Zero Tolerance Policy

Staff Responsible:	**Mrs A Sheridan**
Date of Issue:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2029

Introduction

Ribbon Academy is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for trustees, employees, pupils, parents, carers, contractors and visitors. The school is committed to ensuring its trustees, employees and all visitors can carry out their duties and work in an environment free from violence, harassment, intimidation, discrimination and abuse. This policy applies to all interactions with members of the school community, whether these take place on school premises, during school activities, by telephone, in writing or through electronic communication. The school has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse directed towards trustees, employees and visitors. Any allegations against school employees, trustees or visitors who have failed to comply with the provisions of this policy will be considered under the relevant procedures. This policy supports the school's duties under health and safety, equality, safeguarding and employment legislation.

Expectations of Behaviour

The safety and wellbeing of trustees, employees and visitors should never be compromised.

We expect all members of the school community, including parents and carers, to engage with one another in a respectful, courteous and professional manner. We recognise that individuals may occasionally feel frustrated, upset or dissatisfied; however, behaviour must remain appropriate and respectful at all times.

Any incident where a trustee, employee or visitor is abused, threatened, harassed, intimidated or assaulted is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour

Abusive behaviour can take place in person, over the telephone, through written communication or via technology such as email, social media, messaging applications and online forums. Aggressive or abusive behaviour includes verbal, physical, emotional and discriminatory abuse.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of behaviour that will not be tolerated and which may amount to a criminal offence:

- Physical violence or assault
- Aggressive, hostile or intimidating behaviour
- Shouting, swearing or the use of offensive language
- Racial abuse
- Discriminatory abuse relating to any protected characteristic
- Sexual harassment or sexual assault
- Harassment
- Threats or threatening behaviour
- Deliberately making or sharing false, malicious or defamatory statements about members of the school community
- Malicious allegations
- Stalking, following, monitoring or repeatedly waiting outside school premises
- Deliberate damage to school property
- Filming, recording, photographing or publishing images of staff without permission where this causes harassment, intimidation or distress

- Posting offensive, abusive or defamatory comments on social media or online platforms
- Encouraging or inciting others to engage in abusive behaviour towards members of the school community
- Repeated unwanted contact that causes alarm, distress or disruption

The school will take particularly seriously any behaviour motivated by prejudice, discrimination or hatred relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Reporting Abusive Behaviour

When abusive behaviour occurs, trustees, employees and visitors should disengage from the perpetrator wherever it is safe to do so.

Where there is immediate danger or a threat to safety, the police should be contacted by calling 999.

Where an incident occurs, the following steps should be taken:

1. Ensure personal safety and, where necessary, seek assistance from colleagues or emergency services.
2. Report the incident to the Headteacher as soon as possible.
3. Where the concern relates to the Headteacher, report the matter directly to the Chair of Trustees.
4. Complete the school's online incident reporting form and follow any health and safety reporting procedures.
5. Retain any evidence relating to the incident.

Employees, trustees and visitors are encouraged to keep their own record of any abusive behaviour. Emails, letters, social media posts, text messages or online communications should be saved or copied. Screenshots should be taken where appropriate. Where a telephone conversation or face-to-face discussion has taken place, a written note of the exchange should be prepared as soon as possible after the incident.

Where abuse is serious but does not warrant a 999 call, incidents may be reported to the police by calling 101. Even where no immediate action is taken, a police record may help demonstrate a pattern of behaviour.

If an employee feels unable to raise concerns with the Headteacher, they should follow the school's Confidential Reporting Code.

Following a report, the school may undertake a risk assessment and consider appropriate measures to protect the wellbeing and safety of those affected.

Our Response to Abusive Behaviour

Where abusive behaviour has occurred, the school will take appropriate action to stop, prevent or respond to the unacceptable behaviour.

Depending on the seriousness and circumstances of the incident, the school may take one or more of the following actions:

- Issue a verbal or written warning
- Restrict communication to written correspondence only
- Require communication to be directed through a nominated senior leader

- Refuse meetings unless another member of staff is present
- Ask the individual to leave school premises or school events
- Remove the individual from school premises
- Temporarily or permanently ban the individual from entering school premises, where legally permissible
- Report the matter to the police
- Undertake individual or organisational risk assessments
- Seek legal advice
- Commence civil proceedings, including applying for an injunction where appropriate

Where a parent, carer or visitor displays unacceptable behaviour, the school will take proportionate action whilst ensuring its continuing legal duties are met.

Vexatious, Persistent or Unreasonable Complaints

The school welcomes constructive feedback, concerns and legitimate complaints and is committed to resolving concerns fairly and professionally.

However, abusive, vexatious, persistent or unreasonable behaviour towards staff, trustees or visitors will not be tolerated. Where complaints are pursued in a manner that is aggressive, repetitive, harassing, intimidating or unreasonable, the school may implement proportionate measures to manage communication and protect staff wellbeing.

Such measures may include restrictions on methods of contact, limits on frequency of communication or requiring correspondence to be directed through a nominated member of staff.

Staff Support and Wellbeing

The school recognises that abusive behaviour can have a significant impact on an individual's mental health, wellbeing and ability to carry out their role.

Where appropriate, support may include welfare discussions, wellbeing support, risk assessments, adjustments to working arrangements and access to employee wellbeing services.

A wide range of wellbeing support is available for trustees and employees through the school's support systems and staff resources.

Communication of this Policy

This policy will be shared with staff, trustees and visitors and may be displayed through notices, posters and other communications around the school site.

The school reserves the right to take any reasonable and proportionate action necessary to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of trustees, employees, pupils and visitors.

For concerns, complaints or queries relating to this policy, please contact the school directly and the appropriate procedure will be followed.