

Visitor Policy

SEPTEMBER 2020

THE BERWICK WAY

Work hard, with humility, diligence and attention to detail

ON TIME

ON SIDE

ON TASK



Visitor Policy

Approved by:	Headteacher	Date:	14.09.20
Person Responsible:	Deputy Headteacher	Version:	2.0
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1. Introduction and aims

At Berwick Academy we recognise that educating our children is a process that requires a full partnership between home and school and we understand the importance of a good working relationship with parents, carers and any member of a child’s immediate network who might attend site to support, celebrate and work with Berwick Academy staff. Therefore, we welcome, encourage and expect parents and carers to participate fully in the life of our academy.

However, due to the unprecedented issues surrounding the spread of the Covid-19 virus, there is a need for the Academy to put in place additional safeguards for students and staff. This is done in conjunction with government guidance and direction, and will be in place until advice is given that normal routines can be returned to.

The purpose of this policy is to clarify our expectations for the conduct of parents, carers and any adult engaged in attending the academy.

2. Restrictions to visitors on site

2.1 Arranging meetings in school

In relation to all visitors coming on to academy site, the two safeguarding questions must be addressed:

- a) Is it necessary?
- b) Can it be done a different way?

In order to support the suppression of the spread of the virus, it is our policy that visitors will not come on to academy site at the current time. This includes meetings with professionals, parents/carers, visiting speakers, and applies to all non-Academy staff.

Meetings will take place virtually or via telephone at the current time.

2.2 Exceptions

Exceptions can only be made in advance, with the agreement of the Headteacher, where a visit is unavoidable or essential. An exception is made for members of the emergency services attending the site in the conduct of their duties.

3. Dropping off / collecting children

3.1 Arrival by foot

Students should arrive and leave via their designated gate. Parents/carers and others are not permitted to come on site to drop-off or collect children, except by specific prior agreement.

3.2 Arrival by car / bus

Those being collected or dropped off by vehicle will arrive to the lower turning circle, and then proceed via foot to the designated gate.

3.3 Collecting children who are unwell or leaving early

Parents/carers collecting children who are unwell, leaving for an appointment, or have been excluded, should arrive to the top gate and press the button to inform reception that they have arrived. The child will be escorted to the gate by a member of staff. Parents/carers and others may not enter the site at this point.

4. Expectations of visitor conduct

We expect visitors, and those participating in virtual or physical meetings with academy staff, to show respect and concern for everyone in our community by:

- Respect the caring ethos and values of our academy
- Understand that both academy staff and parents/carers need to work together for the benefit of their children;
- Demonstrate that all members of the academy 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 academy's record of that event in order to bring about a peaceful resolution to any issue;
- Correct their own child's behaviour, especially in public, where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive behaviour or unsafe behaviour;
- Approach the academy to help resolve any issues of concern.

Although the following examples are situations rarely encountered at Berwick Academy, we respectfully state that we cannot tolerate parents, carers and visitors 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 at team matches;
- 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, trustee, visitor, fellow parent/carer or student regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence;
- Damaging or destroying academy property;
- 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 or consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst in the academy buildings or grounds;
- Dogs other than registered guide dogs being brought on to school premises;
- Inappropriate use of social network sites.

5. Potential sanctions for inappropriate visitor conduct

5.1 Subsection

It is an offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996 for any person, including parents/carers, to cause a nuisance or disturbance on school premises. The police may be called to assist the academy in removing a parent, but local authorities and Trustees may also authorise the removal of a person if they have reasonable cause to believe that the person is causing a nuisance or disturbance.

The academy expects its staff to behave professionally in these situations and attempt to diffuse the situation where possible, seeking the involvement as appropriate of other colleagues. However, all staff have the right to work without fear of violence and abuse and the right in extreme cases of appropriate self-defence.

The Headteacher and Trustees have the right to ban an offending adult from entering the academy's grounds in order to safeguard our school community. Each situation will be considered individually.

A ban can be for a limited period of time and reviewed, or it can be permanent. This is a decision taken at the Headteacher's discretion and is based on the details of an incident being drawn together to inform as fair a decision as possible. Wherever possible, a warning will be given to a parent/carer who might be demonstrating inappropriate behaviour. If a ban is issued this would typically be for a time limited period and then subject to review. However, if aggression or intimidation continue, or where there have been serious acts of aggression, a parent, carer or other adult may be banned permanently by the Headteacher.

5.2 Where a ban is decided

- 5.21 The adult will be warned, in writing, that s/he is banned from the premises subject to a review by a specified date. The suggested duration of a site ban is one half term.
- 5.22 S/he will be advised that s/he has a right to appeal the ban by writing to the Chair of Trustees within 10 school days setting out the reason(s) for appeal.
- 5.23 Where an assault has led to a ban, a statement indicating that the matter has been reported to the police will be included.
- 5.24 The Chair of Trustees will be informed of the ban.
- 5.25 The academy will maintain a log of relevant incidents as evidence.
- 5.26 The ban will be reviewed at the end of the relevant period and may be extended if the academy has grounds for continued concern regarding the relevant adult's conduct.
- 5.27 The relevant adult will be informed of the outcome of the review and advised whether the site ban is to be lifted or extended. There will be a right of appeal against a decision to extend the site ban, which can be exercised by writing to the Chair of Trustees within 15 school days setting out the reason(s) for appeal.