



ABUSIVE PARENTS / VISITORS POLICY

Key Manager	Vice Principal: Culture and Welfare
Monitoring	Chairperson of Local Advisory Board
Ratified Date	January 2021
Review Date	June 2024
Location of Policy	MS TEAMS Policy Documents http://www.manor.school
Access to Policy	Open

Revision History

Revision Date	Description	Sections Affected	Revised By	Approved By
20.11.20	Review – formatting and website update	None	Vice Principal	

1. Statement of Principles

This policy has been written considering the DfE Guidance 'Advice on school security: Access to, and barring individuals from school premises' December 2012 and 'Controlling access to school premises' November 2018. Consideration has also been given to NAHT guidance on dealing with abusive parent / carers and visitors.

At Manor School, we value the positive relationships forged with parents / carers and visitors to the school. We encourage close links with parents / carers and the community and believe that students benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. We also strive to make our school a place 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.

Almost all parents / carers and visitors to Manor School are keen to work with us and are supportive of the school. However, on very rare occasions the behaviour of a small number of visitors to the school falls short of what we expect. This sometimes manifests 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.

In these situations, we expect members of staff to behave professionally, attempt to defuse the situation where possible and seek the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. Staff facing these situations have licence to end any conversation (face to face or on the telephone). They should then refer the incident to a senior manager who will take appropriate action or invoke the provisions of this policy.

The overriding principle is, however, that all members of the school community have the right to work or be in school without fear of aggression or abuse from parents. The board of Trustees has a requirement to protect staff and students from such aggression.

The progress and well-being of the parent / carer or visitor will be fully considered. Actions taken against anyone will be reasonable and proportionate. The parent / carer or visitor will have the opportunity to put their views forward at every stage. In the case of the imposition of conditions or a ban from school, robust review processes involving the Local Advisory Board Chairperson are in place to ensure fairness.

2. Definition of unacceptable behaviour

We consider that aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language from a parent / carer or visitor presents a risk to staff or students. Unacceptable behaviour is such that it makes a member of staff or student feel threatened. This can be through face-to-face contact, on the telephone or in written communication (including social media). The following is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour:

- any kind of insult as an attempt to demean, embarrass or undermine
- any kind of threat
- raising of voice so as to be intimidating
- physical intimidation, e.g. by standing very close to him/her or the use of aggressive hand gestures
- use of foul or abusive language
- any kind of physical abuse
- allegations which turn out to be vexatious or malicious.

3. The school's approach to dealing with incidents

If a parent / carer or visitor behaves in an unacceptable way towards a member of the school community, the Principal or appropriate senior member of staff will assess the level of risk before deciding on a future course of action. The course of action will be reasonable and commensurate with the assessed level of risk.

4. Risk Assessment

The Principal will carry out a risk assessment in order to help decide the level of response. In all cases the response will be reasonable and proportionate. The Principal will consider the following questions:

- What form did the abuse take?
- What evidence is there?
- What do witnesses say happened?
- Are there previous incidents to take into consideration?



- Do members of staff/students feel intimidated by the parent's behaviour?
- Is there any evidence of provocation?
- How high is the assessed risk that this will be repeated or there will be retaliation at the school's action? (low, medium, high)

5. Recording of Incidents

Staff and / or students subject to abuse and witnesses will make written statements about the incident(s), which will be kept in a file with subsequent letters. This file will be kept by the Principal's PA.

6. The School's response

6.1 Following the completion of the risk assessment, the Principal will decide the level of action to be taken.

6.2 Initial Actions will include the following:

1. Clarify to the parent / carer or visitor what is considered acceptable behaviour by the school

In some instances, it may be appropriate simply to ensure the parent / carer or visitor is clear about behaviour standards expected by the school. This could be explained by letter from the Principal. This letter may contain a warning about further action if there are further incidents. The parent / carer or visitor will be invited to write to the Principal with his / her version of events within 10 working days. Depending on the parent / carer or visitor's response a meeting may then be held to discuss the situation and how this can be avoided in future.

2. Invite the parent / carer or visitor to an informal meeting to discuss events

This could be helpful to discuss and diffuse the situation.

The safety and well-being of those attending such a meeting must be carefully considered. Members of school staff will always be accompanied by at least one other colleague at any such meeting. Consideration should be given to the seating arrangements, and care taken to ensure exits cannot be blocked by a parent / carer or visitor who could potentially become aggressive.

The main points of discussion and any agreed actions should be noted, and a follow-up letter or e-mail sent to confirm the school's expectations and any agreed actions.

3. Impose conditions on the parent / carer or visitor's contact with the school and its staff

Although fulfilling a public function, schools are private places. The public has no automatic right of entry. Parents / carers of enrolled students have an 'implied licence' to come onto school premises at certain stated times. It is for schools to define



and set out the extent of such access. Parent / carers exceeding this would be trespassing.

Depending of the type, level or frequency of the unacceptable behaviour, the school may consider imposing conditions on the parent / carer or visitor contact with the school. These conditions may include (but are not exclusively):

- being accompanied to any meeting with a member of school staff by a member of the senior leadership team
- restricting contact by telephone to named members of the senior leadership team
- restricting written communications to named members of the senior leadership team
- restricting attendance at school events to those where the parent will be accompanied by a member of the senior leadership of the school
- any other restriction as deemed reasonable and proportionate by the Principal.

In this case the parent / carer or visitor will be informed by letter from the Principal the details of the conditions that are being imposed. The parent / carer will be given 10 working days from the date of that letter to make representations in writing about the conditions to the Chairperson of the Local Advisory Board. The Chairperson will decide whether to confirm or remove the conditions. This will be communicated to the parent / carer in writing within 10 working days of the date of the parent / carer or visitor's letter.

If the decision is to confirm the conditions imposed, this decision will be reviewed by the Chairperson of the Local Advisory Board after approximately six months (and every six months after that, if appropriate). The parent / care or visitor will be invited to make written representation to the Chairperson. This and the evidence from the Principal or member of the senior leadership team will be considered at a meeting of the Local Advisory Board. The Board may decide to maintain, extend or remove the conditions. The decision made by the Board will be communicated to the parent / carer by the clerk to the Local Advisory Board within 10 days of the date of the meeting.

When deciding whether it will be necessary to maintain, extend or remove the conditions, the Board will consider the extent of the parent / carer's compliance with the conditions, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from him/her and any evidence of the parent's co-operation with the school in other respects.

6.4 Further Actions

4. Imposing a ban

Where other procedures have been exhausted and aggression or intimidation continues or where there is an extreme act of violence then the school may consider



banning the individual from school premises. This will include banning a parent / carer or visitor from accessing school staff by written communication or telephone.

In these circumstances, the individual will be advised in writing by the Principal that a provisional ban is being imposed. The parent / carer or visitor will then be given 10 working days from the date of that letter to make representations about the ban in writing to the Chairperson of the Local Advisory Board. The Chairperson will then decide whether to confirm or remove the ban. This will be communicated to the parent / carer or visitor in writing within 10 working days of the receipt of their letter. If the Chairperson's decision is to confirm the ban, a parent / carer in these circumstances will be offered an annual meeting about their child's progress, usually with a member of the senior leadership team.

A decision to impose a ban will be reviewed by the Chairperson of the Local Advisory Board after approximately six months (and every six months after that, if appropriate). The parent / carer or visitor will be invited to make written representation to the Chairperson; this and the evidence from the Principal will be considered at a meeting of the full Local Advisory Board. The Board may decide to remove the ban, extend the ban or impose conditions on parent / carer or visitor's access to the school. The decision of the review will be communicated to the parent by the clerk to the Local Advisory Board within 10 days of the date of the meeting.

In deciding whether to remove or extend the ban or impose conditions, the Board will consider the extent of the parent / carer or visitor's compliance with the ban, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from his / her and any evidence of the parent / carer or visitor's co-operation with the school in other respects.

5. Removal from school

Parent / carers or visitors who have been banned from the school premises and continue to cause a nuisance will be deemed to have committed a section 547 offence. They will be considered as trespassers. In these circumstances the offender may be removed from school. This may be carried out by a police officer or person authorised by the Local Advisory Board. Legal proceedings may be brought against the parent / carer or visitor.

6. Complaints policy

Any parental complaint that arises from incidents of abusive behaviour will be dealt with under the complaints policy.