



## CARBEILE JUNIOR SCHOOL

### Dealing with Abuse Towards Staff Policy

Published: September 2020

Reviewed:

To be reviewed: September 2022

#### **Introduction**

Carbeile Junior School is committed to ensuring that disruptive and abusive parents, carers or visitors within its premises are managed in an appropriate and consistent manner, which provides a safe and pleasant environment, conducive to the effective access to and use of school resources and services.

Carbeile Junior School aims to provide a safe workplace for all staff, contractors and visitors to school premises. The school operates a zero tolerance policy towards any harm, abuse or threats directed towards staff, and any behaviour which may be deemed disruptive or constitutes a criminal offence. Any conduct of this kind will be dealt with under this procedure in accordance with our duty of care and occupational health and safety responsibilities.

#### **Eligibility**

This procedure applies to all parents, carers or visitors, including telephone callers, towards any school staff member.

#### **Definitions**

- Contractor - Not a Staff staff member, but is engaged by Staff, on a temporary basis, to work on behalf of the Staff on Staff premises.
- Unreasonable and criminal conduct - is any behaviour by a current or former complainant which, because of its nature or frequency raises substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues for school staff, other service users and complainants or the complainant himself/herself or is by its very nature a criminal offence.

#### **Unreasonable Conduct is grouped into five categories of conduct:**

- Unreasonable persistence - continued, incessant and unrelenting conduct by a complainant that has a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on school staff, services, time and/or resources
- Unreasonable demands- any demands (express or implied) that are made by a complainant that have a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on staff, services, time and/or resources
- Unreasonable lack of cooperation - an unwillingness and/or inability by a complainant to cooperate with our organisation, staff, or complaints system and processes that result in a disproportionate and unreasonable use of school services, time and/or resources
- Unreasonable arguments - include any arguments that are not based in reason or logic, that are incomprehensible, false or inflammatory, trivial or delirious and that disproportionately and unreasonably impact upon staff, services, time, and/or resources
- Unreasonable behaviours - conduct that is unreasonable in all circumstances, regardless of how stressed, angry or frustrated that a complainant is, because it unreasonably compromises the health, safety, wellbeing and security of school staff, other service users or the complainant: and any attempt to supply or consume alcohol and/or illicit substances, suspected stolen goods or any other suspected illegal activity.

\*Further detailed information on what may constitute unreasonable behaviour can be found in Appendix 1.

### **General Provisions**

Staff will deal firmly and courteously with parents, carers or visitors who engage in unreasonable behaviours. Where possible all interaction with the offending person(s) will be undertaken by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Note: It should be noted that you should also check the unreasonable/vexatious parent/carer/visitor register if a customer's previous unacceptable behaviour has been subjected to action and logged. This includes unreasonable, unreasonably persistent or vexatious complainants.

Staff, who feel that a parent/carer/visitor may be vulnerable, will advise the member of SLT. Vulnerable Parents, carers or visitors will always be treated fairly and with sensitivity. Prior to any extended restriction with regards to contacting the staff or withholding access to school services or buildings a member of SLT must consult with the relevant safeguarding team.

### **Physical Exclusion – face to face**

Where practicable, staff will request a parent/carer/visitor who is exhibiting unacceptable behaviours to desist from such behaviour. If they continue, a member of SLT will be called and they will advise the customer that such behaviour will lead to them being requested to leave the premises.

If, following a request to leave, the parent/carer/visitor fails or refuses to comply or responds in an abusive fashion, he/she will be required to leave the premises for the balance of that calendar day. If he/she fails to leave the member of SLT will consider calling the police.

The staff member requesting the visitor to leave will complete an Incident Report form. The report will be registered in the headteacher's electronic incident reporting system.

Where a minor (Under 18yrs of age) has been asked to leave, steps should be taken to notify the Parents or guardians in writing or by telephone within 24hrs of the incident.

Note: The Police may be called at any time where a visitor or customer is involved in an illegal activity or employees fear for their own safety or that of other parents, carers or visitors. Whether the parent/carer/visitor is notified that this action has been taken will depend on the circumstances at the time.

### **Verbal Exclusion - Telephone Contact**

If contact with staff is by telephone, the parent/carer/visitor will be asked to refrain from abusive, intimidating, threatening language or the like.

First incidence - if the parent/carer/visitor refuses to refrain, the staff member will indicate that if this unacceptable behaviour continues they will terminate the call.

Second incidence - if the parent/carer/visitor calls school again, a member of SLT should take the call and if the behaviour is repeated, the staff member should indicate to the caller that if it continues, the call will be terminated and a report sent to the chair of governors.

Period of exclusion applies - in the event a parent/carer/visitor is identified by a member of staff as a person who has been excluded, the parent/carer/visitor will be informed of his or her period of exclusion and the call will be terminated.

\*Note: For all above incident types the staff member will complete an Incident Report form. The report will be registered on the headteacher's electronic incident reporting system.

### **Written Correspondence Exclusion**

In accordance with school's definition of unreasonable conduct, exclusions may be received in writing and will be dealt within the following way:

#### 1. Providing a warning letter

If written correspondence with the school i.e. letter or email, is considered unreasonable the school may restrict a parent/carer/visitor's contact with the school. Unless a complainant's conduct poses a substantial risk to the health and safety of staff or other third parties, the school will provide them with a written warning about their conduct in the first instance.

The warning letter will:

- Specify the date, time and location of the incident;
- Explain why the complainant's conduct incident is problematic;
- List the types of access changes and/or restrictions that may be imposed if the behaviour continues. (Note: not every possible restriction should be listed only those that are most relevant);
- Provide clear and full reasons for the warning being given;
- Include an attachment of school's ground rules and/or briefly state the standard of behaviour that is expected of the complainant
- Provide the name and contact details of the staff member who they can contact about the letter; and
- Be signed by the headteacher

#### 2. Providing a notification letter

- If a complainant's conduct continues after they have been given a written warning or in extreme cases of overt aggression, violence, assault or other unlawful/unacceptable conduct the headteacher has the discretion to send a notification letter immediately restricting the complainant's access to school buildings (without prior written warning).

The notification letter will:

- Specify the date, time and location of the incident(s);
- Explain why the complainant's conduct/ incident(s) is problematic;
- Identify the change and/or restriction that will be imposed and what it means for the complainant;
- Provide clear and full reasons for this restriction;
- Specify the duration of the change or restriction imposed, which will not exceed 12 months
- Indicate a time period for review;
- Provide the name and contact details of the head teacher who they can contact about the letter and/or request a review of the decision; and
- Be signed by the chair of governors
- If a customer returns and/or repeats the abusive behaviour following an initial period of exclusion, the headteacher and/or the chair of governors will consider long-term exclusion. They will be responsible for determining the period of extended exclusion,

depending on the gravity or the repetition of the incidents following consultation with the Manager of the area affected.

- All exclusions will be notified in writing.
- Parents and guardians will be notified where possible when a minor is asked to leave the school premises.

In the event a parent/carer/visitor, excluded from the use of school premises, attempts to enter school premises during any period of exclusion, the headteacher will be notified and the Police may be called.

#### **Use of school premises during Exclusion Period**

•It may be necessary that an excluded person needs to use school facilities to proceed with a necessary business transaction between themselves and the school. Alternative arrangements will be made in order that an excluded person proceeds with essential school business. That person will be advised to initially contact the Staff through written correspondence.

#### **Policy Review**

We will review this policy bi-annually unless earlier revision is required. All staff will revisit this document bi-annually. Once approved by Governors, the policy will be available to all staff and stored as a hard copy by the Clerk.

Next review: September 2022

Signed Headteacher: Mr P Hamlyn

Signed Chair of Governors:

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020