

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE

RHEYNN YNSEE, SPOYRT AS CULTOOR



Isle of Man
Government

Reillys Ellan Vannin

Policy

Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour
by Visitors on School Premises

Glossary

Department means the Department of Education, Sport and Culture (DESC) including schools, UCM, Villa Gaiety and Manx Sport & Recreation.

DESC Department of Education, Sport and Culture.

UCM University College Isle of Man.

Visitor means an individual who is visiting the school and is not employed to work there or is not a pupil there. A pupil who is suspended from the school for misbehaviour may also be referred to as a visitor.

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Summary

About this policy

All the Island's maintained and provided schools actively encourage close links with parents and the community. The Department of Education, Sport and Culture believes that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one.

Most visitors to school premises¹ conduct themselves in a calm and respectful manner, but on very rare occasions, verbal and/or physical abuse is directed towards members of school staff or members of the wider school community.

In such situations the Department expects and requires its members of staff to behave professionally and to attempt to defuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement of other colleagues when appropriate. However, all members of staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse.

Violence, threatening behaviour and abuse on school premises against school staff or other members of the school community, including other visitors and pupils, will not be tolerated. All members of the school community have a right to expect that their school is a safe place in which to work and learn.

This policy outlines the steps that will be taken if behaviour is unacceptable and contravenes Section 21 of the Education Act 2001 (Appendix 1).

Who is this document for?

This Policy is for the leaders, staff and the Governing Bodies of all schools maintained and provided by DESC, as well as UCM.

It may also be referenced by parents, pupils and the wider public for information.

Key points

- This Policy provides for situations where unacceptable behaviour by a visitor has been directed towards a member of staff, a pupil or member(s) of the wider school community.
- A person who is not authorised to be on the school's property, or who is not a registered pupil at the school, must leave the property upon request from the head teacher.
- A visitor who engages in unacceptable behaviour may be guilty of an offence under the Education Act 2001 and could be liable to pay a fine.

Effective Date

This document is effective from February 2024. It will be kept under review and updated as necessary but at least every five years.

¹ Throughout this policy, references to 'school' also include the Department's other education settings including UCM, Pre-School Assessment Centre and Thie Ny Shee

Policy

1. Visitors do not have an automatic right to enter a school, however they are very welcome to come onto school premises at certain times, for example:
 - For appointments;
 - To attend a school event; or
 - To drop off or pick up younger children.
2. Unacceptable behaviour directed toward members of staff, pupils or other members of the school's community will not be tolerated.

The following list includes some examples of behaviour that is considered unacceptable:

- Verbal intimidation either in person or over the telephone, including swearing or shouting
- Verbal abuse, such as speaking in a rude manner or making negative personal comments
- Any form of physical contact
- Throwing of objects or liquids
- Physical intimidation, such as standing unnecessarily close to a member of staff
- The use of rude or aggressive hand gestures such as pointing, shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Spitting
- Breaching the school's security procedures
- Frequent emails and/or phone calls which amount to harassment and intimidation, despite the school's best efforts to address the situation
- Regularly contacting school staff and expecting responses at unreasonable times, such as late at night or during weekends. Emails sent to the school office will be responded to within one working day whenever possible
- Inappropriate electronic activity including publishing abusive or inappropriate content with regards to the school, staff or students on social media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter or in email communication

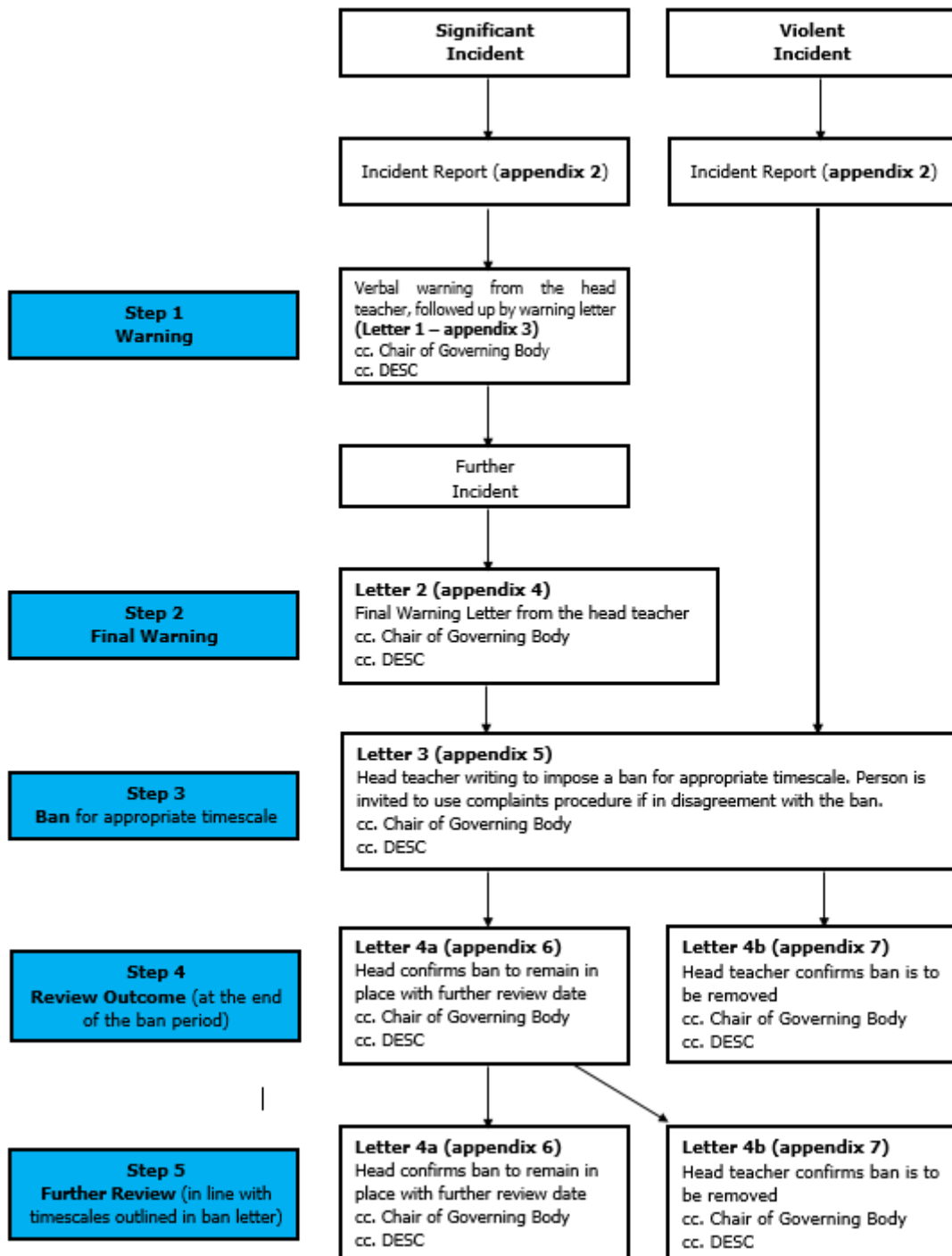
This is not an exhaustive list, but provides some examples of the type of behaviour which is unacceptable.

3. All incidents of unacceptable behaviour will be logged and may result in the police being called or informed of the incident.

4. In normal circumstances, visitors are welcome to visit the grounds and buildings of a school. However, if there are serious concerns regarding the conduct of a visitor or the safety of the school community, the head teacher can:
 - Initiate a meeting/dialogue with the individual
 - Write to the visitor describing their misconduct, explaining both its impact on the school and why it is unacceptable
 - Vary the person's access to the school
 - Warn of the possibility of a 'ban' should the unacceptable behaviour be repeated
 - Impose a ban subject to review after a fixed date or period of time

Procedure

The procedure for dealing with an incident is as follows, although some steps of the procedure may be omitted or accelerated depending on the severity of the behaviour:



1. Incident Report

If a visitor behaves in an unacceptable manner toward a member of staff, a pupil or a member of the wider school community, an incident report form should be completed by the individual against whom the abuse was directed.

When the unacceptable behaviour has been directed towards a pupil, where appropriate, a member of staff may complete the form on the pupil's behalf, allowing the pupil the opportunity to review the content before signing it if they agree with the wording.

Please see **Appendix 2** for the Incident Report template.

2. First Warning – Verbal and Written

Following an incident, if possible, the head teacher should talk privately to the person whose behaviour was deemed unacceptable (the head teacher may choose to have someone accompanying them if desired). During this conversation, the head teacher will tell the individual why their behaviour was unacceptable and seek assurances that it will not be repeated in the future. The head teacher will make the individual aware that should such an incident be repeated, it will result in a more serious response.

The first verbal warning will be followed-up with a written letter addressed to the individual, providing a record of the discussion and the outcomes.

3. Final Written Warning

If the same individual behaves in an unacceptable manner on a further occasion, the head teacher will write to the person to provide a final warning. In this letter, the head teacher will reiterate to the individual that their behaviour is unacceptable and that any further incident will result in the involvement of the Department and/or the Police, with a ban being put in place.

Depending on the severity of the behaviour, the process may be accelerated.

4. Ban Letter

Upon further reoccurrence of an incident (or where the initial incident is deemed to be sufficiently serious by the head teacher) a ban from the premises for a specified amount of time will be given. The School Governing Body and/or the Department will be notified of the head teacher's decision to ban an individual.

An individual may be banned from the school premises, for a period deemed appropriate by the head teacher. The banned person can follow the Department's Complaint Procedure if they do not agree with the ban that has been enforced.

The Department may consider taking legal action if a ban is ignored.

Regardless of a ban being in place, the individual's right remains to be informed about their child's educational progress. This can be achieved through a meeting with another parent, guardian or representative of the individual, or through a written report.

5. Involvement of the Department and the Police

It is an offence for a visitor who enters a school's premises to behave in a violent, quarrelsome, indecent or disorderly manner, or to use any profane, obscene, indecent or threatening language. Such a person may be removed from the school premises and may be subject to a fine of up to £1,000.

If a person enters school premises after being banned from doing so, that person will be removed from the premises and the Department may progress with taking legal action against the individual.

Template letters which may be used can be found in the appendices of this document.

Appendix 8 provides some guidance on dealing with abusive telephone calls

Appendix 9 provides some guidance on dealing with abuse carried out by technology, for example e-mail, messaging or via social media.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Section 21 of the Isle of Man Education Act 2001:

"21. Conduct on school and college premises

(1) Any person, not being —

(a) a person employed or appointed or authorised by the Department or the governing body of a provided school, maintained school or special school, or

(b) a registered pupil at the school (other than a pupil who, in accordance with the articles of government of the school, is for the time being suspended from the school for misbehaviour),

who is present on any school premises and, on being requested by the head teacher to quit the school premises, refuses or fails to do so is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000.

(2) Any person being present on any school premises who —

(a) behaves in a violent, quarrelsome, indecent or disorderly manner on any school premises, or

(b) uses any profane, obscene, indecent or threatening language on such premises,

is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000.

(3) All constables are required, on the demand of the head teacher, or some person in his behalf, to expel or assist in expelling from the school premises any person committing or having committed an offence under subsection (1) or (2), and may use such reasonable force as may be required for that purpose.

(3A) In proceedings for an offence under subsection (1) a certificate signed by the head teacher that a pupil was at the material time suspended as mentioned in subsection (1)(b) shall be admissible as evidence that he or she was so suspended; and a document purporting to be such a certificate shall be deemed to be such a certificate unless the contrary is proved.

(4) References in this section to the head teacher of a school include references to a teacher acting as the head teacher.

(5) This section applies to the premises of a college provided or maintained by the Department as it applies to school premises; and in relation to such premises references in this section to the head teacher of a school shall be construed as references to the principal, or a teacher acting as the principal, of the college."

Appendix 2

Incident Report – Unacceptable Behaviour

1. Details:

Date of incident:

Day of the week:

Time: Location:

2. Member of staff reporting incident:

Name:

Position:

3. Details of person who was subject to the behaviour:

Name:

Job / Position (if member of staff):

4. Details of visitor (if known):

.....

.....

Has the visitor been the subject of a previous Incident Report Form? (Yes/No):

If Yes, details:

5. Witness(es) if any:

Name:

Address:

.....

Other information / relationship between member of staff / pupil/ visitor if any:

.....

6. Details of incident (please attach a full report and any witness statement):

.....
.....
.....
.....

Location of incident:

7. Outcome (see policy):

Step:

Has the visitor been involved in any previous incidents? (Yes/No):

Name and contact details of any police officer involved / incident number:

.....

Form completed by:

Signed:

Date:

Please return to the Headteacher as soon as possible following an incident.

Appendix 3

Letter 1 – Warning from the Headteacher

Dear <name>

Following the incident on <date> involving you and <name>, I am writing to you to confirm the outcome of our conversation on <date>.

I appreciate that the topic of a child's education is of a sensitive nature, but the behaviour you displayed is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Any future incidents where you display rude or aggressive behaviour towards a member of the school community will result in more serious action being taken against you. Such action includes, but is not limited to, an immediate ban from entering the school premises.

A copy of this letter will be provided to the Chair of Governors and to the Department of Education, Sport and Culture.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact the school office to arrange a meeting with me.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher

cc. Chair of Governing Body, <name>
cc. DESC

Appendix 4

Letter 2 – Warning from the Head Teacher Following Further Incident

Dear <name>

With regard to the previous warning sent to you on <date>, and following further incident on <date> involving you and <name>, I am writing to you to confirm that **this letter is to be considered a final warning and any further incidents of abusive or inappropriate behaviour on school premises, or towards any member of the school community, will result in an immediate ban, preventing you from entering the school premises.**

I appreciate that the topic of a child's education is of a sensitive nature, but the behaviour you displayed is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

A copy of this letter will be provided to the Chair of Governors and to the DESC Director of Strategic Advice for Education.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact the school office to arrange a meeting with me.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher

cc. Chair of Governing Body, <name>
cc. DESC, Director of Strategic Advice for Education

Appendix 5

Letter 3 – Head Teacher Writing to Impose a Ban

Dear <name>

I am writing to you regarding the serious matter of your conduct on school premises on <date>, for which I have previously written to you.

In line with our Policy, such conduct will not be tolerated and the necessary action will be taken to protect members of the school's community. Therefore, I am informing you that **you are not permitted to enter the school premises for <timeframe> from the date of [the incident (<date>)] or [this letter]**. Within the first 7 school days of this ban you may follow the Department's Complaint Procedure if you disagree with the ban that has been imposed.

Although you are banned from the school premises, all staff at school remain committed to the education of your child(ren), who must continue to attend school as normal under the arrangements set out below.

For the duration of this time 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.

At the end of the ban period, <insert the date the ban will end>, I will contact you to discuss the situation and confirm the removal of or extension of the ban.

Should you fail to comply with these instructions, your removal from the premises will be arranged.

If you carry out any further incidents of unacceptable behaviour towards members of the school community, you may be guilty of an offence under section 21 of the Education Act 2001 and could be liable on summary conviction to pay a fine of up to £1,000.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher

cc. DESC, Director of Strategic Advice for Education
cc. Chair of Governing Body, <name>

Appendix 6

Letter 4a – Head Teacher Confirming Continuance of the Ban, in line with the review date stated in the initial letter informing of ban

Dear <name>

I refer to my letter dated <date> advising that you are not permitted to come onto the school premises until <date>. I have consulted with the Governing Body and I have concluded that it is not yet appropriate for the ban to be removed <add brief summary of reasons>.

Please be advised that the ban has been extended and remains in place until <date> and that you are not permitted to come onto the school's premises without my prior knowledge.

Although you are banned from the school premises, all staff at school remain committed to the education of your child(ren), who must continue to attend school as normal under the arrangements set out in my previous letter.

If you fail to comply with this instruction, you will be removed from the premises and may be subject to further legal action.

A review of the current ban will take place by <insert review date stated above (which should be within a reasonable period and no longer than 6 months)>, following which I will write to confirm the outcome.

In the meantime you may wish to write to me with a statement of your views, which will be considered when the current ban is reviewed.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher

cc. DESC, Director of Strategic Advice for Education
cc. Chair of Governing Body, <name>

Appendix 7

Letter 4b – Head Teacher Removing Ban in line with the review date stated in the initial letter informing of ban

Dear <name>

On <date> I wrote to inform you that you are not permitted on the premises of <name of> School.

In the circumstances, and after consulting with the Governing Body, I have decided that it is not necessary to continue the ban and I am therefore restoring permission for you to come onto the school premises from <insert date> for the following purposes:

- for appointments
- to attend a school event
- to drop off or pick up younger children.

In addition, you may visit the school for other reasons, when an appointment has been made.

Please note that should there be any future incidents of inappropriate behaviour, there will be no hesitation in re-instating the ban to prevent you from entering school premises.

Yours sincerely,

Head teacher

cc. DESC, Director of Strategic Advice for Education
cc. Chair of Governing Body, <name>

Appendix 8

Dealing with Abusive Telephone Calls

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 to try to gain their agreement
- 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 need to get some information, let the caller know why 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 the caller to the head teacher/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:

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.

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

I understand that you are upset/frustrated but I am not prepared to be shouted at/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 the caller still continues to raise their voice/ be abusive

I advised you earlier during this call that I would terminate the call if you continued to raise your voice/swear at me so I am not terminating the call. *Hang up.*

Further actions:

Make a written note of the telephone call using the Incident Report Form (Appendix 2) and report the incident to your line manager.

Appendix 9

Abuse/Bullying using 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 and wellbeing. Preventing abuse of staff should be included within school policies and appropriate practices.

Cyber abuse/bullying may consist of threats, harassment, ridicule, humiliation, defamation or impersonation. It may take the form of general insults, or it could be prejudice-based abuse e.g. homophobic, sexist, racist or other forms of discrimination. It could 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 happen at any time and incidents can intrude into the victim's private life. The audience for such messages can be 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.

The Department endorses the decision of any school to operate a zero-tolerance policy towards direct or indirect abuse, harassment, bullying or threat of assault against any member of staff, volunteer or governor. The procedure detailed in this policy can be used to address abuse received via technology. This includes the use of social media and other forms of electronic communications to facilitate the act.

Version Control and Review

The business area that owns this document is Education Advice and Support Division.

Version	Author	Date	Changes
V0.1	Policy Hub	Oct 2023	First Draft
V0.2			Amendments following consultation
V0.3	Policy Hub	Jan 2024	Final Draft submitted to SLT (Policy Hub Edit)
V0.4	Policy Hub	Jan 2024	Amendments following SLT review (if applicable)
V0.5	Policy Hub	24 th Jan 2024	Final Draft approved by Department
V1.0			Version 1.0 published

Review Date

This document was issued in February 2024 and is due to be reviewed no later than February 2029.