

HOWITT PRIMARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

(Part of Embark Academy Trust)



**Policy on abusive or threatening behaviour
from parents, carers or visitors on school
premises
September 2024**

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Statement of intent

Howitt Primary Community School encourages close links with parents/carers and the community. We believe that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. This view is one that is shared by other stakeholders within our community.

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, threatening behaviour, verbal and /or physical abuse towards a member of the school community.

Our school expects and requires staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations, and to attempt to defuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. However, all members of the school community 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/carers and other visitors to behave in a reasonable way towards other members of the school community. This policy outlines the steps that will be taken where parent/carer/visitor behaviour is unacceptable and seen as “disorderly conduct” (*verbal abuse, threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour or any disorderly behaviour whereby a person is caused alarm, harassment or distress*)

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated towards any member of the school community

This is not an exclusive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour:

- Shouting, either in person or over the telephone
- Speaking in an aggressive/threatening tone
- Physically intimidating e.g. standing very close to her/him
- The use of aggressive hand gestures/exaggerated movements
- Physical threats
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Swearing
- Pushing
- Hitting e.g. slapping, punching or kicking
- Spitting
- Racist or sexist comments
- Breaking the school’s security procedures

Unacceptable behaviour may result in the police being informed of the incident.

Procedures

When a parent/carer or member of the public behaves in an unacceptable way during a telephone conversation, staff at school have the right to terminate the call. The incident will be reported by staff to the Senior Leadership Team. The school reserves the right to take any necessary actions to ensure that members of the school community are not subjected to verbal abuse. The school may warn the aggressor, ban them from the school, and/or contact the police.

When a parent/carer/visitor behaves in an unacceptable way in person towards a member of the school staff, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and aggression or intimidation continues, or where there is an extreme act of violence, the discussion will be terminated and the parent/carer/visitor will be asked to leave the school immediately. The police will be called if necessary. A parent/carer/visitor may be banned from the school premises for a period of time, which will be determined by the school.

Prior to being banned the following steps will be taken:

- The parent/carer/visitor 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 (for example, that an injunction application may follow).
- The co-chairs of governors will be informed of the ban.
- Incidents of verbal or physical abuse towards staff may result in the police being informed, and may result in prosecution.
- Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from, the school gate will be clarified.

Actions to be taken if an incident occurs

- **Incident report**
If an incident involving violence, threatening behaviour or abuse does occur then an incident report form (Appendix 1) will be completed by the member of the school community against whom the abuse was directed.
- **Step 1: First warning**
The headteacher will speak to the person or persons perpetrating such an incident privately. This meeting may be on a 1-1 basis or either party can be accompanied. In the case of the headteacher this would be a member of staff. It will be put to the person that such behaviour is unacceptable and an assurance will be sought that such an incident will not be repeated. It will be stressed on this occasion that repetition of such an incident will result in further more serious action being taken.

The headteacher will write to the adult(s) informing them that this conduct is unacceptable.

The process may be accelerated according to the level of behaviour

- **Step 2: Final written warning**

If a second incident occurs involving the same person or persons, the co-chairs of governors will write to the adult(s) giving a final warning that this abusive and threatening behaviour is unacceptable, and that a repetition of this conduct will leave the governors no option but to involve the Embark Trust and/or the police.

The process may be accelerated according to the level of behaviour.

- **Step 3: Ban from the premises**

If such an incident recurs, or if an initial incident is considered serious enough by the headteacher, this may result in a person or persons being excluded from school premises. The Trust may consider taking legal action to enforce a ban. Therefore an assurance will need to be sought from members of the school community who witnessed the offence that they will be prepared to give evidence in court should the need arise.

- **Step 4: Involvement of the Embark Trust and police**

If, following a decision to ban a person from the school premises, that person nevertheless persists in entering school premises and causes a nuisance or disturbance, such a person may be removed from the school premises as a trespasser and prosecuted.

- All parents/carers, even if excluded from school premises following action by the Trust, have a right to be informed about their child's educational progress. This could be achieved through a meeting with the other parent/carer or through a written report.

This policy will be used in conjunction with the following policies:

Health and Safety Policy

Complaints Procedure

Safeguarding Policy

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Appendix 1

Abusive or threatening behaviour – incident report form

1. Details

Date of incident:

Time:

Location:.....

2. Member of staff reporting the incident

Name:

Position.....

3. Details of person assaulted/verbally abused

Name:.....

Job / position (if member of staff)

4. Details of verbal abuser/assailant/trespasser (if known)

.....
.....

5. Witness(es) if any

Name

6. Details of incident (please attach witness statement)

.....
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.....
.....

7. Outcome (see Policy)

Step

Has abuser been involved in any previous incidents?.....

Name and contact details of police officer involved/incident number:

.....
.....

Form completed by:

Signed:

Date:

Please return to the headteacher as soon as possible.