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Managing Violence, Aggression and Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

			Cross - References
Definition(s)	For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply;		
	Work related violence	Any incident, in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work. Verbal abuse and threats are the most common types of incident.	Health & Safety Executive
Policy	Swindon Borough Council (SBC) considers violent and/or aggressive behaviour directed at staff not acceptable. SBC recognises that all employees are entitled to work in a safe environment and one in which they are fully supported when faced with unacceptable behaviour from any other person however it occurs and in whatever form. SBC has a 'zero tolerance' approach to these behaviours and will endeavour to ensure the safety, protection and welfare of SBC staff at all times. Violence includes all physical behaviour involving risk of injury to staff, without it necessarily being deliberate. Examples of behaviour classed as 'Violence & Aggression' include: • Kicking • Biting • Punching • Poking or pushing • Spitting • Scratching • Head butting • Tripping • Actions that restrict movement • Unwanted physical contact which results in no injury • Use of weapons • Use of missiles • Swearing		

	• Other verbal or written abuse which causes personal offence or distress
	• Sexual, racial or other harassment
	• Bullying
	• Intimidation
	• Damage to personal property
	• Other aggressive behaviour
	    • Shouting
	    • Posturing
	    • Gestures
	    • Insults
	    • Innuendo
	    • Unreasonable demands or blackmail	

Policy Aims	The aims of the 'Managing Violence and Aggression in Schools' policy are to: • Prevent Violence and Aggression at school level as far as reasonably practicable • Reduce the risk of violence and aggression against school staff. • Assist the Governing Body and Head teacher with the implementation of the policy. • Give guidance to all members of the school community so they can contribute towards a safe school environment. • Provide information about roles and responsibilities and good practice in this area. • Make appropriate training and information available for staff. • Minimise the short and long term impact of any ill-health effects experienced by staff following an incident. • Encourage and facilitate incident reporting and recording.	
Risk	Violent, aggressive or anti-social behaviour toward school staff by children, young people and adults in schools.	
Responsibility	**Local Education Authority (LEA)** The Chief Education Officer (CEO) is responsible for promulgating this policy through consultation with the LEA's partners and for ensuring that it is brought to the attention of all schools. **Community & Voluntary Controlled Schools** Within Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, the Governors and the Head Teacher are responsible for the implementation of this policy. **Academy Trust Schools (Schools where SBC is not the Employer)** Within Academy Trust schools, the Governors may choose to adopt this policy. They are, in any case, responsible as	

		the employer of staff for applying measures which seek to achieve a similar purpose to that of this policy. The roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body, Head Teacher and Employees are detailed below.	
Roles and Responsibilities			
1.	**Governing Body** The Governing Body is responsible for the implementation of this policy. In all areas and activities under their control, the Governing Body has a duty to take steps to ensure that appropriate Health & Safety standards are complied with as far as is reasonable practicable. This duty will include ensuring that appropriate arrangements are made to comply with statutory requirements and the Health & Safety Policy for Schools and that these are taken into account in determining the allocation of resources.		
2.	**Head Teacher** The Head Teacher should: • Ensure that risk assessments are carried out across all work activities that they control and that appropriate measures are implemented commensurate to those risks. Guidance on risk assessment is given in the next section; • Ensure that all staff identified through the risk assessment process, receive training at appropriate intervals in skills that can be used to minimise risks to personal safety. The range of training to be considered is set out in a later section; • Ensure that all staff are provided with clear instructions in respect of reporting incidents of violence and aggression and that all such reports are thoroughly investigated and responded to; • Offer and provide appropriate post-incident support to staff; • Monitor the effectiveness of this policy; • Ensure that all staff know about their responsibilities and of the measures used within the school to counter violence and aggression.		
3.	**Employees** Employees are responsible for: • Following working procedures and risk assessments; • Reporting likely or actual incidents of violence or aggression. • Taking due regard of their own personal safety and well-being and for withdrawing from a situation where the risk of actual or potential violence or aggression is high.		

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	• Contributing actively in hazard and risk assessment, and familiarising themselves with policies, guidelines, control measures, instructions and reporting procedures. • Participating positively in appropriate training.	

Arrangements

| 1. | **Risk Assessment Management Process**

The risk assessment process is the starting point for dealing with violence and aggression. It allows for the identification of potentially violent or aggressive situations and leads schools to consider all aspects such as the environment, the situation itself, any background information which may be of assistance, the employee and any other individual(s) concerned. Once all this information is to hand, a strategy for dealing with a situation appropriately and keeping everyone safe can be developed.

Managing the risk of violence: key points
• Find out if you have a problem
• Decide what action to take
• Take action
• Check what you have done is working
• Provide feedback

Assessing the risk and reducing the potential for violence
There are precautionary and preventative steps that schools can take which help to avoid, prevent, minimise or mitigate incidents where staff can be subjected to violence or abuse. Talk to staff; they may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious.

It is important to foster a security–conscious culture amongst all staff and pupils, maintaining a sense of proportion in relation to the assessed risk.

Step 1 – Look for the Hazards
You need to consider the elements which may contribute to the risk of violence and the effect they have on each other. Consider the following:
• The role of the individual employee in relation to children and young people.
• Who they come into contact with, on and off site
• The times when staff work including early mornings, late evenings, holidays, weekends.
• Have you identified the behaviour patterns of children and young people who might present a risk to employees? Are there identifiable triggers for this behaviour?
• Are staff aware of the disabilities of children and young people which may impact on their behaviour towards employees?
• Staff working alone, in remote buildings, on sports fields or carrying out home visits. | |

- Are your work instructions and procedures being communicated and followed?
- Are all staff made aware of any changes and procedures in working practices including for example: positive handling strategies, care and control policies, behaviour management policies.
- Do your accident/incident records reflect a true picture?
- Are there security/access restrictions of the premises?

Step 2 – Who might be harmed and how?

If this part of the assessment is to be of practical value you need to identify all the groups of employees who might be affected. It is not simply a matter of saying all those that have direct contact with children and young people. Consider the frequency, context and nature of interactions with children and young people when determining the extent to which employees' could be at risk.

Step 3 – Evaluate the risk and your existing precautions

The most effective precaution is to avoid risks altogether. Obviously this is not always possible, therefore you need to consider what you need to do to reduce and minimise the risk. When considering the **likelihood** and **severity** of harm, think about the most serious risks and those that affect the most people first.

- Do you need to change the way people carry out their duties or where they work?
- Have you taken account of the site layout and the knowledge of the immediate working environment?
- How is the site and buildings used by others?
- Incident recording and response to incidents.
- Do you have any information, reports, involvement with other agencies such as the police and children's' social care?
- What information is provided for staff, how is it communicated?
- Is the right level of training provided to relevant employees?

Step 4 - Record your findings – Take action to minimise the risk

The main (significant) findings of the risk assessment must be recorded and where necessary written work procedures and instructions provided for staff. The assessment should include:

- High risk children and young people, activities and areas.
- Existing preventative measures and evaluation of the remaining risks.
- Additional preventative and control measures identified, including timescales.
- Communication procedures and review arrangements.

Step 5- Monitor, Review and update the assessment

It is important to establish the assessment as a continuous two-way communication process between persons' at risk and Head

teachers/managers controlling the risks. This will help to promote regular review to ensure precautions are kept up to date. Monitoring is about making sure your procedures are being followed and are effective. Where possible involve new people in the review process as they will be able to provide observations from a different perspective. The written assessment, control measures, safe working practices and procedures must be reviewed following significant changes for example legislation, building/site makeup, work activities and incidents. **Step 6 - Draw up an action plan** The action plan should be monitored by Head Teacher/Senior Management and Governors to ensure that all items identified have sufficient resources allocated and have been addressed. The plan should be fit for purpose and tailored to managing the specific hazard/risk presented by identified individuals or groups of children and young people. The plan should include the following: • Action required, • Action by whom • Risk priority • Projected timescales • Date completed	
2.	**Preventative Strategies** This section includes policy guidance on; • General security • Suitable working environment • Working practices and patterns • School behaviour policies • Suitable learning environments • Training • Physical intervention (control and restraint) • Self-defence • Protective equipment **General security** School sites should wherever possible have a distinct boundary with controlled points of access. Uncontrolled access to areas of school buildings may expose some staff to unnecessary risk. All school buildings, therefore, must be assessed to identify which parts need to have controlled access. Keys and door entry combinations should be limited to authorised personnel only and combinations should be regularly changed.	

Systems to register all visitors, including the use of identification badges, can help minimise unauthorised access. Staff should challenge any unauthorised persons. Registered visitors should check out and return their badges after use.

A means of summoning emergency assistance should be available in areas where there is a significant possibility of encountering violent or aggressive behaviour.

This may include isolated parts of the school such as mobile classrooms. Any such system must be regularly tested including the reaction to the alarm from other staff.

The immediate environment around the school should be as free as possible from debris or loose materials that could be used as missiles.

Suitable working environment

Teaching Areas
Classroom layout will be governed by space and teaching needs but wherever possible staff should base themselves in a position which allows sight of all entrances and immediate access to at least one of them.

Reception areas
All reception and controlled access areas should be well signed.

Reception areas should be clean, well-lit and comfortable. If the area is unmanned, even temporarily, then instructions to visitors should be given on a sign. Items that could be used as weapons or missiles should be avoided if possible.

Delays in attending to visitors may increase the potential for aggressive behaviour. An explanation of any delay, with regular updates, should be given. Tension–building boredom may be relieved by the provision of reading material and displays.

Head Teacher's office and other Interview Rooms
Rooms used for interviews with parents and visitors should have an unobscured vision panel in the door and be furnished with consideration to items being used as weapons or barricades. Seating arrangements should allow a quick exit and a means of summoning help should be provided.

External areas
All external areas used during hours of darkness must be adequately lit.

Working practices and patterns

Known aggressors
School staff should discuss and agree responses to individual pupils and other regular visitors who are known to be potentially violent or aggressive.

It is essential that all staff should be made aware of the strategies and procedures used by the school to manage pupils who have violent, aggressive or abusive traits. Where individual behaviour plans have been produced, all staff who come into contact with the pupil should be clear about what is expected of the pupil and what their own response should be.

Meeting parents/visitors
Before meeting a parent or visitor, staff should refer to any information available about that person's potential for violence. For this to be an effective precaution it is essential that all relevant information about previous incidents is recorded and shared with staff. If it is anticipated that a visitor may display aggressive behaviour then staff should consider whether to meet with that person alone.

Lone working
Staff should avoid working in isolation, particularly out of normal hours. After evening functions, staff should consider leaving in groups rather than individually.

Abusive telephone calls
If telephone callers become abusive or threatening, staff may issue a caution along the lines of, 'if you continue to be abusive, I shall put the telephone down', and then do so if the caller persists.

School behaviour policies

Everyone involved with the school needs to know and understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.
All schools should have a school behaviour policy including a clearly stated code of conduct.

The Code of Conduct that gives effect to the overall behaviour policy should
cover:-

- child protection against abuse and assault
- staff protection procedures
- discipline, control and restraint procedures
- identification and response to racial and sexual harassment, bullying and truancy.

A comprehensive behaviour policy sets the framework for improving the overall climate of behaviour and discipline within the school.

The aims of the policy might include:-
- encouraging a whole school approach to behaviour and discipline;
- helping staff to manage behaviour more effectively;
- helping the school to promote young people's respect for others;
- promoting firm action against all forms of bullying;
- reducing the level of truancy;
- reducing the numbers of pupils being excluded; and
- promoting equal opportunities policies (gender, race and disability).

The precise content of the policy is a matter for each school and its supporting community; it cannot effectively be 'lifted' or prescribed.

Suitable learning environment
Creating the best possible learning environment can contribute significantly to encouraging positive pupil behaviour. A wide variety of factors affect behaviour in the learning environment and schools may wish to develop their own checklists to help staff. These checklists may include:
- physical arrangements
- social interactions :
- pupil/pupil interaction
- pupil/teacher/teaching assistant interaction
- social and academic grouping of pupils
- teaching factors

Training
All school staff at risk from violence will require some level of training. The type and frequency of training will differ according to the nature of the risks faced.
All training should cover as necessary:
- theory – understanding aggression and violence in school environments;
- prevention – assessing danger and taking precautions;

• interaction – with aggressors;
• post-incident action – reporting, investigation and support measures.

First level training for school support or teaching staff at risk will cover:
• causes of violence;
• recognition of warning signs;
• relevant interpersonal skills;
• details of working practices and control measures;
• incident reporting procedures.

Second level training for staff who may face aggressive or potentially aggressive pupils and visitors will cover:
• first level information;
• methods of defusing, de-escalating and avoiding incidents;
• breakaway techniques.

Third level training for staff most at risk will cover:
• first and second level information;
• physical intervention (control and restraint) techniques.
Individual training records will be kept and training updates will take place at appropriate intervals throughout a member of staff's career.
All staff will receive information about this policy and related procedures as part of their induction.

Physical intervention (control and restraint)
The use of physical intervention techniques is only one aspect of behaviour management and usually the last resort. It may resolve a short-term situation but long-term the aim must be to help the pupil control his or her own behaviour.

The use of any degree of force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant its use (see section on self-defence). Any force used should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. The use of force, for example, in response to the threat of trivial property damage is unlikely ever to be justified.

Reasonable force should only be used for the purposes of preventing a pupil from:
  i.   committing any offence;
  ii.   causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the person him/herself); or

iii. engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils.

Only staff who have been trained to do so should engage in physical intervention and even then it must be as a last resort when all other techniques have failed and the member of staff believes that immediate action is necessary to prevent any of the aforementioned situations from occurring.

All schools should have a policy about the use of force to control or restrain pupils. Staff should know what is acceptable and what is not – as should parents and pupils.

The policy should be drawn up by the Governors and the Head Teacher in consultation with the staff to whom it may apply taking into account the DfEE guidance on pupil behaviour and discipline policies (Circular 10/98 – 'The use of force to control or restrain pupils') . A version of the school policy should be included with the information that is given to parents about the school's broader policy on discipline and standards of behaviour. The management of pupil behaviour is not just an issue for staff but should fully involve the pupil and their parents/guardians or carers.

Self-defence
Leaving or getting away is often the best defence using any pretext that may work but individuals do have the legal right to defend themselves, or others, if attacked. The amount and degree of defensive force used must be proportional to the level of risk being faced. This will depend upon the circumstances. You do not have to be hit first if you are in genuine fear of being injured.

Protective equipment
There are some circumstances in which personal protective equipment may provide a degree of protection or reassurance to staff. Risk assessments should identify when equipment should be issued to staff and it should only be issued once information and training in its use has been provided.
If personal alarms are issued they need to be carried so that they are easy to reach in an emergency. They may deter an attacker but may also aggravate a situation.
Mobile telephones can be used to summon assistance but they may not operate very well in some parts of the county.

DfEE - The Department for Education and Employment was formerly known as the Department for Education. They produced building bulletins, design guides and facilities guides to support the construction and managing of school facilities. In 1999 they changed to the Department for Education and Skills, and since June 2007 are now known as the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

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3.	**Incident Reporting, Investigation and follow Up** Report any incidents of violence and aggression using the SBC Accident/Incident reporting form (HSF 012). Schools are required to maintain their accident records. However, serious incidents of violence and aggression should be forwarded to the SBC Corporate Health and Safety Team for advice and support. Such serious incidents would include incidents where there is possible criminal intent, or incidents where a staff member has sustained a potentially life changing injury, or where there was a "near miss" of a potentially life changing injury. Any incident of violence and aggression where staff members are injured and are out of work for more than 7 days should be reported to the Health and Safety Executive to comply with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR 2013). Incident should be investigated swiftly and confidentially where appropriate to identify the underlying causes and to record remedial actions required to minimise and control the identified risks. Where a serious incident has taken place, or is suspected of having taken place, precautionary measures should be immediately taken to ensure the physical safety of staff, without waiting for an investigation to be concluded. Investigations must not be looking to assign blame bit to learn from an incident and how to improve the response if it occurs again and prevent a situation escalating into abuse or violence. The purpose of the investigation into the incident is to assess and mitigate the risk to staff.	
4.	**Managing Victims of Violence and Aggression** It is important staff receive the individual support they need in response to any incident of violent and aggressive behaviour: Occasionally there may be times, despite all reasonably practicable measures being taken, when prevention is unsuccessful and staff are victims of violence, aggressive or anti-social behaviour. At these times the line manager must ensure that the member of staff is fully supported. The following should be considered: • ensure the member of staff is physically safe and protected • ensure any first aid & medical treatment is procured immediately • consider the need for immediate police involvement	

| | - ensure the member of staff has the opportunity to talk about the incident either with line-management, colleagues or the counselling service
- management reassurance is given to reduce feelings of guilt and/or anxiety
- offer of the availability of confidential counselling service e.g. through the employee assistance programme.
- consider special/compassionate leave for the employee
- explain to the employee the need to record the details of the incident but at an agreed and appropriate time
- share the experience at the appropriate time, with other team members to enhance support and learning.

Managers should recognise that people working in areas where aggression may be more commonplace may appear to build up a resistance to it; however support and the opportunity to discuss the impact of on-going incidents should be made available on a regular basis.

All managers should receive appropriate information and necessary training to enable them to recognise signs of stress, the impact of incidents and the support options available to their staff, e.g. employee assistance programme.

It is important for staff to know that, if they have been the victim of violence, aggression or anti-social behaviour, the Council will support them and work to protect other staff from similar incidents. Where an incident is particularly serious, SBC may take appropriate legal action to manage situations on a case by case basis i.e., where necessary seek an injunction to prevent an assailant gaining further access to staff or premises, or support the police in a criminal prosecution. | |

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