

Swansea Schools: Guidelines for Parents, Carers and Visitors on Acceptable Behaviour

All schools in Swansea strive to foster an environment that is conducive to learning and mutual respect for all members of our school communities. We value the partnership between parents/carers, visitors, and school staff in creating a positive educational experience for our learners. As part of our commitment to maintaining a safe and supportive environment, we have developed this document to establish acceptable behaviour from parents/carers, visitors and third parties across various contexts, including face-to-face interactions, communication through social media/WhatsApp groups, and interactions within the community. These guidelines are intended to promote mutual respect, professionalism, and constructive communication among all members of our school communities.

Definition of unacceptable behaviour

We consider that aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language presents a risk to staff or pupils. Unacceptable behaviour is such that makes a member of staff or pupil 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
- persistent communication to staff and/or school
- physical intimidation, e.g. by standing very close to him/her or the use of aggressive hand gestures
- use of foul or abusive language
- use of discriminatory language, including but not limited to racist, misogynistic, ableist, homophobic
- any kind of physical abuse
- allegations which turn out to be vexatious or malicious.
- misuse of email and/or school platforms e.g. class dojo.

We acknowledge and respect the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of our communities. We understand that communication styles, gestures, and expressions may vary significantly across cultures. However, we emphasise that all interactions must remain respectful and non-threatening, regardless of cultural differences.

We believe that clear communication and consistent expectations are essential for fostering a collaborative and respectful school environment. Therefore, we ask all parents/carers, visitors and third parties to familiarise themselves with the following guidance and to adhere to these principles in all interactions with school staff and other school stakeholders.

Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to these values of respect, kindness, and cooperation that define our school communities.

Acceptable Behaviour

Face-to-face

Respectful Communication: Parents/carers should engage in all communication with school staff, other parents/carers, and learners in a respectful, courteous and culturally sensitive manner. This includes using appropriate language, tone, and demeanour during face-to-face interactions, phone calls, emails, and any other form of communication. We recognise that communication styles, tone, and expressions may differ across cultures, however we encourage the use of language and behaviour that prioritises mutual respect and understanding.

Collaborative Partnership: Parents/carers should actively collaborate with the school in supporting their child's education. This involves attending parent/carer-teacher meetings, participating in school events and activities, and contributing positively to the school community. We acknowledge that different parents/carers may have varying capacities to participate due to cultural, linguistic, or personal circumstances. Our schools are committed to fostering inclusive opportunities for engagement. Building a strong partnership between parents/carers and the school is crucial for the success and wellbeing of learners.

School Policies: Parents/carers should familiarise themselves with and adhere to all school policies and guidelines, which have been designed to ensure safety, inclusivity, and a positive learning environment for all. This includes following procedures for drop-off and pick-up, respecting school property and complying with rules regarding parent involvement in school activities. By respecting and following these policies, parents/carers contribute to a safe, orderly, and harmonious school environment for all learners and staff.

Social Media/WhatsApp Groups/Online School Platforms

Responsible Communication: Parents/carers should engage in responsible and respectful communication when using social media platforms, WhatsApp groups and online platforms such as ClassDojo, associated with the school. This includes refraining from posting or sharing content that is inappropriate, offensive, or inflammatory. Parents/carers should also avoid engaging in cyberbullying or spreading rumours that could negatively impact the school community.

Privacy and Confidentiality: Parents/carers should respect the privacy and confidentiality of others when using social media, WhatsApp groups and online school platforms. This includes refraining from sharing sensitive or confidential information about learners, teachers, or school events without proper authorisation. Parents/carers should also be mindful of the boundaries between personal and school-related discussions when using these platforms. In addition, parents/carers should avoid intruding on staff members' personal social media accounts, such as requesting to follow them. Additionally, refrain from contacting staff outside of school hours unless it is an emergency or directly related to your child's immediate wellbeing.

Constructive Engagement: Parents/carers should use social media and WhatsApp groups as platforms for constructive engagement and collaboration with school staff and other parents/carers. This involves participating in discussions related to school events, initiatives, and policies in a positive and productive manner. Parents/carers should also seek clarification or raise concerns through appropriate channels rather than resorting to public forums for grievances or complaints. Additionally, it is important to avoid making defamatory statements about individuals or the school, as these can harm reputations and create unnecessary conflict. By promoting respectful communication, privacy, and constructive engagement, parents/carers can contribute to a positive and supportive online environment within the school community.

General Behaviour Towards Staff

Respect and Courtesy: Parents/carers should demonstrate respect and courtesy towards all school staff, including teachers, support staff, administrative staff and volunteers. Recognising that cultural norms around communication, authority, and interaction may vary, we encourage parents/carers to approach interactions with staff in a polite and considerate manner, listening attentively to their instructions or feedback. It is important to avoid undermining the authority of staff in front of learners and refraining from using derogatory language or making disrespectful comments.

Collaborative Approach: Parents/carers should adopt a collaborative approach when interacting with school staff, recognising them as partners in their child's education. Recognising that parents/carers come from diverse cultural, linguistic, and personal backgrounds, schools are committed to creating accessible and welcoming opportunities for all parents/carers to engage. This includes actively participating in parent-teacher meetings and other school events to foster positive relationships with teachers and staff. Parents/carers should also be willing to work together with school staff to address any concerns or challenges that may arise regarding their child's progress or well-being.

Adherence to Boundaries: Parents/carers should respect the professional boundaries of school staff. Whilst recognising that cultural differences in communication styles or expressions of emotion may sometimes lead to misunderstandings, parents/carers should endeavour to refrain from engaging in behaviour that could be perceived as intrusive or inappropriate. This includes avoiding confrontational or aggressive behaviour towards staff members, respecting their time and workload, and following established procedures for addressing concerns or grievances. By maintaining respectful and professional interactions with school staff, parents/carers can contribute to a positive and supportive school environment for all.

Direct Contact with Staff in the Community

Respect Personal Boundaries: Parents/carers should respect the personal boundaries of school staff when encountering them outside of school. This includes refraining from approaching staff members in public places such as shops, restaurants, or social events unless invited to do so. Respecting personal space and

privacy demonstrates consideration for the individual's personal life outside of their professional role.

Professional Conduct: Parents/carers should maintain a professional demeanour when interacting with school staff in public settings. This involves refraining from discussing confidential or sensitive school matters in public, as well as avoiding confrontational or aggressive behaviour. Engaging in polite and respectful conversation, if appropriate, fosters a positive relationship between parents/carers and staff members outside of the school environment.

Use Appropriate Channels: If parents/carers wish to address school-related concerns or inquiries with staff members outside of school, they should use appropriate channels of communication. This may include scheduling a meeting, sending an email, or contacting the school's office to arrange for a suitable time to discuss the matter. This should always be during school hours where possible. Schools will facilitate accessible communications, for example, by offering flexible options for parents/carers who may face language barriers, technological limitations, or scheduling challenges. Respecting established communication protocols ensures that school staff can address parental concerns effectively while maintaining professionalism and discretion.

Recording of Interactions

Obtain Consent: Parents/carers should obtain consent from all parties involved before recording any interactions with school staff, other parents/carers, or learners. This includes seeking permission from the individuals being recorded as well as any individuals who may be overheard or captured in the recording. Respecting the privacy and consent of others demonstrates consideration and ethical conduct. It is also advisable to agree on a timeline for the recording's deletion.

Respect Confidentiality: Parents/carers should exercise discretion and respect the confidentiality of recorded interactions. This involves refraining from sharing or distributing recordings without the explicit consent of all parties involved, especially if the content contains sensitive or confidential information. Respecting confidentiality safeguards the privacy and rights of individuals and maintains trust within the school.

Use Recordings Constructively: Parents/carers should use recordings of interactions with school staff for constructive purposes, such as documenting important discussions or clarifying information. However, recordings should not be used to intimidate, manipulate, or discredit others, nor should they be used as a means of publicising grievances or disputes. Using recordings responsibly promotes transparency and accountability while upholding mutual respect and professionalism in communication.

Statements for School Use

Respectful Conduct: "We expect all individuals on school premises to engage in respectful and courteous behaviour towards one another, fostering a safe and positive learning environment for learners and staff alike."

Zero Tolerance: "Disruptive behaviour, including but not limited to verbal abuse, aggression, or intimidation towards any member of our school community, will not be tolerated under any circumstances."

Adherence to Policies: "All visitors and parents/carers are required to adhere to school policies regarding conduct on site, including guidelines for interaction with staff, learners, and other visitors. Failure to comply may result in restricted access or further disciplinary action."

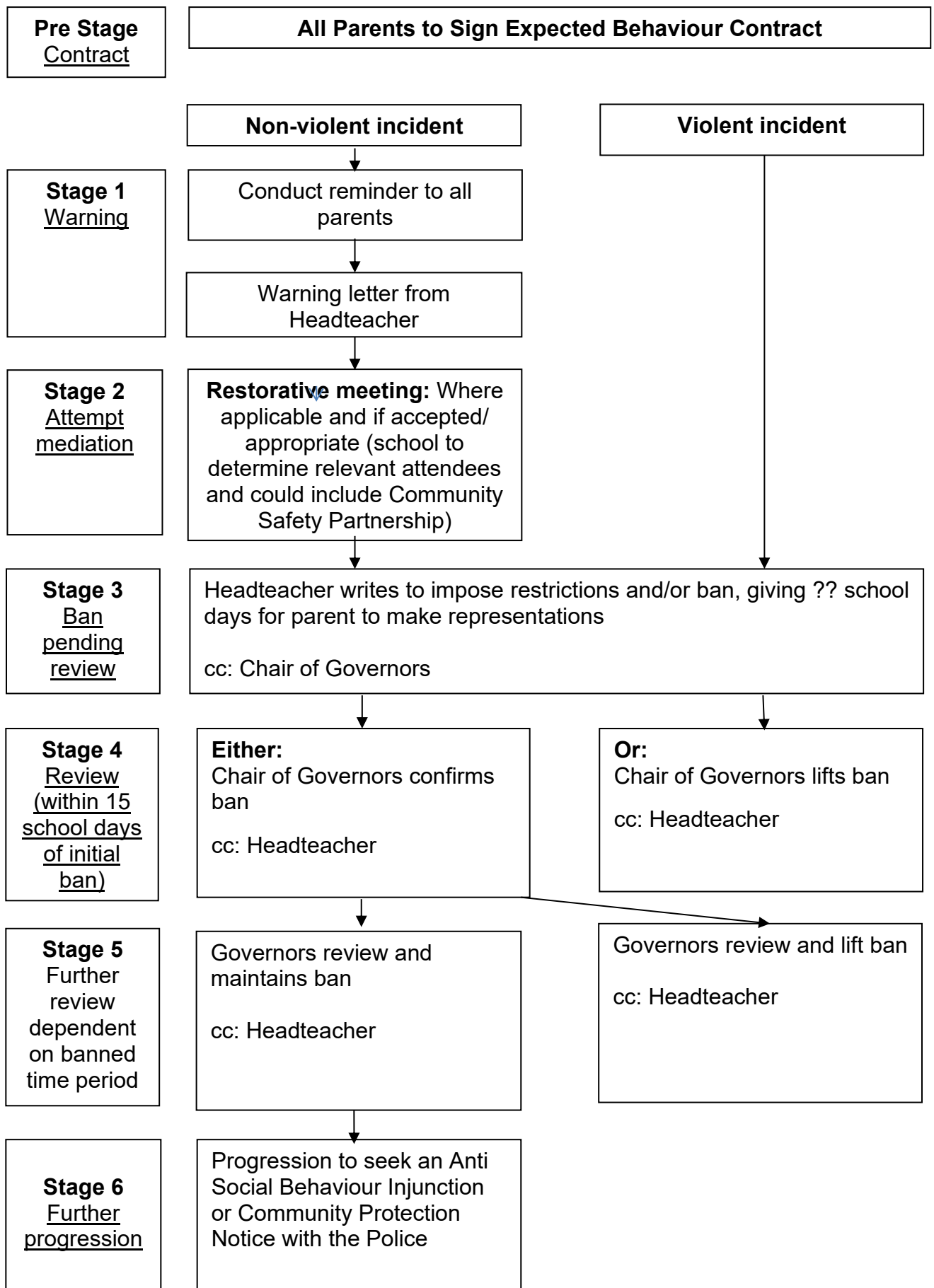
Confidentiality and Privacy: "Respecting the confidentiality and privacy of learners, staff, and fellow parents/carers is paramount. Any unauthorised sharing of sensitive information or breaches of privacy will be addressed with the utmost seriousness."

Collaborative Partnership: "We encourage open communication and constructive engagement between parents/carers, visitors, and school staff. Together, we can create a supportive, inclusive and respectful community where every individual feels valued and heard."

These statements can be displayed prominently in areas such as school entrances, reception areas, or on the school's website to communicate expectations clearly to all stakeholders.

By implementing and consistently reinforcing these guidelines, schools can effectively address and mitigate unacceptable behaviour from parents/carers and visitors, promoting a safe and conducive learning environment for all stakeholders involved.

Flowchart for Process of Managing Unacceptable Behaviour



Other Guidance and Templates for Schools

LA Legal Resources for Schools: [Template letters for legal services for education and schools - Staff portal \(swansea.gov.uk\)](#)

[Practices and principles for schools use of social media - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)

[Professionals Online Safety Helpline - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

Social Media Policy Template: [View - Hwb \(gov.wales\)](#)