# BARTONS PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Managing Aggressive Behaviour from Parents and Visitors Policy

| | |
|---|---|
| Lead member of staff | Kate Powell |
| Governor Committee | FGB |
| Chair of Governors signature | |
| Date of publication | Spring Term 2026 |
| Review date | Spring Term 2028 |

### Statement of Principles

- At Bartons Primary School, 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 Bartons Primary School 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. This also includes mail, email, social media or press posts.
- 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.
- However, all members of staff have the right to work without fear or violence, abuse or intimidation.
- We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff.
- This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

## Definition of Unacceptable Behaviour

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated include:

- Shouting at members of school staff, either in person or over the telephone;
- Physically intimidating a member staff e.g. by standing very close to her/him;
- The use of aggressive hand gestures;
- Threatening behaviour which can include mail, email, social media or press content;
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person;
- Swearing;
- Pushing;
- Hitting e.g. slapping, punching and kicking;
- Spitting;
- Breaching the school's security procedures. This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour.

## 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 and West Sussex County Council, 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.

**Unacceptable behaviour by parents, carers or visitors may result in the Local Authority and the Police being informed.**

## 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).
- 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 (Appendix 2).
- If necessary, the school's complaints procedure will be followed.

- 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.
- In some circumstances, 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 the 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.
- If after a ban has been imposed, and the individual comes on to school premises, the Police would be called immediately. (Appendix 3)
- The Governing Body would then decide in conjunction with the Local Authority whether to consider taking out a Court Injunction preventing this from happening again.
- Throughout this process thorough record keeping is critical (Appendix 4).

**Banning Procedures**

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

1. The parent/carer/visitor will be informed, in writing, that she/he is banned from the premises (subject to review) and of the consequences if the ban is breached.
2. Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the Local Authority and the police will be included.
3. The Local Authority will be informed of the ban.
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.
5. A review date for consideration of the ban will be decided upon and communicated to the parent/carer/visitor.
6. Following the review, the outcome will also be communicated to the parent/carer/visitor (Model letters for all the above steps can be found in Appendix 5)

**Conclusion**

The Local Authority may also take action where behaviour is unacceptable or there are serious breaches of our home-school code of conduct or health and safety legislation.

In implementing this policy, the school will, as appropriate, seek advice from the Local Authority's education, health and safety and legal departments, to ensure fairness and consistency.

## APPENDIX 1: RISK ASSESSMENT

In the event of a parent behaving in an inappropriate way, each situation will need to be considered individually by the Headteacher or a designated member of staff. The following factors should be taken into account as a risk assessment, before deciding on the most appropriate course of action:

- Has the parent been verbally aggressive/threatening/intimidating?
- Has the parent been physically aggressive/threatening/intimidating?
- Has the parent been threatening by mail, email, social media or press posts?
- What evidence is there? What do witnesses say happened?
- Does the parent have a known previous history of aggression/violence? (information can only be sought from the police when an official complaint has been made).
- Do members of the school staff/community feel intimidated by the parent's behaviour?
- Have pupils witnessed aggressive/threatening/intimidating behaviour from the parent?
- Have pupils been approached inappropriately by the parent?
- Has the parent been abusive to school staff, pupils or visitors?
- Has the parent been persistently abusive to school staff, pupils or visitors?
- Was the parent provoked in **any** way prior to their behaviour and/or does the parent claim to have been provoked?
- Is there evidence of provocation?
- How frequently have the behaviours occurred?
- Is there a risk (low, medium or high) that the behaviour may be repeated?

## APPENDIX 2: OPTIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

### Inviting the Parent to a meeting to discuss events

This could be helpful where a planned and structured meeting has either not been held before or has previously been productive. Skilled facilitators may need to be used. A full restorative meeting may be considered, but if it is not safe to bring all the parties together at a meeting, a restorative process can still take place through the exchange of information.

The safety and well-being of those attending such a meeting must be carefully considered. It is strongly recommended that members of school staff should be accompanied by at lead 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 sent to confirm the school's expectations and any agreed actions. Some parents may covertly record meetings and then seek to use the information obtained to support their case, and therefore **schools should state explicitly that information obtained without permission will not be permissible**.

### Clarifying to the parent what is considered acceptable behaviour by the school

In some instances, it may be appropriate simply to ensure the parent is clear about behaviour standards expected by the school. This could be explained at a meeting, or by letter, however any verbal explanation should be followed by a written confirmation of the discussion and the standards of behaviour outlined.

### Forming strategies to manage future situations of potential conflict

It is sometimes possible to identify situations of potential conflict and to plan for these in a way that minimises potential risks. For example, where a parent persistently engages in arguments with staff in corridors at the beginning or the end of the school day, the parent could be informed that any discussions with school staff must be held by prior appointment.

Alternatively, the parent may be asked not approach the teacher, but should instead arrange to meet the Headteacher (or other member of the senior leadership team), who will deal with their concerns.

In more serious cases a further option may be to advise the parent that in future their concerns should be dealt with by written communication. Any such arrangements should be confirmed in writing to the parent.

### Withdrawing permission for the parent to enter the school site and/or buildings

In more serious cases of actual or threatened aggression/violence, or persistent abuse/intimidation, Headteachers may need to consider whether is it safe for the parent to continue to come onto the school site or enter the buildings.

## APPENDIX 3 CALLING FOR POLICE ASSISTANCE

- In an emergency, police assistance should be sought.
- In cases where a ban is in place but is ignored and the person comes onto the school site, the police should be notified immediately. (Staff will need to be aware of the ban and have agreed procedures in place should the person come onto the school site).
- In situations where there is no immediate threat to staff, pupils, other members of the school community or the school's property, Headteachers may still wish to make their local community police officer (e.g. neighbourhood support team, youth intervention officer) aware of the situation.
- The police could give consideration to warning the offender of formal action, which may include legal proceedings.

## APPENDIX 4 RECORD KEEPING

- There should be clear and detailed records of all events which must be kept up to date. Any witness statements (where appropriate) and notes of any subsequent meetings held to discuss the events should also be retained. Notes should be signed and dated.
- Any physical evidence should be bagged and labelled, and witnesses should be asked to make a record of exactly what they saw and heard at the earliest opportunity.
- It is also advisable to ensure that in every case, even where a formal letter is not required, parents receive a written confirmation of the events and the Headteacher's response.
- If the police are asked to deal with an incident as a criminal investigation, there are a number of actions that may thwart this process. Witness details should not be made known to suspected offenders or their families. Groups of witnesses or suspects should not be left together, or allowed to discuss what happened, before the police interview them. If in doubt always seek the advice of the police officer first.
- An incident reporting form is attached below.

## APPENDIX 5 MODEL LETTERS

### Model Letter 1:

This is an initial warning letter which can be sent by the Headteacher when it is felt that further serious incidents will warrant a ban.

### Model Letter 2:

It is suggested that this letter is sent by the Chair of the Governors when, after full consideration, it is felt a ban is necessary.
Normally this would follow from a warning (letter 1), **although there may be occasions where it is appropriate to move directly to a ban – it is strongly recommended that the LA is consulted in such cases.**

At this point consideration should also be given to any practical issues, in particular to ensure that the pupil(s) concerned can be properly accompanied to and collected from school, and to ensure there can be an effective exchange of necessary information between the school and parent.

At this stage, the ban take effect immediately, but as the letter indicates, the parent must be enabled to make representations. A period of a week is recommended to allow for this, at the end of which the Chair of Governors should consider any representations made, then make a decision to either confirm the ban or discontinue it (see model letters 3a and 3b).

### Model Letters 3a/b:

These letters confirm the outcome of the review of the ban by the Chair of Governors. In the event that the decision is made to confirm the ban, a date should be included for a further review. This should be for a reasonable period, possibly extending up to three months, but preferably not longer than six months.

If the parent is dissatisfied with this decision, it is suggested in the model letter that the matter is then appropriately considered by a panel of school governors (equivalent to the fourth stage of the West Sussex County Council model school complaints procedure).

### Model Letters 4a/b:

These letters can be used to confirm the outcome of further reviews of decisions where the ban has been extended. When a review is due to take place, it is advisable to notify the parent in advance and invite them to make any representations.