Wincanton Primary School

Parental Behaviour Policy

Approved by the Headteacher **December 2023**

Proposed Date of Future Review: **December 2025**

Signed Graeme Wilson. **Headteacher**

Statement of principles

This policy has been written taking into account the DfE Guidance 'Controlling access to school premises' dated November 2018.

At Wincanton Primary School we have good relationships with our parents/carers and value the contribution that parents/carers play in the life of the school and in their children's education. We provide many opportunities for parents to engage with school life including parents' evenings, invitations to assemblies and participation in special celebrations.

We want all parents/carers to be confident that there are arrangements in school to keep their children safe. As part of our safeguarding procedures the school has put in place this parental behaviour policy to ensure that behaviour from other parents/carers does not cause the children and staff in school to feel distressed, threatened or unsafe.

Rationale

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 other users of the premises is contrary to the aims of the school.

School premises are private property with no right of public access. Parents/carers of children attending the school have an implied licence (permission) to be on its site for the purpose of delivering or collecting their child/ren before, during and after the school day, and attending pre- arranged meetings or events.

That licence may be suspended or withdrawn for an individual whose behaviour or language poses a risk to staff or pupils.

Expectations

We expect parents, carers and visitors to:

- Respect the caring ethos and values of the school.
- Appreciate that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Ensure that approaching school staff for help to resolve an issue is done in an appropriate manner.
- Treat all members of the school community with courtesy and respect using appropriate language and behaviour.
- Understand that the school needs to work with a child in order to clarify their version of events in order to bring about an appropriate solution to an issue.

- Correct their child's actions especially where it could lead to conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour – both on and off the school premises.

Definition of unacceptable behaviour

We consider that aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language from a parent/carer presents a risk to staff or pupils. Unacceptable behaviour is such that makes a member of staff or pupil feel threatened. 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
- raising of voice so as to be intimidating
- physical intimidation, e.g. by standing very close to an individual or the use of aggressive hand gestures
- use of foul or abusive language
- any kind of physical abuse
- allegations which turn out to be vexatious or malicious.

Continuing to display behaviour which a member of staff has made clear is unacceptable and requested that it ceases, will result in the procedures described below being invoked.

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, a written report of the incident will be completed and the Headteacher 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.

Any act of physical violence towards a member of the school community by a parent/carer, or other adult family member, will be reported to the police.

Risk Assessment

The Headteacher will carry out a risk assessment in order to help make a decision about the appropriate level of response. The Headteacher will consider the following questions:

- What form did the behaviour 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/carer's behaviour?

- Is there any evidence of provocation?
- How high is the assessed risk that this will be repeated? (low, medium, high).

Actions

After consideration, the Headteacher will confirm to the parent/carer the actions required to address the issue, including where appropriate, any conditions to be imposed in relation to access to the school premises, or communications between the parent/carer and the school.

If the impact of the incident on others and associated level of risk is severe, or a warning about unacceptable behaviour has previously been given, the Headteacher may advise the Chair of Governors to give immediate written notice that the parent/carer is provisionally banned from entering the school site.

In that event, the parent/carer may submit in writing their case that the ban is not justified to the Chair of Governors within 10 days of receiving notice. If after examination of the facts the Chair concludes that the ban is justified, it will be confirmed, subject to review further review at three monthly intervals.

In the above circumstances, children in Year 3 and above may be brought to school and collected at the end of the school day, but the person subject to a ban must not go beyond the school gates for the duration of the ban. For younger children, if it is not possible to arrange for another adult to bring them into school, arrangements will be made for them to be collected and returned to their parent/carer at the school gates by a member of staff.

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996

Any person who enters the school site uninvited while subject to a ban is trespassing. If they refuse to leave when asked, or otherwise create a disturbance, they are committing an offence under the above legislation and are open to criminal charges and a fine of £500.

Abusive phone calls

Calls will be terminated if a parent/carer shouts, is abusive or speaks in an aggressive or intimidating tone over the telephone and fails to stop when requested. Such incidents will be subject to reporting and assessment as described in previous sections.

The Headteacher may consider limiting future telephone contact to a designated member of staff, or restricting all communication to emails, if deemed necessary.

Inappropriate use of Social Networking Sites

Social media websites are sometimes used to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, head teachers, school staff, and in some cases, other parents/pupils.

The Governors of Wincanton Primary School consider the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interest of the children or the whole school community.

Any concerns parents/carers may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, Senior Leader, the Headteacher and lastly the Chair of Governors, so that they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned. Where concerns are raised with the class teacher via their class email account, they will do their best to provide an initial response within two working days – Monday to Friday during school hours.

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren being educated at Wincanton Primary School is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the social network site. All social networks 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 pupil 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.