



St Edward's
RC/CE VA School

Building mutually respectful communication with parents, carers and callers

Reviewed and Approved by the Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare Committee on 28th March 2019

Reviewed and Ratified at the Full Governing Body on 4th April 2019

Next review date: Spring 2021

SLT are responsible for oversight of this policy's implementation

1. Statement of intent

St Edward's School encourages close links with parents and carers and the community. We believe that our students benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. We strive to make our school a place where we model for children the Christian behaviour we teach and expect. We promote respect for all with whom we work, and celebrate differences in a positive manner. We place a high importance on good manners and positive communication, founded on mutual respect. The vast majority of parents and carers and others visiting, or calling our 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 school staff.

Our school expects and requires its 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 staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse and the right, in an extreme case, of appropriate self-defence.

We expect all visitors and callers, and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards school staff. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable in various modes of communication with our school.

2a. Behaviour

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated: This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour:

- Shouting at school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, eg standing very close to her/him
- The use of aggressive hand gestures
- Threatening, belittling, disparaging, or insulting school staff
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Swearing at a member of school staff
- Pushing
- Hitting, eg slapping, punching and kicking
- Spitting
- Racist, sexist or other derogatory comments
- Breaking the school's security procedures

Unacceptable behaviour will result in the Local Education Authority, the Diocesan Board of Education, the Chair of Governors and the Police being informed. Legal action may follow. The school site is comprehensively covered by CCTV and footage may be used in evidence.

2b. Behaviour on the telephone

If telephone conversations become threatening, abusive or contemptuous, members of staff are instructed to terminate the call and report the incident. In line with many institutions, all calls to and from the school are recorded for security and training purposes. The school may restrict future telephone contact with the caller, to the extent that it feels necessary.

2c. Behaviour online and/or via email

School staff have the right to be treated with respect, both in person, or via remote communication. The immediacy of electronic communication can result in ill-considered messages and emails to the school. Aggression, contempt, and/or disparaging remarks in emails, and via social media, can adversely affect staff. In exercising its duty of care towards employees, the school may pursue offenders and/or restrict communication and/or access in regard to the offender(s) to the extent that it feels is necessary. The school will act in cases where an individual, or individuals are making defamatory, or offensive comments about members of staff or Governors online, including in email correspondence.

3. Procedure

When a visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school staff the Headteacher or appropriate senior staff will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. If a person refuses to use the informal and formal complaints procedure, the school will consider the concern closed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a visitor may be banned by the Headteacher from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review. The school also reserves the right to restrict access to members of staff, or to only communicate on terms that the school feels are appropriate under the circumstances, for the duration of time determined by the school.

In the event of aggression towards, or intimidation of staff, an investigation will be conducted and an incident report form will be completed and evidence taken from witnesses.

If a ban is deemed appropriate the following steps will be taken:

1. The person or persons will be informed, in writing, that s/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, eg that an injunction application may follow.
2. Where an assault or threatening behaviour has led to a ban, a statement confirming that the matter has been reported to the Local Education Authority and the Police will be included.
3. The Chair of Governors will be informed of the ban.
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for students being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

Where such behaviour does occur on site, the person involved will be instructed to leave the premises or be taken to a room away from other persons.

4. Conclusion

St Edward's School will always take action where behaviour or communication are unacceptable and constitutes a breach of our home-school code of conduct, health and safety legislation, or negatively impacts upon any of our staff.

Member of SLT responsible for oversight of the implementation and review of this policy: Mr M Antram