



Working together to resolve problems: Parental Complaints & Staff Safety Policy



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Next Review date:	Spring 18
Person Responsible:	Natasha Beckles, Inclusion Manager

At the Willow Primary school we want to create a learning environment and community that accurately articulates our vision and core purpose.

The Willow on Broadwaters' Vision

Our children are passionate learners who excel academically and are resilient, reflective, creative and confident. They leave us with the competencies needed to thrive in the current and future world.

To make this vision a reality, all staff, parents, carers and visitors must be able to subscribe to the following core values:

Values

- We ensure our children love coming to school because it is safe, fun, challenging and exciting.
- We have high expectations and are committed to supporting each individual to achieve their dreams.
- Everyone is valued as a unique member of our diverse community.
- We uphold the highest standards in all that we do and look continually to improve ourselves, so that what we do today, we do even better tomorrow.

At The Willow Primary school, we recognise that in order to honour our vision and values, the learning relationships within our community need to be strong and consistently skilled enough to support the high quality social, moral and academic learning that we seek to offer.

With this in mind, our Relationships and Behaviour policy is based on thinking drawn from Restorative Approaches training that was delivered in 2014/15.

Our aim is to actively adjust our language, thinking, resources and environment to directly impact on our relationships in order to establish the Willow on Broadwaters Primary School as a restorative learning community. This policy acts as an addition to the **Relationships & Behaviour Policy**, but also stands as guidance outlining what support parents and staff can expect when dealing with complaints and when dealing with challenging or inappropriate behaviour from parents/carers; other members of the school community, visiting adults or the general public.

To further promote these aims we are seeking to communicate clear guidelines and procedures to help promote and expand our restorative ethos to support staff, parents and visitors, when dealing with complaints and resolving disagreements.

Procedure for parents making complaints or raising concerns

1) Speak to your child's class teacher or speak to our Parental Involvement Lead/Headteacher's PA Umarani Nathan.

Umarani is available most mornings to speak to any parents/carers who wish to see her. She will usually be outside in the playground or inside school. Do ask for her at the office or you may prefer to email her directly: [**parent@thewillow.haringey.sch.uk**](mailto:parent@thewillow.haringey.sch.uk)

2) Ask to speak to a Senior Management Team member.

One of the Senior Leaders is available every day to speak to parents/carers.

3) Ask to speak to the Headteacher - Ms Ferdinand.

If you feel the matter has still not been resolved, Ms Ferdinand will always try to be in her office during the start and end of school but it is best to book an appointment with **Umarani Nathan** if you wish to speak with her.

4) Write a letter to the Chair of Governors.

Parents, carers or any other parties may write to the Chair of Governors **but only after following all the steps outlined above**. Any matters that have not been dealt with via the agreed procedure will be automatically referred back to the appropriate stage of the policy.

5) Further representation. If - having followed the agreed procedure - you remain dissatisfied with the support and services that you have received you may make further representations to the following bodies. You may approach the **Secretary of State for Education** or the ***Ombudsman** if you are unhappy with the process or outcome. This would normally only be appropriate if you believe that the school, the Governing body and the LEA have acted illegally or arbitrarily.

* Please note the Ombudsman does not investigate internal school management matter.

Procedure for class teachers dealing with parental complaints

1. If a parent tries to strike up a conversation at the beginning of the day when you or your team are about to escort children to class, please ask the parent either to make an appointment to see you at the end of the day.
If the matter is urgent or the parent/carer is noticeably frustrated or upset by their concern, please ask them to go to the office to speak to Uma and to complete a formal complaint sheet.
2. If a parent makes a complaint during a meeting, you must produce a written record of the complaint detailing the concern and outlining whether the matter has been resolved. This must be sent to SLT, via email, as soon as possible – and certainly within 24 hours. Please send a copy to Uma who will keep a record of the matter.
3. If an issue cannot be resolved or if a parent continues to complain about the same issue, please speak to your **phase leader**, in the first instance for advice. If your phase leader feels a senior leader should become involved, a senior leader will arrange to meet the parent/carer/visitor. If this happens the senior leader will give feedback on the outcome of the meeting. If the complaint is against you, you may be asked to attend this meeting, but only if it is deemed safe and productive to do so. If it is deemed unsafe - The SLT member will inform you of the outcomes of the meeting.
4. All Class based staff need to be aware that if a parent/carer/visitor becomes verbally abusive at any point in an interaction or meeting with any member of the team –if there are other staff in the vicinity - **A staff member should provide support to the colleague and if safe, remove them from the space. Another member of staff should immediately call for senior leader support.** Staff should calmly ask the parent/carer/visitor to go to the Main Reception and make an appointment with a SLT.
5. If a parent/carer/visitor becomes verbally abusive or imposes on the classroom environment **when there are no other staff in vicinity**, all staff are reminded to stay calm, polite and professional. This is known as a **'Red Card'** situation. If possible, please remove or lead any children away from the vicinity and make your way to a safe space where you can raise the alarm and request the support of a member of the SLT. **Do not respond to verbally abusive or threatening parents/carers/visitors.** If you are alone, please remove yourself from the space and seek assistance immediately.

Procedure for front line and all support staff dealing with complaints:

If a parent/carer approaches you with a complaint please follow these steps:

1. If the parent/carer/visitor is calm, please suggest that they make an appointment to see the class teacher in the first instance. This is particularly the case if they are querying something that has happened in class or if it about something that the class teacher or staff member has done/not done.
2. If a parent/carer/visitor is distressed or demonstrates that they are unlikely to be able to express their concern to the staff member in a positive manner, please direct the individual to Uma. If you believe that the complaint is serious please inform the Duty SLT.
3. Please do not allow parents/carers/ visitors to publically complain about other members of staff to you. This is especially important when this happens in the presence of children and/or other parents/carers/visitors, like in the playground or at the Front Office. Close down the conversation and send them to Uma.
4. If the parent/carer/visitor becomes loud, aggressive or inappropriate, about another member of staff, please ask them to calm down in a polite but firm manner. Please inform them about the complaint procedure (see below).
5. If parent/carer/visitor approaches you in a loud, aggressive or inappropriate manner. Please refer them to the complaints procedure and let them know that you will have to walk away if they continue to behave in the same way. In these circumstances please inform a member of SLT and ask them to talk with the parent/carer/visitor, on your behalf. The SLT member will let you know the outcome of the meeting.

At no point should any staff allow themselves to feel threatened or made unsafe by the actions of a parent/carer or visitor.

All Willow staff have a right to come to work and feel safe and confident to carry out their role. If staff feel unsafe they are under obligation to:

- See a member of SLT immediately.
- Quickly close down any conversation or interaction that abuses their right to be safe at work.

Staff may do this by saying: **'I am not comfortable with this situation so I am going to get a member of SLT to assist you.'**

They will THEN walk away and find a member of SLT.

In the event of an incident of unacceptable or inappropriate treatment of staff, the matter will be investigated and Senior Leaders will use the following table of decisions to make an assessment of how to respond to the incident.

This is designed to ensure that all incidents and all parties are treated in a fair and consistent manner.

Managing Unsafe and Unacceptable Adult Behaviour at The Willow School

Unsafe and unacceptable adult behaviours	Reported by	Reported to	Consequence
<p>Modelling unsafe behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Damage to property - Swearing on site - Speaking about or shouting at school members in a manner that is unbecoming of the relationship of mutual respect and positive regard. - Dismissive of the guidance provided by staff. 	Any member of the school community	Duty SLT/ Parent Engagement & Liaison Officer	<p>Attend a meeting with Duty SLT within 3 days to discuss incident.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reset expectations. Provide a letter of guidance explaining consequences were the behaviour to be repeated. - If parent fails to attend - formal warning letter outlining concerns and resetting expectations and consequences.
<p>Inciting/promoting unsafe behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appearing to approach or respond to any child or staff member in a physically aggressive and/ threatening manner, at any time - Approaching or responding to any parent/ carer in a verbally or physically aggressive and/ threatening manner at any time on the school premises. - Verbally insulting or abusing any child or staff member. - Offensive or derogatory comments or written communications aimed at individual children or members of staff. - Instructing children to retaliate to peers or staff in a verbally or physically inappropriate or threatening manner. - Failure to notify a member of the SLT of a risk/ threat/ information that could jeopardise the safety and well-being of a member of the school community. - Facilitating the above or any illegal act. 	Any member of the school community	Duty SLT/ Parent Engagement & Liaison Officer	<p>Attend a meeting with Duty SLT within 3 days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mediated meeting with affected parties to resolve the meeting if safe. - Adult will have the opportunity to explain their concern. - Verbal warning of automatic ban, if any repeat. - Formal warning letter and policy. - If parent fails to attend - Formal warning letter with policy outlining concerns; resetting expectations and explaining consequences were the behaviour to be repeated.

Unsafe and unacceptable adult behaviours	Reported by	Reported to	Consequence
<p>Contravening and undermining the communicated expectations, requests and routines of the school, or having been informed or warned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowingly or repeatedly entering the school site without a visitors badge or authorisation. - Repeated failure support/ adhere to Home School Agreements. - Repeated failure to engage with the school staff to address behavioural, learning, attendance or punctuality concerns. - Repeated failure to pay or engage with staff to address arrears for school lunch, BESS, damaged property or unreturned resources. 	<p>Any member of the school community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SLT - Admin Team 	<p>SLT/ Parent Engagement & Liaison Officer</p>	<p>Attend a meeting with Duty SLT within 3 days.</p> <p>If parent fails to attend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formal warning letter outlining concerns. - State dates of incidents and any key dialogue. - State why this is unacceptable. - Reset expectations. - Provide copies of relevant school guidance documents - Explain consequences were the behaviour to be repeated. - Let the parent/ carer know that letter will remain on file until for 12 months. - Outlining what would be shared with the relevant authorities, if requested. - Agree any repayment plan including default arrangements. - Mediated meeting with affected parties to resolve the meeting if safe and required. - Full closure of the matter with formal warning or banning letter, if unsafe.
<p>Unacceptable danger that puts all/ any member of the school community at risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physically attacking behaviour - Sexually offensive or intimidating behaviour. - Entering or refusing to leave the building in contravention with the express request of a staff member. - Contravening the guidance of a staff member during a fire alarm or other safety incident. - Bringing a weapon of any kind onto the school site. - Bringing or using an illegal substance on the school site - Supplying a weapon, illegal substance or inappropriate resource (film/ games) to any member of the community 	<p>Any member of the school community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SLT - Admin Team 	<p>SLT/ Parent Engagement & Liaison Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police contacted immediately. - School Safe Alert if person is unknown to the school - Automatic ban from school. - Reported to relevant safeguarding authority and professionals. - The school will act to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community remains of the highest priority.

The safety of all members of our school community is of the highest priority.

All members of the school community are asked to make themselves aware of the details of this document and are expected to report any instances of the outlined behaviour to a member of SLT or Parent Engagement and Liaison, at the earliest opportunity and within 24hours.