

Howe Dell Primary School and Day Care

Safeguarding Staff in School Policy

Statement of Intent

Howe Dell Primary School and Day Care encourages close links with parents and the community. We believe that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school/day care is kind and positive. We wish to keep the school/day care a happy and safe place for both staff, visitors and children to work and learn.

The very vast majority of parents, carers and other visitors to Howe Dell are keen to work with us and are incredibly supportive of the school/day care. However, on the rare occasions when a negative attitude towards the school/day care is expressed, this can result in difficult or detrimental behaviours, which may include verbal, written or physical abuse towards our School/Day Care staff or other members of the school/day care community. Not only does every child matter at Howe Dell School and Day Care, so too does every member of staff, every day.

We expect parents and other visitors to behave in a kind and respectful manner. If parents are unhappy about any aspect of their child's education they can arrange a meeting in the first instance, with the class teacher, the Phase/Key Stage leader, the Senior Leadership Team member responsible for that class and if it is not resolved then the Executive Head teacher.

Detrimental behaviours (including violence, threatening behaviour and verbal abuse) against school/day care staff or other members of the school/day care community are not tolerated as everyone has the right to expect that their school/day care is a safe environment in which to work and learn.

The Governing board is responsible for protecting the health and safety of their staff, pupils and visitors; this policy outlines the steps that may be taken where behaviour is deemed anti-social.

Behaviour

Some examples of detrimental behaviours towards School/ Day Care staff or members of the school/day care community that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

a) Anti-social behaviour and aggressive language:

- Shouting, either in person or over the telephone
- Physically intimidating e.g. standing very close to them
- The use of aggressive hand gestures

- Making threats whether in person, via email/written correspondence/social media
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Swearing
- Pushing
- Hitting e.g. slapping, punching and kicking
- Spitting
- Sexist, racist or homophobic comments

Dangerous behaviours:

- b) Common Assault - involving the threat of immediate violence or causing minor injury (such as a graze, reddening of the skin or minor bruise)
- c) Actual Bodily Harm - causing an injury which interferes with the health or comfort of the victim (such as multiple bruising, broken tooth or temporary sensory loss)
- d) Grievous Bodily Harm - causing serious injury (such as a broken bone or an injury requiring lengthy treatment). There is also a racially aggravated form of assault, where there is a racial element to the offence, which carries higher maximum penalties.
- e) Harassment - situations can arise where staff find themselves subjected to a pattern of persistent and unreasonable behaviour from individual parents which is not abusive or overtly aggressive but which can be perceived as intimidating and oppressive. In these circumstances, staff may be faced with a barrage of constant demands or criticisms (on an almost daily basis) which, whilst not particularly taxing or serious when viewed in isolation, can have the cumulative effect over time of undermining their confidence, well-being and health. In extreme cases, the behaviour of the parent may constitute an offence under the protection from Harassment Act 1997.

Howe Dell School has a Home - School agreement where all parties of the school community are required to sign and adhere to the agreement.

Detrimental (difficult and dangerous) behaviours may result in Hertfordshire County Council and the Police informed.

Non-Statutory Measures

Should any parent or visitor demonstrate any negative behaviours the following may occur:

- Adult spoken to regarding their behaviour and warned verbally that further such behaviour may result in them being denied access to the school/day care site
- Discussion may be followed up in writing
- Resolution opportunity

Statutory Measures

The School/Day Care's Governing Board would take the lead in giving consent for proceedings against a parent/carer. The School/Day Care may also decide to use the following legal measures:

- *Section 222 Local Government Act 1972*
- *Anti-Social Behaviour Orders*
- *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*

The School/Day Care measures to avoid, prevent and minimise incidents include:

- The Executive Head teacher has the prime responsibility in the school/day care to ensure that the staff feel safe. This responsibility is delegated to the members of the Senior Leadership Team who share in the responsible for safety of staff on a day to day basis. Staff are advised, however, in the event of an incident, to:
 - Speak calmly and without raising the voice
 - Be assertive but not aggressive
 - Be polite but firm
 - Seek assistance
 - Think about an escape route, should the need arise
 - Walk away
 - Concluding a telephone call
- In the event of an emergency, staff should request assistance from a member of the Senior Leadership Team, if available, otherwise the nearest member(s) of staff
- The member of the Leadership team may request that the person demonstrating detrimental behaviours leave the premises should they be unable to communicate professionally with staff members
- Should the person choose not leave the premises then a member of staff will call the police
- The incident will be reported to the Local Authority

Dealing with detrimental, difficult and dangerous behaviours

When a parent or member of the public behaves anti-socially towards a member of the school/day care staff, the Executive Head teacher or senior staff member will seek to resolve the situation through discussion and mediation. If necessary, the school/day care complaints procedure should be followed. Where all procedures have been exhausted, and negative behaviours continue, a parent or carer may be denied access to the School/Day Care site by the Executive Head teacher for a period of time, subject

to review. A parent of a child attending a school/day care has implied permission to be on the school/day cares premises at certain times and for certain purposes but if the parent's behaviour is anti-social (unreasonable) this permission will be withdrawn and they will become a trespasser.

Section 547 of the Education Act 1996 makes it an offence for a trespasser on school/day cares premises to cause or permit a nuisance or disturbance and allows for the removal and prosecution of any person believed to have committed the offence. The penalty for a person convicted of the offence is a fine of up to £500.

Prior to being denied access, the following steps will be taken:

1. The parent/carer will be informed, in writing, that they are being denied access from the premises, subject to review, and what will happen if this is breached, e.g. that an injunction application may follow
2. Where an assault has led to denied access, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to Hertfordshire County Council and the Police will be included
3. The Chair of Governors will be informed of the denied access to school/day care site
4. Where appropriate, arrangements for pupils being delivered to, and collected from the school gate will be clarified. It is important for clear and concise detailed records of events to be maintained at every stage

Support for Employees

If a member of staff is unfortunate enough to be one of the very small minority subject to detrimental behaviours (physical or serious verbal abuse) there are a variety of support mechanisms available to them. In such circumstances, the immediate and ongoing support of colleagues will be invaluable.

Conclusion

As a maintained school, Hertfordshire County Council will take action where behaviour is deemed dangerous or there are significant breaches in our home school agreement or health and safety legislation.

In implementing this policy, the school/day care will as appropriate, seek advice from the County's Education, Health and Safety and Legal Departments to ensure fairness and consistency.