# Parents question free speech and law enforcement after school-related arrest



Rosalind Levine, a 46-year-old television producer, and her partner Maxie Allen, 50, were recently involved in an incident that has raised questions about the boundaries of free speech and the role of law enforcement in matters of parental dispute. The couple, who reside in Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, were arrested on charges of malicious communications, harassment, and causing a nuisance on school premises, following their discussions in a private WhatsApp group related to their daughter’s education at Cowley Hill Primary School.

The ordeal began when six uniformed police officers arrived at the couple's home at midday on a January afternoon. Rosalind initially experienced a wave of relief, believing her daughter Sascha, who was at school at the time, was unharmed. However, upon being informed of their arrest, she faced overwhelming emotions, recalling, "There was a moment where I honestly thought I wanted to die, because I couldn’t cope with losing her," as reported by the Daily Mail.

Maxie Allen described their treatment by law enforcement as excessive, recalling it was akin to an operation meant for serious criminal activity. He stated, “the sort of treatment you might expect for a drugs bust or a terrorism cell.” The couple’s arrest stems from a series of private conversations that included discussions about a disagreement with the school regarding the head teacher’s retirement and subsequent recruitment processes, which they felt were not properly conducted.

According to Morgan, the couple found themselves banned from the school after the head teacher perceived their comments as inflammatory. Despite their protests that their discussions were non-abusive and merely reflections of parental concern, the school enacted a policy restricting their communication about their daughter to an official email address only. This ban limited their involvement in school activities, including parents’ evenings and performances, causing distress not only to them but also to their daughter, Sascha. Rosalind noted, "When I explained to her that we weren’t allowed into the school, she cried her eyes out."

The situation escalated when Cowley Hill Primary School reportedly sought police advice due to what it described as a "high volume" of public comments and emails sent from the couple. In December 2023, they received an unwelcome visit from the police, leading to their eventual arrest just days later on January 29, 2024. Following their detention, which lasted approximately 12 hours, the couple were released without any formal charges after a five-week investigation concluded there was insufficient evidence for the accusations made against them.

Hertfordshire Police Chief Constable Andy Prophet acknowledged that while the arrests could have been conducted in a more understated manner, the decision to arrest was made because the inspector involved assumed the couple would not cooperate with a voluntary interview. Responding to the police actions, Rosalind remarked, “Well, they didn’t ask,” indicating a sense of disbelief regarding the handling of their case.

The couple are now contemplating pursuing legal recourse regarding their treatment and potential wrongful arrest. They assert that this incident exemplifies broader issues of potential overreach by public authorities and urges scrutiny on how disputes between citizens and public bodies should be resolved.

In the wake of their arrest, the story has gained significant media attention, prompting conversations regarding the balance between freedom of expression and the actions taken by schools and law enforcement to manage community relations. Maxie Allen expressed a hope that their case would mark a turning point, stating, "I don’t know if we’re the first people to have our collar felt because of something like this – but I hope we’ll be the last."

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://news.sky.com/story/couple-arrested-after-school-whatsapp-chat-messages-say-they-cannot-fathom-what-happened-13337935> - This article corroborates the details of Rosalind Levine and Maxie Allen's arrest following their dispute with Cowley Hill Primary School, highlighting their reactions and concerns about the police's handling of the situation.
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kJTs2QeYf0> - This YouTube video provides additional context and media coverage of the incident, including discussions on potential overreach by law enforcement and the implications for freedom of speech.
3. <https://noahwire.com/> - Although not directly linked, Noah Wire Services is mentioned as a source, which may have contributed to the overall narrative of the incident.
4. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/police-arrest-parents-for-criticising-school-over-emails-rqczsn67j> - This article would likely support the report on the couple's arrest and the subsequent drop of charges, providing details on the school's reaction and the police's decision to investigate.
5. <https://www.childrenandyoungpeoplenownews.com/news/parents-arrested-after-whatsapp-criticism-of-school-151178> - This URL likely discusses the incident involving Rosalind Levine and Maxie Allen, focusing on the implications for parental engagement and freedom of expression in educational settings.
6. <https://www.hertfordshiremercury.co.uk/news/herts-news/maxie-allen-rosalind-levine-couple-arrested-9118324> - This article provides local coverage of the incident, detailing the couple's experience and reactions to their arrest, as well as the broader community response.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14573335/six-police-officers-arrest-couple-WhatsApps-childs-school.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data