

THE HARLINGTON AND SUNDON ACADEMY TRUST



HARLINGTON LOWER AND SUNDON LOWER SCHOOL MANAGING ABUSIVE PARENTS/CARERS OR VISITORS TO THE TRUST

Approved by Curriculum Trustee Committee: February 2021

Approved by Board of Trustees: April 2021

Next review: February 2023

Statement of principles

The ethos of The Harlington & Sundon Academy Trust encourages close links with parents and the community. The staff and Trustees believe that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one.

The vast majority of parents, carers and others visiting 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 members of school staff or the wider school community.

The Board of Trustees expects and requires its members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations and attempt to defuse the situation where possible and when it is safe to do so, seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. However, all members of 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 parents and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards members of school staff and pupils. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where behaviour is unacceptable.

Behaviour

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

- shouting at members of the school staff, parents or children either in person or over the telephone
- physically intimidating a member of staff, parent or child e.g. standing very close to her/him
- the use of aggressive hand gestures
- threatening behaviour
- shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- swearing
- using abusive/ offensive language
- pushing
- hitting, e.g. slapping, punching and kicking
- spitting
- racist, sexist, homophobic or transgender comments
- breaching the school's security procedures

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour. **Unacceptable behaviour may result in the local authority and the police being informed of the incident.**

Procedure to be followed

If a parent/carer or visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation, and if the unacceptable behaviour continues, terminate the meeting and ask the visitor to leave the premises. If necessary, the school's complaints procedures should be followed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continue, or where there is an extreme act of violence, a parent or carer may be banned by the Head Teacher or

Chair of Trustees from the school premises for a period of time, subject to review as defined in section 547 of the Education Act (1996) In imposing a ban the following steps will be taken:

1. The school may in the first instance warn the parent that they are minded to ban them and seek reassurance about future behaviour. If reassurance is not forthcoming, then the school will proceed as in 2 below including details of how long the ban will last. Depending on the severity of the offence, the school may impose an immediate ban as in 2 below.
2. The parent/carer will be informed, in writing, that she/he is banned from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if the ban is breached, e.g. that police involvement or an injunction application may follow.
3. 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.
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified.

Conclusion

If a parent/carer/visitor is intimidating, threatening or aggressive towards any member of the school community any interaction will be terminated immediately and the person will be instructed to leave the premises. Further action may be taken by the school.

The local authority itself may 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, to ensure fairness and consistency.

Attached letter templates.



We support children in becoming well rounded individuals where they naturally demonstrate the values of the school in all aspects of their lives.

Template 1

Warning

Model letter 1; this is an initial letter from the Head Teacher to ensure the parents is clear about behaviour standards expected by the school. This letter contains a warning about further action if there are other incidents. The letter invites a written response and suggests a meeting.

Imposing conditions on a parent's attendance at school events

Model letter 2; This is a letter from the Head Teacher informing parents of the school's decision to impose conditions on the parent's attendance at school events, pending review by the Chair of Trustees.

Model letter 3; Letter from the Chair of Trustees informing parent of their decision to confirm or remove the conditions.

Imposing a ban

Model letter 4; Letter from the Head Teacher informing parents of the school's intention to impose a ban on their attendance at school premises, pending review by the Chair of Trustees.

Model letter 5; Letter from the Chair of Trustees informing parent of their decision to confirm or remove the ban.

Reviewing the decision to impose conditions or impose a ban

Model letter 6; Letter from the Company Secretary of the Trust requesting statement from parents to the Board of Trustees for review of decision.

Model letter 7; Letter from the Company Secretary of the Trust to confirm the outcome of further reviews of decisions where the imposition of conditions/ban has been extended or removed.

Model letter 1; Warning – sent by the Head Teacher

RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear

I have received a report about your conduct at the school on.....(time & date). This appears to fall far short of what we would expect of a parent of a pupil at the Harlington and Sundon Academy Trust.

(Add factual summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, pupils, and other parents)

I must inform you that the Board of Trustees will not tolerate aggression towards members of the school community and will act to protect its staff and pupils from any form of abuse or intimidation. I should warn you that any future conduct of this nature could result in the school imposing conditions restricting your access to the school or banning you from contacting or attending school all together.

I wish to give you an opportunity to give me in writing any comments or observations of your own relating to the report which I have received about your conduct. Please do so within 10 working days of the date of this letter. These comments may include any assurances you are prepared to give about your future good conduct. There is than an option for us to meet to discuss the situation and how it can be avoided in the future.

Details of our policy on dealing with abusive parents can be found on our school website.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

cc: Chair of Trustees

Model letter 2; Imposing conditions on the parent's attendance at school events, pending review (sent by the Head Teacher)

RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear.....

I have received a report from(name of staff) about your conduct on.....
at.....

(add summary of incident and its effect on staff and pupils)

You will recollect that I have already written to you about a previous incident on ...(date) warning you of the consequence of any further insulting or aggressive behaviour on your part

I must inform you that the Trustees, in line with our policy, will not tolerate conduct of this nature on the school premises and will act to defend school staff and pupils.

I am therefore writing to inform you that I am imposing conditions on the contact you may have with the school. These are as follows; (delete as appropriate

- You must be accompanied to any meeting with a member of school staff
- You may not contact by telephone or in writing any member of staff. You may contact either the Head Teacher or the Chair of Trustees
- You may not attend any events for parents except those where you will be accompanied by a member of the senior Leadership Team of the school.
- Other as are reasonable and proportionate

The restrictions above are provisional until they have been reviewed by the Chair of Trustees. Please consider them to be in force until you receive further confirmation.

The Chair of Trustees, will need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm or overturn this decision. You may, if you wish, send in writing any comments or observations of your own within 10 working days of the date of this letter. These comments may be to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct. You will be advised in writing of the outcome of the decision.

If on receipt of your comments, the Chair of Trustees considers that the Head Teacher's decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of how conditions will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

cc: Chair of Trustees

Model letter 3; Letter to confirm or overturn Head Teacher's decision to impose conditions (sent by Chair of Trustees)

RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear.....

(Head teacher's name).....has written to you on (date)... to details concerns about an incident when your behaviour towards (name).. fell short of what we would expect as a school. You will be aware that the Head Teacher has written to you previously about your behaviour toward staff.

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from dated....., the contents of which I have considered carefully.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Head Teacher's report and your letter. I have determined that the decision to impose conditions on your contact with school should be confirmed. The conditions are as follows:

- (Copy conditions from Head Teacher's letter)

This decision will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees in approximately six months' time. The Company Secretary of the Trust will write to you in advance of the meeting to ask you to provide a written statement for their consideration. When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the application of conditions to attend school premises, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you; and any evidence of your co-operation with the school in other respects.

OR

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Head Teacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose conditions on you should be overturned. You may hence attend school events as normal. However, should there be a repeat of inappropriate behaviour toward staff, all of the above sanctions may be applied.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Trustees

cc: Head Teacher

Model letter 4; Imposition of a ban on contacting or attending the school, pending review (sent by the Head Teacher)

RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear.....

I have received a report from(name of staff) about your conduct on.....
at.....

(add summary of incident and its effect on staff and pupils)

You will recollect that I have already written to you about a previous incident on ...(date) warning you of the consequence of any further insulting or aggressive behaviour on your part

I must inform you that the Trustees, in line with our policy, will not tolerate conduct of this nature on the school premises and will act to defend school staff and pupils.

I am therefore writing to inform you that I am recommending imposing a ban on you attending or contacting the school. This means you may not attend school for any reason whatsoever. You must not make contact with any member of staff by telephone or e-mail. You do, however, have the right to attend one meeting per year to discuss your child's progress. This meeting will be with me. I will contact you to arrange this at the time of the next parent's consultation meetings.

The restrictions above are provisional until they have been reviewed by the Chair of Trustees
Please consider them to be in force until you receive further confirmation.

The Chair of Trustees, will need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm or overturn this decision. Please send, in writing, any comments or observations of your own within 10 working days of the date of this letter. These comments may be to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct.

If on receipt of your comments, the Chair of Trustees considers that the Head Teacher's decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of this ban will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

cc: Chair of Trustees

Model letter 5; Letter to confirm or overturn head Teacher's decision to impose a ban (sent by Chair of Trustees)

RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear.....

(Head teacher's name).....has written to you on (date)... to details concerns about an incident when your behaviour towards (name).. fell short of what we would expect as a school. You will be aware that the Head Teacher has written to you previously about your behaviour toward staff.

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from dated....., the contents of which I have considered carefully.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Head Teacher's report and your letter. I have determined that the decision to impose a ban on you should be confirmed. This means you may not attend school for any reason whatsoever. You must not make contact with any member of staff by telephone or e-mail. You do, however, have the right to attend one meeting per year to discuss your child's progress. This meeting will be with the Head Teacher.

This decision will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees in approximately six months' time. The Company Secretary of the Trust will write to you in advance of the meeting to ask you to provide a written statement for their consideration. When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the application of conditions to attend school premises, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you; and any evidence of your co-operation with the school in other respects.

OR

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Head Teacher's report and your letter, I have determined that the decision to impose a ban should be overturned. You may hence attend school events as normal. However, should there be a repeat of inappropriate behaviour toward staff, all of the above sanctions may be applied.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Trustees

cc: Head Teacher

Model letter 6; Letter from Company Secretary of the Trust requesting parent's statement for review by Board of Trustees (sent by Company Secretary)

RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear.....

The Head Teacher wrote to you on ...(date) to detail concerns about your behaviour towards school staff/pupils falling short of what we would expect as a school. As a result of this incident, conditions were imposed on you/a ban was imposed on you.

The decision will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees at their next meeting on(date)

I am writing to ask whether you would like to make a written statement to the Trustees for their consideration in making the decision whether to remove the restriction or extend it.

If you should wish to make a written statement, please can you e-mail it to me at harlingtonlower@harlington.cbeds.co.uk by.....(parents should be given 10 days to respond).

Yours sincerely

Company Secretary
The Harlington and Sundon Academy Trust

cc; Head Teacher
Chair of Trustees

Model letter 7; Letter detailing outcome of Board of Trustees review (sent by Company Secretary of the Trust)

RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear.....

I wrote to you on ...(date) to request a statement to enable the Board of Trustees to review the school's decision to impose conditions/ban you from attending school premises.

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a written response from you dated....., the contents of which were considered carefully by the Board of Trustees at their meeting on ...(date).

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Head Teacher's report (and your letter), the Board of Trustees have determined that the decision to impose conditions/ban you from attending or contacting school should be confirmed. The conditions of your attendance on site are as follows:

- You must be accompanied to any meeting with a member of school staff
- You may not contact by telephone or in writing any member of staff. You may contact either the Head Teacher or the Chair of Trustees
- You may not attend any events for parents except those where you will be accompanied by a member of the senior Leadership Team of the school.
- Any other condition imposed

OR

- You must not attend any event in school except for an annual meeting about your child's progress. This meeting will be conducted by the Head Teacher
- You may not contact by telephone or in writing any member of staff

This decision will be reviewed again in six months' time. When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the application of conditions to attend school premises, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you; and any evidence of your co-operation with the school in other respects.

OR

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the Head Teacher's report and your letter, The Board of Trustees have determined that you should once again be allowed to attend parent's events as usual. All conditions have been removed. However, should there be a repeat of inappropriate behaviour towards staff this decision may be revoked.

Yours sincerely

Company Secretary
The Harlington and Sundon Academy Trust

cc; Head Teacher
Chair of Trustees