the school community (this is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour)

- Shouting, either in person or over the telephone
- Speaking in an aggressive/threatening tone
- Physically intimidating , e.g. standing very close
- Swearing
- The use of aggression/physical threats
- Racist or sexist comments
- Inappropriate posting on Social Networking sites deemed as bullying
- Using social networking sites to single out individuals or to distribute untruthful or malicious information or comments

**The school reserves the right to take any necessary actions to ensure that members of the school community are not subjected to abuse.** Any of the above could result in a legally approved warning letter by the school and, should they persist, would result in the offender having their right to enter the school premises withdrawn. In the case of social networking sites, this would result in a request for comments to be withdrawn and could result in prosecution by the board of governors.

**It is essential to remember that it is not the intention of the perpetrator that is central in deciding whether harassment has occurred, but whether the behaviour is unacceptable by normal standards and is disadvantageous.**

### **The legal framework:**

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it an offence for any person to be on school premises to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance and allows for the removal and prosecution of any person believed to have committed an offence. A parent of a child attending a school normally has implied permission to be on school premises at certain times and for certain purposes, but if the parent's behaviour is unreasonable, this permission may be withdrawn. **This also applies to all other individuals invited into the school for other reasons.**

Parents, carers or other visitors exhibiting unacceptable behaviour could have a ban which prevents access to the school premises imposed on them. Should they ignore this ban, they would then become a trespasser on the school site. The Governing Body, in conjunction with the Headteacher, will take the lead in authorising the removal of a person believed to be causing a nuisance or disturbance, and, if necessary, will bring legal proceedings against them.

### **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 (Appendix 1)

If a parent/carer/visitor has been verbally abusive, either in person or via telephone, a letter will be sent explaining that future calls must be to a named senior leader. If this fails to solve the issue, then the procedure will be the same as with any other threat, as follows:-

The Headteacher/senior leader may seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. This may include meeting the parent, clarifying the school's expectations and agreeing strategies to manage future incidents.

Where all procedures have been exhausted and aggression or intimidation continues OR where there is an extreme act of violence then further action may be taken including banning the individual from school premises. The individual would be advised in writing by the Headteacher that following the incident of unacceptable behaviour, a ban is being considered. They would then be given an opportunity to explain their actions, after which a decision would be made about imposing the ban.

In more serious circumstances a parent/carer or visitor may be banned from the school premises by the Chair of Governors for a specified period of time, subject to review. In

this situation the parent/carer/visitor will be given an opportunity to explain their behaviour, after which a decision will be taken to confirm, remove or extend the ban. Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the police will be included.

If after a ban has been imposed and the individual comes on to school premises, then the Police would be called immediately. The Governing Body would then decide, in conjunction with the Headteacher, whether to consider taking out a Court Injunction preventing this from happening again.

### **Malicious allegations against school staff:**

All allegations made against school staff will be fully investigated promptly in line with the statutory guidance to schools and colleges 'Keeping children safe in education', (July 2015). Malicious allegations made against school staff are considered to be a breach of the behaviour policy. The term 'malicious allegation' is defined by the Department for Education (July 2015) as a situation where there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive. This document goes on to state that: 'If an allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated or malicious, the designated officer should refer the matter to the children's social care services to determine whether the child concerned is in need of services, or may have been abused by someone else. If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Headteacher, principal or proprietor should consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against pupil who made it; or whether the police should be asked to consider if action might be appropriate against the person responsible, even if he or she was not a pupil.' DfE (July 2015)