



CORNWALL EDUCATION
LEARNING TRUST

CELT

**Keeping our Schools Safe from abuse, threats and
violence**

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Adopted by (body): **CELT Directors**

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Outline

This guidance deals with situations in person and online where visitors are being threatening, abusive or aggressive towards other members of our school community. Such behaviour clearly cannot be tolerated. Staff and pupils have a right to expect their school to be a safe place in which to work and learn.

CELT takes our responsibility to protect staff well-being and mental health seriously and as such, we have a duty to ensure staff are treated well and are not exposed to such behaviour.

The Department for Education advises that schools should have a written policy setting out the behaviour expected of parents/visitors, and the procedures to be followed when a school wishes to restrict a parent's access to the premises.

In addition, the guidance explains how we will deal with difficult or abusive telephone calls and inappropriate use of social media/ abuse using cyber technology both of which should be considered seriously and given equal weighting as incidents occurring on the school site.

In this guidance, the definition in the Education Act 1996 of the word parent is somewhat extended and includes an individual who has care of the child whether or not s/he is the natural parent or has parental responsibility for the child. This includes step parents. Where an individual does not fall within this broad definition, the principles of this guidance should still be applied (but the wording of the model letters should be amended accordingly).

Risk assessment

In the event of a parent 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 should be taken into account as a risk assessment, before deciding on the most appropriate course of action:

- Has the parent been verbally aggressive/threatening/intimidating?
- Has the parent been physically aggressive/threatening/intimidating?
- What evidence is there? What do witnesses say happened?
- Does the parent have a known previous history of aggression/violence? (Information can only be sought from the police when an official complaint has been made).
- Do members of the school staff/community feel intimidated by the parent's behaviour?
- Have pupils witnessed aggressive/threatening/intimidating behaviour from the parent?
- Have pupils been approached inappropriately by the parent?
- Has the parent been abusive to school staff, pupils or visitors?
- Has the parent been persistently abusive to school staff, pupils or visitors?
- Was the parent 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?

Options for the headteacher

After evaluating all available information, and any other relevant factors, there are several actions the headteacher may wish to take. These can include:

Inviting the parent to a meeting to discuss events

This could be helpful where a planned and structured meeting has either not been held before or has previously been productive. Skilled facilitators may need to be used. A full restorative meeting may be considered, but if it is not safe to bring all the parties together at a meeting, a restorative process can still take place through the exchange of information. The safety and well-being of those attending such a meeting must be carefully considered. It is strongly recommended that members of school staff should 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 who could potentially become aggressive. The main points of discussion and any agreed actions should be noted, and a follow-up letter sent to confirm the school's expectations and any agreed actions. Some parents may covertly record meetings and then seek to use the information obtained to support their case, and therefore schools should state explicitly that information obtained without permission will not be permissible.

Clarifying to the parent what is considered acceptable behaviour by the school

In some instances it may be appropriate simply to ensure the parent is clear about behaviour standards expected by the school. This could be explained at a meeting, or by letter, however any verbal explanation should be followed by a written confirmation of the discussion and the standards of behaviour outlined.

Forming strategies to manage future situations of potential conflict

It is sometimes possible to identify situations of potential conflict and to plan for these in a way that minimises potential risks. For example, where a parent persistently engages in arguments with staff in corridors at the beginning or end of the school day, the parent could be informed that any discussions with school staff must be held by prior appointment. Alternatively, the parent may be asked not to approach the class teacher, but should instead arrange to meet the headteacher (or other member of the senior leadership team), who will deal with their concerns. In more serious cases a further option may be to advise the parent that in future their concerns should be dealt with by written communication. Any such arrangements should be confirmed in writing to the parent.

Withdrawing permission for the parent to enter the school site and/or buildings

In more serious cases of actual or threatened aggression/violence, or persistent abuse/intimidation, the headteacher may need to consider whether it is safe for the parent to continue to come onto the school site or enter the buildings. Cases of actual assault should be also reported to the local authority by completing an online health and safety event report.

Calling for police assistance

In an emergency, police assistance should be sought. In cases where a ban is in place but is ignored and the person comes onto the school site, the police should be notified immediately. (Staff will need to be aware of the ban and have agreed procedures in place should the person come onto the school site). In situations where there is no immediate threat to staff, pupils, other members of the school community or the school's property, the headteacher may still wish to make their local community police officer (e.g. neighbourhood support team) aware of the situation. The police could give consideration to warning the offender of formal action, which may include legal proceedings.

Legal proceedings

Where individuals persist in coming onto the school site even when permission to do so has been withdrawn, it is possible for legal proceedings to be pursued. The options include:

Prosecution under section 547 of the Education Act 1996

This requires substantial evidence to be gathered and presented by the police. Clearly it is not a quick process, and whilst in most cases the threat may prove to be a sufficient deterrent, prosecution can only be seen in the last resort as a punitive measure.

Appropriate behaviour contracts

These are voluntary agreements made between people involved in anti-social behaviour, and the agency/school concerned. They are flexible in terms of content and format, and can be an effective means of encouraging young adults, children and parents to take responsibility for unacceptable behaviour. The person named does not always agree with the contract, but it can be used as evidence at a later stage for an application for an anti-social behaviour order. Conditions can be put on the contract, e.g. not to enter school grounds.

Anti-social behaviour orders (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

These are most likely to be used where the offender (aged over 10) has acted in a manner which causes harassment, alarm or distress, and is needed to protect others in the same area from similar behaviour. Anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) may be sought by the local authority or the chief officer of police. ASBOs are designed to deal with persistent bad behaviour, and the police will need to show that other options have been tried, or are unsuitable.

Restraining orders (Protection from Harassment Act 1997)

Section 2 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 provides for criminal or civil prosecution, for cases where someone causes alarm or distress to another person on more than two occasions. Section four provides for criminal or civil prosecution where people have been put in fear of violence on at least two occasions. In each case the sanctions include both criminal penalties (fines, imprisonment or community sentences) and a restraining order. These orders are generally quicker and easier to obtain, but are part of a criminal conviction.

Prosecution for criminal damage/assault

Prosecutions for causing deliberate damage or injury may occasionally be the most appropriate course of action. If the police are called, the option to make criminal allegations is readily available, and they may arrest suspected offenders there and then. Official allegations should only be made if there is no intention of later withdrawing the complaint. Criminal proceedings can be initiated at a later date. All possible steps should be taken to prevent the loss of evidence. In particular witnesses should be asked to make a record of exactly what they saw and heard at the earliest opportunity. Whilst the emphasis will usually be on ensuring safety and security of persons and property, and therefore the injunction route is likely to be the most effective deterrent legal action, it does not necessarily guarantee against the behaviour of the more persistent offender.

If the police are asked to deal with an incident as a criminal investigation, there are a number of actions that may thwart this process. Witness details should not be made known to suspected offenders or their families. Groups of witnesses or suspects should not be left together, or allowed to discuss what happened, before the police interview them. If in doubt always seek the advice of the police officer first.

Record keeping

There should be clear and detailed records of all events which must be kept up to date. These should be held securely on the school safeguarding system, usually CPOMS. Any witness statements (where appropriate) and notes of any subsequent meetings held to discuss the events should also be retained. Handwritten notes should be signed and dated. Any physical evidence should be bagged and labelled, and witnesses should be asked to make a record of exactly what they saw and heard at the earliest opportunity.

It is also advisable to ensure that in every case, even where a formal letter is not required, parents receive a written confirmation of the events and the headteacher's response.

Appendix A: Statement for the expected behaviour of parents/visitors to the school

The Department for Education advises that schools should have a written policy setting out the behaviour expected of parents/visitors on the premises and the procedures that will be followed when the school wishes to restrict a parent's access to school premises.

All schools should ensure the following statement is available in their reception areas if needed (not necessarily on display).

We welcome visitors to our school. We will act to ensure it remains a safe place for pupils, staff and all other members of our community. If a parent/carer has concerns we will always listen to them and seek to address them. However, abusive, threatening or violent behaviour will not be tolerated. If such behaviour occurs we will follow the procedures outlined in the policy – 'Keeping our School Safe', which is available on our website or from the office staff.

We would like to inform parents that no meeting at the school may be electronically recorded without the express permission of all parties, and that information obtained without such permission will not be admissible in any proceedings.

Appendix B

Model letters

Model letter 1:

This is an initial warning letter which can be sent by the headteacher, when it is felt that further serious incidents will warrant a ban.

Model letter 2:

It is suggested that this letter is sent by the chair of governors when, after full consideration, it is felt a ban is necessary. Normally this would follow from a warning (letter 1), though there may be occasions where it is appropriate to move directly to a ban – it is strongly recommended that the Area Schools Officer is consulted in such cases.

At this point consideration should also be given to any practical issues, in particular to ensure that the pupil(s) concerned can be properly accompanied to and collected from school, and to ensure there can be an effective exchange of necessary information between the school and parent.

At this stage, the ban takes effect immediately, but as the letter indicates, the parent must be enabled to make representations. A period of a week is recommended to allow for this, at the end of which the chair of governors should consider any representations made, then make a decision to either confirm the ban or discontinue it (see model letters 3a and 3b).

Model letters 3a/b:

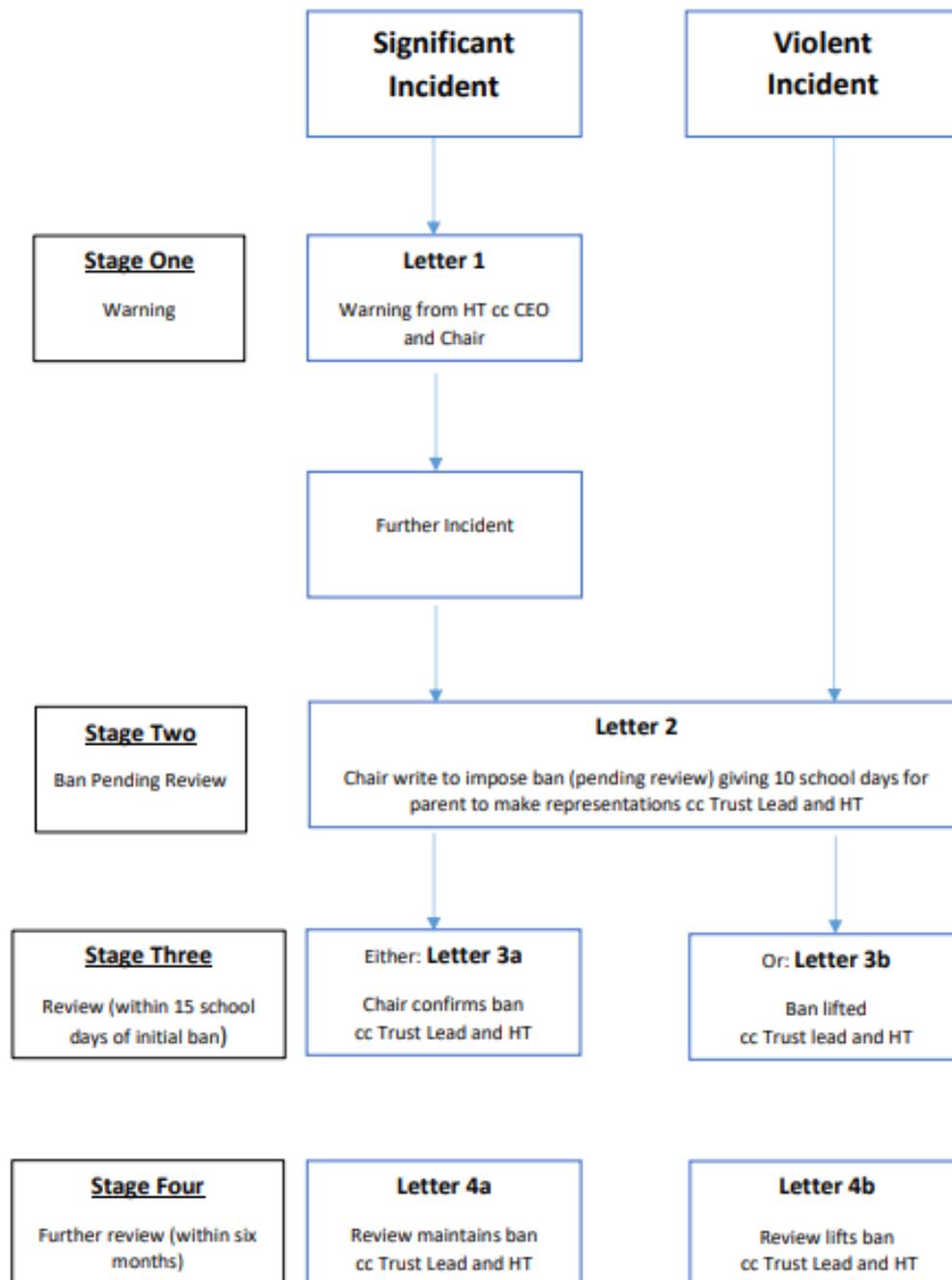
These letters confirm the outcome of the review of the ban by the chair of governors. In the event that the decision is made to confirm the ban, a date should be included for a further review. This should be for a reasonable period, possibly extending up to three months, but preferably not longer than six months.

If the parent is dissatisfied with this decision, it is suggested in the model letter that the matter is then appropriately considered by a panel of school governors (equivalent to the fourth stage of the Surrey County Council model school complaints procedure).

Model letter 4a/b:

These letters can be used to confirm the outcome of further reviews of decisions where the ban has been extended. When a review is due to take place it is advisable to notify the parent in advance and invite them to make any representations. A flowchart showing the process to be followed for a ban is shown overleaf.

Flowchart of process to ban a parent from school premises



Letter 1 (Warning from headteacher, cc: Chair of Governors)

Dear

In line with expectations of adult visitors to the school, as outlined in our policy, I am writing to advise you formally that your behaviour towards on was totally unacceptable and I have taken advice on how to proceed.

Or

I am very concerned about the unsatisfactory nature of our meeting/telephone conversation on and I have taken advice on how to proceed.

(add summary of incident and its effect on staff and pupils)

I have now been able to investigate the incident further and I understand that

Or

As I witnessed your behaviour myself there is no need for me to investigate the incident further.

I am not prepared to continue to accept such behaviour. If parents are unhappy about any aspect of their child's education they can arrange to have a meeting with me at an appropriate place and time. We expect everyone at such meetings to behave calmly and respectfully.

(Optional) In the circumstances I must ask you not to approach any of my staff directly until further notice, though you will still be able to make contact through me.

For the future I must inform you that any repetition of such behaviour towards any of the school staff, pupils or others connected with the school will be followed by an immediate withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of Governors and our Trust Lead. Should you wish to discuss the contents of this letter please make an appointment to see me via the school office.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

cc: Chair of Governors, Trust Lead

Letter 2 (Withdraw permission pending review- sent by chair of governors)

Dear

I have received a report from the headteacher ofSchool about your conduct on at
.....

(add summary of incident and its effect on staff and pupils)

(optional reference to first letter from headteacher)

I must inform you that the governors, in line with our policy, will not tolerate conduct of this nature on the school premises and will act to defend school staff and pupils. On the advice of the Headteacher, I am therefore instructing you that until I have reviewed this incident, you are not to reappear on the school premises. If you do not comply with this instruction I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises you may be prosecuted under section 547 of the Education Act 1996; if convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of £500.

For the duration of this decision you may bring your child(ren) to school and collect them at the end of the school day, but you must not go beyond the school gate.

For infant children – arrangements have been made for your child(ren) to be collected and returned to you at the school gate by a member of the school staff).

Special arrangements can be made for you to meet with the headteacher, if necessary, but this may only be with the written permission of the governors.

The withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises takes effect immediately and will be in place for 15 school days in the first instance. I still need to decide whether it is appropriate to confirm this decision. Before I do so, I wish to give you an opportunity to give me in writing any comments or observations of your own in relation to the report that I have received from the headteacher. These comments may be to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct. To enable me to take a decision on this matter, please send me any written comments you wish to make by (date 10 school days from date of letter).

If on receipt of your comments, I consider that my decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of how to pursue a review of your case.

I am copying this letter to the headteacher and the Trust Lead.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

cc: Headteacher and Trust Lead

Letter 3a (Withdrawal of permission confirmed- sent by chair of governors)

Dear

On I wrote to inform you that on the advice of the headteacher I had withdrawn permission for you to come onto the premises of School. To enable me to determine whether to confirm this decision for a longer period, I gave you the opportunity to give your written comments on the incident concerned by

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated, the contents of which I have carefully considered.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the headteacher's report, I have determined that the decision to withdraw permission for you to come onto school premises should be confirmed. I am therefore instructing that, until further notice, you are not to come onto the premises of the school without the prior knowledge and approval of the headteacher.

If you do not comply with this instruction I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises of the school. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises, you may be prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996; if convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500.

Even though we have taken this decision, the headteacher and staff at School remain committed to the education of your child(ren), who must continue to attend school as normal (insert for primary age children) under the arrangements set out in my previous letter.

This decision will be reviewed again(insert review date which should be within a reasonable period and no longer than six months). When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the withdrawal of permission to come onto the school premises, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you; and any evidence of your co-operation with the school in other respects.

If you wish to pursue the matter further you have a right to complain to a panel of school governors who have not been involved previously and who will consider the circumstances of the decision to withdraw permission for you to come on to the school site. You can make your complaint by writing to the Clerk to the Governors, c/o School.

(Where the incident has arisen in the context of a parental complaint against the school, the following may be inserted) Finally, I would advise you that I have asked the headteacher to ensure that your complaint that..... is considered under the appropriate stage of the school's parental complaints procedure. The school will contact you about this in due course.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

Cc: Headteacher, Trust Lead

Letter 3b (Restore permission after review- sent by Chair of Governors)

Dear

On I wrote to inform you that on the advice of the headteacher I had temporarily withdrawn permission for you to come onto the premises of School. To enable me to determine whether to confirm this decision for a longer period, I gave you the opportunity to give your written comments on the incident concerned by

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated, the contents of which I have carefully considered.

In the circumstances, and after consulting further with the headteacher, I have decided that it is not necessary to confirm the decision and I am therefore restoring to you permission to come onto the school premises, with immediate effect.

(Optional) I must warn you, however, that if it should become necessary in the future I shall not hesitate to withdraw permission for you to come onto the school premises once again.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

cc: Headteacher, Trust Lead

Letter 4a (Continue ban after second review- sent by Chair of Governors)

Dear

I wrote to you on confirming that permission for you to come onto the premises of School had been withdrawn until further notice. I also advised you I would take steps to review this decision by

I have now completed the review. However, after consultation with the headteacher, I have determined that it is not yet appropriate for me to withdraw my decision. (Add brief summary of reasons).

I therefore advise that the instruction that you are not to come onto the premises of School, without the prior knowledge and approval of the headteacher remains in place until further notice. If you do not comply with this instruction I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises and you may be prosecuted under section 547 of the Education Act 1996; if convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500.

I shall undertake a further review of this decision by(insert review date which should be within a reasonable period and no longer than six months).

In the meantime you can write to me with a statement of your views, which I will consider.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

cc: Headteacher, Trust Lead

Letter 4b (Restore permission after later review- sent by Chair of Governors)

Dear

I wrote to you on confirming that permission for you to come onto the premises of School had been withdrawn until further notice. I also advised you I would take steps to review this decision by

I have now completed the review. After consultation with the headteacher I have decided that it is now appropriate to restore permission for you to come onto the school premises with immediate effect.

I trust that you will now work together with the school and there will be no further difficulties of the kind which made it necessary to restrict your access to the school premises.

(Optional) I must warn you, however, that if it should become necessary in the future I shall not hesitate to withdraw permission for you to come onto the school premises once again.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

cc: Headteacher, Trust Lead

Appendix C

Dealing with abusive telephone calls

Sometimes staff may have to deal with challenging, abusive, aggressive or threatening telephone calls. It is unacceptable for any member of staff to be subjected to such abuse but staff may not know how to handle such a telephone call. This guidance has been produced to assist staff if they are faced with such a situation.

To reduce the likelihood of callers becoming abusive staff should conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner and make every reasonable attempt to meet the needs of the caller. Staff should also have the confidence that it is acceptable to end an abusive telephone call.

Always

- remain calm and polite
- stay in control of the situation
- actively listen – repeat information back to the caller to test understanding of the issue and gain their agreement
- inform the caller they are trying to help them
- be positive and say what you can do
- be clear and avoid using jargon
- if necessary, apologise for an error and take action to put it right
- if you have to go and get some information, let the caller know why you are putting them on hold and do not leave them on hold for a long time. Update them as necessary
- make notes of the conversation
- follow the procedure below if appropriate
- refer to the caller to the headteacher, deputy etc.

Never

- respond in the same manner as an abusive caller
- take it personally
- allow yourself to be bullied
- slam the phone down.

Script for abusive telephone calls

When the caller starts to raise their voice/be abusive:

Mr/Mrs/Ms...please don't raise your voice/swear at me, I am not raising my voice/being rude to you. If you continue to raise your voice/be rude to me then I will be forced to terminate the call.

If the caller continues to raise their voice/be abusive:

Mr/Mrs/Ms..... I understand you are upset/frustrated however I am not prepared to continue to be shouted/sworn at so you can either call back when you have calmed down or if you prefer you can put your views in writing.

If, despite the two warnings above, the caller continues to raise their voice/be abusive:

Mr/Mrs/Ms.... I advised you earlier during this call about raising your voice/swearing and you have continued to do this, so I am afraid I am going to have to terminate this call. **Hang up.**

You must make a written log of the call using CPOMS (or equivalent) and inform your headteacher of the nature of the call.

Appendix D

Inappropriate use of social network sites

Social media websites and online systems are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against Schools, Headteachers and their staff and in some cases other parents/students. CELT considers the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of students or the whole school community.

Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, senior leader or the Headteacher (as outlined in the CELT Complaints Policy), so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

Parents who regularly post negative comments about any school to social media sites will be robustly challenged by the headteacher and governors, following the above processes for abusive behaviour.

Abuse/bullying using cyber technology

Staff in schools may become targets of cyber abuse/bullying and, like other forms of bullying, it can have a significant impact on their health, well-being and self-confidence. Protecting staff from abuse is best done within a prevention framework, including whole school policies and appropriate practices. Our trust Social Media policy states that staff should not be online 'friends' with parents at the school. This is in place to protect staff from unwanted contact online.

Cyber abuse/bullying may consist of threats, harassment, embarrassment, humiliation, defamation or impersonation. It may take the form of general insults, or prejudice based abuse, e.g. homophobic, sexist, racist or other forms of discrimination. It may involve email, virtual learning environments, chat rooms, websites, social networking sites, mobile and fixed-point phones, digital cameras, games and virtual world sites.

Abuse using cyber technology can occur at any time and incidents can intrude into the victim's private life. The audience for such messages can be very large and can be reached rapidly. The content of electronically forwarded messages is hard to control and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for the victim to move on.

Our trust supports every school to operate a zero tolerance policy towards direct or indirect harassment or assault against any member of staff, volunteers and governors. This includes the use of social media and other forms of electronic communications to facilitate the act.

Cyberbullying and the law

While there is not a specific criminal offence called cyberbullying, activities can be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including:

- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986
- The Defamation Acts 1952 and 1996

It is the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees. Incidents that are related to employment, even those taking place outside the hours or place of work may fall under the responsibility of the employer.

Responding to Incidents

- Staff should never retaliate i.e. personally engage with cyberbullying incidents.
- Keep any records of abuse – texts, emails, voice mails, or instant messages. Take screen prints of messages or web pages. Record the time, date and address of the site.
- Inform the appropriate person e.g. headteacher, or head of year at the earliest opportunity.

- Where the perpetrator is known to be a current pupil or co-worker, this should be dealt with through the school's own behaviour management / disciplinary procedures.
- Monitoring and confiscation must be appropriate and proportionate - parents, employees and learners should be made aware in advance of any monitoring (for example, of email or internet use) or the circumstances under which confiscation might take place.
- A designated member of the leadership team should contact the police where it appears that a law has been broken – for example, where death threats, assault, or racially motivated criminal offences are involved. Where a potential criminal offence has been identified, the school should ensure that any internal investigation does not interfere with police inquiries. School staff are of course able to report incidents directly to the police.
- If a potential criminal offence has been committed and the school is not able to identify the perpetrator, the police may issue a Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) request to a service provider, enabling them to disclose the data about a message or the person sending it.

Getting offensive content taken down

Where online content is upsetting / inappropriate and the person(s) responsible for posting is known, the quickest way to get material taken down is likely to be to ensure that the person who posted it understands why the material is unacceptable and to request that they remove it.

If the person responsible has not been identified, or will not take the material down, the school will need to contact the host (i.e. the social networking site) to make a request to get the content taken down. The material posted may breach the service provider's terms and conditions of use and can then be removed.

It is important to be clear about where the content is – for example by taking a screen capture of the material that includes the URL or web address. If you are requesting they take down material that is not illegal, be clear how it contravenes the site's terms and conditions.

In cases of actual/suspected illegal content, the school should contact the police.

Appendix E

Model initial unacceptable social media letter- sent by headteacher

Letter 1 (Warning from headteacher, cc: Chair of Governors)

Dear

In line with expectations of parents online, as outlined in our policy, I am writing to advise you formally that your comments about our school on were totally unacceptable and I have taken advice on how to proceed.

Or

I am very concerned about the unsatisfactory nature of your comments on and I have taken advice on how to proceed.

I have included screenshots of the comments for your reference.

I am not prepared to continue to accept such behaviour. If parents are unhappy about any aspect of their child's education they can arrange to have a meeting with their child's class teacher or with me at an appropriate place and time. We expect everyone at such meetings to behave calmly and respectfully.

It is not appropriate for such comments to be posted to social media sites.

(Optional) In the circumstances I must ask you not to approach any of my staff directly until further notice, though you will still be able to make contact through me.

For the future I must inform you that any repetition of such behaviour towards any of the school staff, pupils or others connected with the school will be followed by an immediate withdrawal of permission for you to enter the school premises.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of Governors and our Trust Lead. Should you wish to discuss the contents of this letter please make an appointment to see me via the school office.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

cc: Chair of Governors, Trust Lead

Appendix F

Communication with Parents

All CELT schools welcome regular communication with parents and carers. We recognise that a strong working relationship between school and home is key to ensuring children's success and well-being.

It should be noted by parents that CELT considers the well-being and mental health of staff to be a high priority and staff are not expected to read or respond to any e-mails outside of their usual working hours (normally between 8am and 5pm). Staff will not read or respond to e-mails during school holidays or at the weekends. Staff should never be contacted by parents using social media and parents should be aware that staff are not permitted to respond to comments or concerns sent in this way.

In our Primary Schools, quick messages can always be passed via class teachers or teaching assistants when dropping off or collecting from schools. This is often the best way to communicate quickly with your child's teacher who usually has the most up-to-date information about your child.

The following guidelines are given as best practice for responding to parental communication. It is recognised that all our schools are busy places and that, while staff will do their utmost to keep to these timescales, this may not always be possible. Where formal complaints are made, the complaints policy will supersede these guidelines.

| Method of Contact | Best way of Communicating | Expected response time |
|--|---|---|
| Emails | Please send all e-mails via the school office on admin@fowey.sch.org | Acknowledged within 48 working hours, full response within 5 working days |
| Written letters | Please send any letters via the school office or hand to the class teacher- letters are sometimes missed if left in book-bags. | Acknowledged within 48 working hours, full response within 5 working days |
| Requests for Meetings with class-teachers, senior staff (e.g. SENCO, deputy and head-teachers) | Please make all requests via the school office. | Meeting to be scheduled by office within 5 working days. If not possible, a meeting within 5 days to be offered with an alternative member of the senior team. CELT schools cannot usually accommodate instant requests for meetings and parents insisting on being seen immediately will be asked to leave. |
| Requests for phone calls class-teachers, senior staff (e.g. SENCO, deputy and head-teachers) | Please contact the school office on 01726 832542 if needed. | Within 2 working days. If not possible, a call within 2 days to be offered with an alternative member of the senior team. |
| Messages on school online platforms (e.g. Class Dojo, Doodle Maths, E-Schools) | Please note that while we do our best to regularly check these platforms, it is very easy for busy teachers to miss messages sent in this way. Important messages should be e-mailed via the school office team or passed directly to class teachers. | Within 2 working days |