



Protocol for dealing with unacceptable behaviour from parents/carers or visitors on school premises

1. Position statement

This protocol has been written taking into account relevant DfE Guidance as well as professional guidance on dealing with unacceptable behaviour from parents/carers or visitors on school premises.

Insight MAT values the positive relationships forged with parents and visitors to its schools. We encourage close links with parents and the community and believe that children and young people benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. We also strive to make our schools places where, as adults, we model for students the behaviour we teach and expect. In general, we place a high importance on good manners, positive communication, and mutual respect.

The vast majority of parents, carers and other visitors to the schools within Insight Multi-Academy Trust are supportive of each school, its teachers, other members of staff, its students, their parents/carers and other visitors, and act in a reasonable way, ensuring that the school is a safe, orderly environment in which children and young people can learn.

However, at times, the behaviour of a small number of parents/carers or visitors falls short of what we expect. This may manifest itself in aggression or abuse towards members of the school community. This can be in written communication (including social media), on the telephone or in face-to-face incidents.

Insight MAT requires teachers and other members of staff to behave professionally in these difficult situations, attempting to defuse the situation wherever possible, and to seek the involvement of other members of staff as appropriate. However, all teachers and members of staff have the right to work without fear of harassment, violence, intimidation or abuse. We expect parents and other visitors to always behave in a reasonable way towards all members of the Insight MAT community. This protocol outlines the steps that will be taken where the behaviour displayed falls below the standard expected and will not be tolerated.

Please note: In education law, the term "parent" includes the natural or adoptive parents of a student, as well as a non-parent with care of a student and a non-parent with parental responsibility of a student. For the purposes of this protocol only, the term "parent" will also include a non-parent who does not have care of or parental responsibility for a student, but who is involved in looking after a student on a regular basis (for example, a childminder, non-resident partner of a parent or relative who takes the student to or from school, is involved with the care of the child or young person in some other way, or a person whose emergency contact number we have been provided with).

2. Expectation:

Insight MAT expects all members of the school community treat each other with respect and demonstrate the following;

- That adults set a good example to children and young people at all times, showing them how to get along with all members of the school and the wider community

- That no members of staff, parents/carers, children or young people are the victims of abusive behaviour or open to threats from other adults on the school premises
- Physical attacks and threatening behaviour, abusive or insulting language verbal or written, to staff, governors, trustees, parents/carers, children, young people and other users of the school premises will not be tolerated and will result in withdrawal of permission to be on school premises
- Any parent/carer or visitor who is asked to leave the school premises will have the right to appeal the decision by writing to the Chair of Governors. Please note that all incidents of rudeness will be logged and passed to the headteacher the school.

3. Visitors Code of Conduct

We expect visitors to:

- Understand that both teachers/school staff and parents/carers need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that all members of the school community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and behaviour.
- Seek to clarify a student's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue.

4. Permission to enter the premises

Schools are not public places and anyone who enters without permission of the headteacher is trespassing. Parents have "implied permission" to enter and be on the premises for reasons relating to their child / children's education. This means that parents/carers are welcome to come to the school to speak to teachers and other members of staff about their children, or for meetings, parents' evenings and social events. Parents/carers do not have a legal right to enter or be on the school's premises without a good reason.

- Correct their own child's behaviour especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour.
- Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern.
- Avoid using staff as threats to admonish children's behaviour.

5. Withdrawal of permission to enter and be on Insight MAT Premises

Whilst some groups of people, such as parents/carers, have an "implied permission" to enter school premises, this may be withdrawn in the event of inappropriate conduct.

Insight MAT has the right to withdraw the "implied permission" for a parent/carer or visitor to enter or be on the premises if their behaviour while they were previously on the premises was unacceptable. The withdrawal of the "implied permission" will be effective as soon as the parent/carer or other visitor has been told that they must leave and are prohibited from returning and will be confirmed in writing by recorded delivery if the home address is known. The full procedure that the school will follow is outlined in further detail below.

Once the "implied permission" has been withdrawn, the school will ask the police to remove the parent/carer or visitor if they appear on the premises in future.

It is an offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996 for any person (including a parent/carer) to cause a nuisance or disturbance on school premises, such as trespass, public order and criminal damage. Under section 547 school staff have a right to make a report to the police and request their assistance under such circumstances.

If the parent/carer or visitor causes a nuisance or disturbance while they are on the school's premises, they may also be prosecuted in the criminal courts under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996, be liable to pay a fine of up to £500 and have a criminal conviction recorded against them.

6. What constitutes inappropriate behaviour?

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated towards any member of the school community. NB: This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour:

- shouting, either in person or over the telephone
- swearing, either in person or over the telephone
- emails which are combative or aggressive in tone and language
- constant emails and/or phone calls which amount to harassment and intimidation, despite the school's best efforts to address a situation
- inappropriate posting on Social Networking sites which could bring the school into disrepute or be deemed as bullying including publishing abusive or inappropriate content with regards to the school, teachers or students on social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter or in email communication
- any form of physical violence, such as pushing or hitting
- physical intimidation, e.g. standing unnecessarily close to an individual
- the use of rude or aggressive hand gestures, including shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of their actions towards your own children
- smoking and consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs on school premises
- dogs being brought on to school premises with the exception of assistance dogs
- damaging or destroying school property.
- spitting
- racist or sexist comments including sexual innuendo
- any other form of abuse which appears personalised to the person on the receiving end of that abuse.

7. Inappropriate use of Social Networking Sites:

Social media websites are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, headteachers, staff, and in some cases, other parents and students. Insight MAT considers use of social media websites in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community.

Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher or form tutor, Head of Year, Senior Leader or in extreme cases, the Headteacher, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned. The Complaints Policy is available on the

school's or Insight MAT websites and outlines the process of making a more formal complaint if concerns are not resolved.

In the event that any Insight MAT pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report content or activity which breaches this.

Insight MAT will expect that any parent/carer or student removes such comments immediately and content will be reported to the headteacher. In serious cases the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites.

Additionally, and perhaps more importantly is the issue of cyber bullying and the use by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry.

8. Procedures

8.1 Staff Conduct

Staff are advised to communicate with parents/carers, whatever the circumstances, in the following manner:

- Speak calmly and without raising your voice
- Be assertive but not aggressive
- Be polite but firm
- Seek assistance if necessary
- Politely terminate the conversation if necessary, explaining your reasons.

In the event of an emergency, staff should request assistance from a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Pastoral staff, if available, otherwise the nearest member(s) of staff. The member of SLT/Pastoral will request that the person causing offence leave the premises. Should the person not leave the premises then they should be informed that the police will be called.

The incident should then be recorded and use direct quotes where language has been unacceptable.

8.2 Recording Incidents

Any of the following incidents must be recorded by email to the headteacher:

- Trespass
- Verbal abuse
- Sexual or racial comments or abuse
- Threats
- Aggression
- Physical violence
- Intentional damage to personal property or the school's property
- Any injuries to staff or children

8.3 Risk assessment

In the event of a parent/carer or visitor behaving in an inappropriate way, each situation will need to be considered individually by the headteacher or a designated member of staff. The following factors, where applicable, should be taken into account as a risk assessment, before deciding on the most appropriate course of action:

- Has the parent/carer or visitor been verbally aggressive/threatening/ intimidating?
- Has the parent/carer or visitor been physically aggressive/threatening/ intimidating?
- What evidence is there? What do witnesses say happened?
- Does the parent/carer or visitor have a known previous history of aggression/violence?
- Do members of the school staff/community feel intimidated by the parent's/carer's or visitor's behaviour?
- Have students witnessed aggressive/threatening/intimidating behaviour from the parent/carer or visitor?
- Have students been approached inappropriately by the parent/carer or visitor?
- Has the parent/carer or visitor been abusive to school staff, students or visitors?
- Has the parent/carer or visitor been persistently abusive to school staff, students or visitors?
- Was the parent/carer or visitor provoked in any way prior to their behaviour and/or does the parent claim to have been provoked?
- Is there evidence of provocation?
- How frequently have the behaviours occurred?
- Is there a risk (low, medium or high) that the behaviour may be repeated?

8.4 Action to be taken in the event of an incident;

Step 1: Verbal Warning

The headteacher, member of SLT or delegated member of staff will speak to the person or persons perpetrating such an incident, away from the public eye, with appropriate witnesses present to take notes. It will be put to them 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. If the headteacher has been subject to abuse then a warning letter will be sent out to inform them of inappropriate behaviour and the consequences of this.

Step 2: Written Warning

If a second incident occurs involving the same person or persons, the headteacher will write to the adult(s) informing them once again that this conduct is unacceptable. The person/ persons concerned will be invited to submit a response in writing explaining their conduct. This may include an apology and reassurance that such an incident will not happen again. At this point Insight MAT may insist on written communications to named member of the senior leadership team only.

NB: Any incidents of violent conduct would immediately proceed to step 4. At any stage, the school may report serious incidents of abusive and threatening behaviour to the Police and the Trust. Any act of actual or threatened violence will be referred to the police immediately.

Step 3: Ban from Insight MAT Premises

If such an incident recurs or if an initial incident is considered serious enough, the headteacher would enforce a ban from Insight MAT premises.

Step 4: Removal By Police

If, following a decision to ban a person from the school premises, that person persists in entering school premises, they may be removed by the police as a trespasser under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 and charged with an offence under the Public Order Act 1986.

All parents/carers, even if banned from school premises, are not excluded from the rights to access to information regarding their child's education and have a right to seek an appointment to speak to staff about their child's educational progress.

8.5 Formal Procedures

The School may also decide to use the following possible legal measures:

- Section 222 Local Government Act 1972
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Criminal Damage Act 1971
- Section 39 of Criminal Justice Act 1988
- Section 47 of the Offences against the Persons Act 1861
- Offences against the Public Order Act 1986
- Section 31 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Criminal Justice Act 1988
- Section 547 of the Education Act 1996

8.6 Warning Letters

- All letters should be sent by recorded delivery and stored with the pupil log on school MIS. A note should then be placed on the student's MIS page identifying that the parent/carer has received a warning or a ban from site.

8.7 Support for Students

- Students who are affected by any such incident should be made aware that they can speak to a member of pastoral staff team who will ensure appropriate support is provided.

8.8 Support for Staff

If a member of staff is unfortunate enough to be subject to physical and/or verbal abuse there are a variety of sources of potential support available to them:

- The staff member should immediately inform a member of the leadership team so they can provide appropriate support.
- The staff member will seek medical attention if required and any injuries recorded by the HR dept.
- Staff will be advised to take a break and speak to a colleague directly following such an incident with lesson cover organised should this be required.
- Staff can take advantage of the counselling service offered to all Insight MAT employees
- Trade unions may also likely to be a source of assistance.

Following an incident Insight MAT will ensure that sympathetic and practical help, support and counselling are made available to the member of staff at the time of the incident and subsequently.