



Established 1949

POLSKA SZKOŁA PRZEDMIOTÓW OJCZYSTYCH
im. św. Stanisława Kostki w Manchesterze
The Polish Saturday School in Manchester

Correspondence: c/o 196 Lloyd Street North, Manchester, M14 4QB
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Manchester, 12th October 2014

Dear Dziennik Polski,

It has been brought to my attention that you have published an anonymous letter in your newspaper titled 'Dziecko zawsze ofiarą' on 10th October concerning the reputation and good name of our award winning Polish Saturday School which this year celebrates its 65th anniversary.

As the Chairman of the Board of Governors of The Polish Saturday School in Manchester (Polska Szkoła Przedmiotów Ojczyźtych im. św. St. Kostki w Manchesterze), I am appalled at the fact that you have published a totally unsubstantiated letter without seeking to establish the TRUTH.

At no time has anyone from your organisation tried to contact the school to validate what was written in this letter – you have decided to publish it purely because of the “sensational” nature of its contents.

Since this letter will have been read by a proportion of the Polish population in the UK, a false and misleading impression will have been left with many people who will draw a conclusion based on the false statements contained within it.

The letter that you published seeks to defame the reputation, the good name and the goodwill of the school and has cast aspersions on the many hard working and dedicated volunteers, who each Saturday give up their free time to ensure that the school is run as a safe and effective environment for teaching the Polish language, culture and traditions, to so many children and young people.

Good journalism dictates that you investigate properly and get the view from the opposing side. In this case, you have gone ahead and published it without any corroboration and as a result this has publicly defamed an entire school, including its staff and pupils, based on the unsubstantiated allegations of one “anonymous” individual – who, by the way, is well known to us.

Child safeguarding is a priority in our school and our policies and processes mean that parents have to agree to the rules and regulations and also ensure that they provide the school with up-to-date contact and medical information where appropriate, as specified on the registration form, in order that we can maintain a safe and secure learning environment.

In order to set the record straight, the incident referred to in the “anonymous” article, occurred because the mother of the child refused to sign her child's school registration form. The reason for her refusal, was that she did not accept a new policy introduced to get more parents to help out with duties at the school, duties which she indicated were beneath her standing to carry out. She was warned several times, that if she did not sign the registration form, then her child could no longer attend the school. Despite these clear warnings, she chose not to sign the form, preferring for reasons best known to herself, to deny her child the chance of continuing to attend the school.

An anonymous offer of help was also rejected by this person, and in the end she has only herself to blame for an outcome so avoidable and so very distressing, above all for the child.

An almost identical article has appeared elsewhere and the Board of Governors of the school will consider what legal options we might pursue for the libelous content contained within the text and to seek redress for the damage caused.



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We are also compelled to write to warn others involved in Polish organisations in the Greater Manchester area and beyond, to beware of dealing with this individual because of the trouble she has caused the school.

For information, the Polish Saturday School in Manchester was founded by Polish Ex-Servicemen in Manchester in 1949, with the support of the Polish Roman Catholic Church and Parish and has been, and still remains, an integral part of the Polish Community in Manchester. It is supported by the Manchester Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association (SPK), The Polish Ex-Servicemen's Remembrance Association (PSPK), the Polish RC Church and Parish and the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Manchester. Our school is also a long time member of the Polish Educational Society in the UK.

Our school recently received the Gold Quality Framework Award from the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education, which demonstrates that we have well-established systems in place to ensure consistent good quality across ten key areas in the provision of supplementary education.

We would add that the daughter of the Consul General in Manchester has been a student at the school for well over a year. I hardly think that the Consul General would allow his daughter to be a student at the school, if the situation was anything like as described in this person's letter.

If Dziennik Polski truly wishes to support the Polish Community in a responsible manner, then you should issue a retraction and provide an apology for publishing the aforementioned letter.

We are always at your disposal, should you wish to contact us in relation to this or any other matter.

Yours Faithfully,

Mr Jan Rapacz BEng(Hons) CEng MIMechE
Chairman of the Board of Governors
The Polish Saturday School in Manchester
Polska Szkoła Przedmiotów Ojczystych im. św. St. Kostki w Manchesterze

A copy of this letter is being sent to the following persons for information:

- The Board of Governors and Head Teacher Mrs. Danuta Antonik, The Polish Saturday School in Manchester (Polska Szkoła Przedmiotów Ojczystych im. św. St. Kostki w Manchesterze).
- Dr Andrzej Rózycki, Chairman, Polish Combatants' Association Ltd., Manchester Branch (Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantów Ltd.)
- Dr Marek Wróbel, Secretary, Polish Combatants' Association Ltd., Manchester Branch (Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantów Ltd.)
- The Committee, Polish Combatants' Association Ltd., Manchester Branch (Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantów Ltd.)
- Mr Marek Lange, Chairman, Polish Combatants' Remembrance Association, (Polskie Stowarzyszenie Pamięci Kombatantkiej)
- Mr Marek Mykytyn, Chairman, Polish R C Parish Council, Manchester.
- Rev Father Ryszard Sadecki, Parish Priest, Polish RC Parish of Divine Mercy, Manchester.
- Mr Łukasz Lutostański, Consul General of The Republic of Poland, Manchester.
- Mrs. Aleksandra Podhorodecka, Chairperson, Polish Educational Society (Polska Macierz Szkolna)
- Mr. Wiktor Moszczyński, Chairman, Polish Combatants' Association Ltd., (Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantów Ltd.)