



## CAMP HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL



### POLICY regarding -

### 'PUBLIC ACCESS TO STAFF & PUPILS'

We believe staff and children are entitled to a safe and protective environment in which to work. In recognising that the education of our children is a partnership between the home and school, the Board of Governors, Principal and staff seeks to allow Parents/Guardians access at all reasonable times to their child's teacher and the Principal. The Principal, as the day-to-day manager of the school, will seek to ensure that all such contacts are conducted in a manner which will promote the educational interests of the pupil and allow for the safety of all the children and staff. Behaviour that will cause harassment, alarm or distress to users of the premises is contrary to the aims of the school.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all members of the public about expected conduct. This is so we can continue to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

The aims of this policy and its associated procedures are to:

- protect the pupils and staff when on site from harm both in and outside of school hours and
- to promote effective and meaningful liaison between school staff and the wider school community.

We have a statutory duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and a common law duty to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the school premises are safe and that pupils, staff and visitors to school come to no harm. We have a duty of care to our staff and pupils to ensure that they are safe from harm and therefore we expect visitors to adhere to this policy and safeguarding procedures.

We also work closely with the 'School Council' to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views and opinions.

#### **PROCEDURES -**

The school has many members of the public visiting the school during the course of any single day. In order to maintain the security of pupils and staff, the following procedures must be followed:

- *All members of the public must report to the school office on arrival;*
- *For pre-arranged visits, the office staff must be informed of the date of any visit, their name, their host and the purpose of the visit;*
- *A visitors' book is available to record who is on the premises at any particular time;*
- *Identification passes are available from the school office and must be worn by visitors;*
- *Visitors must sign out when leaving the premises;*
- *A member of staff will escort all visitors to the appropriate location within the school;*
- *Visitors must ensure they do not use any photographic devices or video/recording devices whilst in the building without consent*

The importance of meaningful, regular and positive liaison between parents/carers and staff cannot be overstated. The means of expressing this working relationship are diverse but members of the public/parents/carers will appreciate that some guidelines are necessary to ensure communication is as effective as possible.

All exchanges between parents/carers and staff should be conducted in a respectful and tolerant manner. As parental attitudes to school, and the staff members, can directly influence the child, it is important that all exchanges between school and home should be informative and show mutual respect for each other's knowledge and concern for the pupil's welfare. Pupils have much to gain from the shared interest of parents/guardians and staff members - it is important that pupils feel secure in the working relationship between home and school.

Parents /Guardians are asked to adhere to the school's guidelines when seeking contact with their child's teacher.

### **GUIDANCE -**

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment we expect all members of the public to:

- *Respect our school values and our caring ethos*
- *Understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children*
- *Demonstrate that **all** members of the school community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and behaviour*
- *Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue*
- *Approach the school to help resolve any issues of concern*
- *Avoid using staff as threats to admonish child's behaviour*
- *Correct own child's behaviour especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behaviour or unsafe behaviour*

In line with the Education Authority's recommendations, the Board of Governors reserve the right to put in place arrangements for addressing the most serious situations where the approach of a member of the public might amount to harassment, rude/inappropriate behaviour or threats towards any member of the school community. These arrangements include the Board of Governors right to withdrawing the parent/guardian's/visitors right to enter the school grounds/premises. Any individual causing disruption to the operation of the school or harassing pupils or staff, shall be directed to leave the school premises immediately and the PSNI called if necessary. Thankfully such situations are rare in the school system and we trust that they are unlikely to ever occur in the context of this school.

In order to support a peaceful and safe school environment the school **will not** tolerate any member of the public exhibiting the following:

- *Disruptive behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, office area or any other area of the school grounds including team matches or training sessions*
- *Using loud/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying temper*
- *Threatening to do actual bodily harm to a member of school staff, Governor, visitor, fellow parent/ carer or pupil regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence*
- *Damaging or destroying school property*
- *Abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication*
- *Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/ staff at the school on social media sites. Any concerns you may have about the school must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, Head of Key Stage, Vice Principal, Principal or the Chair of the Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned*
- *The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on school premises*
- *Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences)*
- *Smoking (this includes the use of E cigarettes) and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on school property*
- *Dogs being brought on to school premises*

### **Inappropriate Use of Social Media**

Social media is being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against schools, Principals, school staff, and in some cases other parents/pupils. The Board of Governors considers the use of social media being used in this way as **unacceptable** and certainly not in the best interests of the children or the whole school community. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, Head of Key Stage, Vice Principal, Principal or the Chair of the Governors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

In the event that any pupil or parent/carer of a child/ren is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments on social network sites this will be treated as a serious matter and dealt with through the appropriate channels - the school will also expect that any parent/carer or pupil removes such posts immediately. If necessary, the school will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare.

**We would expect that parents would make all persons responsible for collecting their child/ren aware of this policy.**

The Board of Governors, Principal and staff would like to thank parents/guardians for their co-operation and support in this matter and look forward to working together to further strengthen home/school partnerships.

Principal :- Mrs. K. McMaster

Signature: - *K. McMaster*

Date:- January 2020

Chair of Governors :- Mr. H. Ballentine

Signature: - *H. Ballentine*

Date:- January 2020