



GOODYERS END PRIMARY SCHOOL

Parent Behaviour/Code of Conduct Policy

Adopted by the Governing Body:

Electronic Copy Signed by: Mark Lovick, Chair of Governors

Claire Hall, Headteacher

Date: Autumn 2022

Date of next review: Autumn 2025

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Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

1. CP & Safeguarding Policy
2. Parental Use of Social Networking & Internet Sites Policy
3. School Visitors policy

Rationale

As a general rule, Schools are orderly, safe places, where relationships between staff and visitors, especially parents/carers, demonstrate mutual respect and recognition of shared responsibility for pupils' welfare and educational progress. Parental involvement is an important factor in educational success and in dealing with emerging problems at an early stage.

All members of a school community are entitled to be able to work, learn or visit without fear of verbal or physical assault. It is the purpose of this policy to promote and support this entitlement and provide guidance to all School stakeholders as to how this might occur.

On occasion, the behaviour of some parents/carers/adults can cause severe disruption or worse, result in abusive or aggressive behaviour towards staff, pupils, or other members of the School community. This policy outlines the approach taken when this occurs.

Underlying Principles

- Positive relationships between parents/carers and visitors are greatly valued; partnership working is seen as enhancing the education of all pupils in the School
- Parents and visitors are welcome to come into School to discuss matters of concern with members of staff in a polite and respectful manner.
- All meetings held in School are by mutual consent and will take place in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.
- School staff and parents/visitors will act reasonably and responsibly in dealing with issues of concern, including verbally (i.e. on the telephone) and in person during ad-hoc discussions and pre-arranged meetings.
- Parents with concerns or complaints about pupils other than their own should not deal with the pupil in question but should address their concerns to a member of school staff.
- All parties will work together to resolve difficulties, even when they relate to matters of a personal nature.
- Parents should allow the school a reasonable period of time to investigate complaints/concerns, in compliance with the schools complaints procedures.

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Context

The School has a zero tolerance policy towards verbal or physical acts of an intimidating or threatening nature. The following statement is visible across the School site:-

Visitors are welcome at Goodyers End Primary School. We are here to help you and are committed to resolving any problems or questions you may have in a professional and caring manner. We also expect parents and carers to speak to all our staff in a polite and courteous manner.

We will not tolerate violence, rudeness or aggressive behaviour from anyone towards our staff, pupils and other members of our school community.

The school and Local Authority have legal powers to take action against any person who behaves inappropriately which includes prohibiting access to the school site and restricting contact with school staff.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour might include, but are not limited to:-

- The use of offensive language on the School site or in communications with staff
- Shouting at staff or behaving in a verbally aggressive or threatening manner
- Making disparaging comments about staff, children or other families
- Commenting about issues with the School on social media (*please see separate policy on Parental Use of Social Networking and Internet Sites*)

Unacceptable behaviour is determined to be that which makes another individual feel threatened, intimidated, anxious or at risk of harm. Therefore, this cannot be determined by what is 'acceptable' behaviour to the perpetrator or wholly encompassed in a policy document.

Unreasonable Complainants

Goodyers End Primary School is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly and impartially, and to providing a high quality service to those who complain. We will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the school. However, we do not expect our staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect staff from that behaviour, including that which is abusive, offensive or threatening.

Goodyers End Primary defines unreasonable complainants as *'those who, because of the frequency or nature of their contacts with the school, hinder our consideration of their or other people's complaints'*.

A complaint may be regarded as unreasonable when the person making the complaint:-

- refuses to articulate their complaint or specify the grounds of a complaint or the outcomes sought by raising the complaint, despite offers of assistance;
- refuses to co-operate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;
- refuses to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure;
- insists on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice;
- introduces trivial or irrelevant information which the complainant expects to be taken into account and commented on, or raises large numbers of detailed but unimportant questions, and insists they are fully answered, often immediately and

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- to their own timescales;
- makes unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issues, and seeks to have them replaced;
- changes the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds;
- repeatedly makes the same complaint (despite previous investigations or responses concluding that the complaint is groundless or has been addressed);
- refuses to accept the findings of the investigation into that complaint where the school's complaint procedure has been fully and properly implemented and completed including referral to the Department for Education;
- seeks an unrealistic outcome;
- makes excessive demands on school time by frequent, lengthy, complicated and stressful contact with staff regarding the complaint in person, in writing, by email and by telephone while the complaint is being dealt with.

A complaint may also be considered unreasonable if the person making the complaint does so either face-to-face, by telephone or in writing or electronically:-

- maliciously;
- aggressively;
- using threats, intimidation or violence;
- using abusive, offensive or discriminatory language;
- knowing it to be false;
- using falsified information;
- publishing unacceptable information in a variety of media such as in social media websites and newspapers.

Complainants should limit the numbers of communications with a school while a complaint is being progressed. It is not helpful if repeated correspondence is sent, (by either letter, phone, email or text) as it could delay the outcome being reached.

Whenever possible, the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will discuss any concerns with the complainant informally before applying an 'unreasonable' marking.

If the behaviour continues the Headteacher will write to the complainant explaining that their behaviour is unreasonable and asking them to change it. For complainants who excessively contact Goodyers End Primary School causing a significant level of disruption, we may specify methods of communication and limit the number of contacts in a communication plan. This will usually be reviewed after 6 months.

In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the concerns and actions taken will be put in writing immediately and the police informed. This may include banning an individual from Goodyers End Primary School.

Actions

At Goodyers End Primary School we encourage partnerships with our parents and work very hard to maintain mutual respect and recognition of shared responsibility for the children.

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On **any occasion** where the behaviour of a Parent/Carer, other adult or visitor to School causes disruption, resulting in abusive or aggressive behaviour towards staff, where staff feel vulnerable, threatened, or where the behaviour of the adult causes distress to children; action will be taken. This could result in the police being called to the school.

An investigation will be undertaken and if an adult's behaviour is found to be unreasonable, permission for them to be on the School premises may be withdrawn. At this point, they will become a 'trespasser'. The School will respond in a measured way, depending on the seriousness of any inappropriate conduct e.g.:

- 1. Conduct investigation into the alleged unacceptable behaviour**
- 2. Initiate a meeting/dialogue with the individual to discuss the unacceptable behaviour**
 - **Or / and**
- 3. Write to the visitor, describing their misconduct, explaining its impact on the School and stating its unacceptability;**

- 4. Warn of the possibility of a "ban" (i.e. the withdrawal of their license) if the misconduct is repeated**
- 5. Impose a ban with a review after a fixed period**
- 6. Impose a ban without review**

There are also other exceptional circumstances when a parent/carer will be automatically banned from the school premises; these include if a parent/carer is a registered sex offender (for sexual offenses against children), a parent/carer has been prosecuted for harming children. In the case of a parent/carer who is on the sex offender register for offences involving children (whether historical or not) where a charge and conviction has taken place automatic ban will be put in place to protect all areas of the School community.

The Schools Position

Section 206 of the Education Act 2002 makes it a criminal offence punishable with a fine of up to £500 for a person to trespass on School premises and cause a nuisance or disturbance.

Parents and some other visitors have implied permission to be on School premises at certain times and for certain purposes and they will not therefore be trespassers unless the implied permission (license) is withdrawn.

If a parent/carer or other person behaves unreasonably on school premises, the steps detailed above will be followed.

If a person who has been banned subsequently trespasses and causes a nuisance or disturbance the matter will be referred to the County Council's Head of Legal Services who will write a warning letter.

Further breaches may lead to prosecution of the person concerned by either the Police or the Head of Legal Services.

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