

Model Policy for Schools – Violence to Employees at Work

Introduction

1. This Oxfordshire model policy has been drawn up following consultation with all the recognised Trade Unions and Associations: ASCL, ATL, NAHT, NASUWT, NUT and Unison.
2. It is recommended that Academies also adopt this model policy. Where an academy adopts this policy the word 'school' should be taken to refer to the academy.
3. Further advice and support on the application of the policy is available from [HR](#)

Policy Statement

4. The Governing Body recognises that some employees may be at risk of violence in the course of their work.
5. Violence for the purposes of this policy is defined as an incident in which an employee is verbally abused, threatened or attacked, by a pupil or member of the public in circumstances arising out of, or in the course of, employment with the school.
6. The school, as an employer, has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees at work. The Governing Body and Headteacher recognise that a prime consideration should be to prevent violent acts through preventative measures and changes in the working environment and/or working practices as necessary.
7. All employees are obliged to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions, and to co-operate with the Headteacher and their line manager on matters relating to their health, safety and welfare at work.
8. Where employees have been subjected to violence in the course of their work, the Governing Body and Headteacher will give support, including paid time-off work where necessary, but will not subsidise or conduct an employee's own legal proceedings.

9. Depending on the age of the assailant, violent incidents may constitute a criminal offence and should be referred to the police.
10. The local authority maintains insurance cover for the benefit of school employees, (excluding those working in Academies), who are assaulted in the course of their duties.

The Policy in Operation

11. Employees must report any incident to the Headteacher or their line manager or another senior manager. A record should be made of any such incident, however minor. It is only from identifying the circumstances of each incident that preventative measures can be determined. See guidance "Responding to Assaults on Education Employees".
12. All incidents should be examined and remedial action taken where appropriate. There are no ready-made solutions but as an example, the possibility of violent incidents may be minimised by changing work arrangements or layout, limiting access, providing training to help employees recognise potentially violent situations so that they can be avoided or coped with, providing alarms or the security of an additional member of staff.
13. It is essential that the employee concerned, and if applicable their trade union representative, is involved in the process of considering appropriate measures to be taken via a risk assessment process. An attempt should be made to balance the needs of the employees with those of pupils and the general public, and it should be remembered that an atmosphere that suggests employees are worried about violence can often increase the likelihood of it occurring.
14. It is important to keep under review the measures outlined in the risk assessment and any associated action plans to ensure they are adequate.
15. It is essential that these procedures are brought to new employees' attention as part of the induction process. It is also necessary to remind existing employees of risk assessment processes and management action required to support staff affected by violence or the threat of violence at work.

Sources of Advice & Information

Training and support is available from Oxfordshire County Council to look at risk and conflict reduction. It is suitable for whole school settings or smaller groups of staff. This uses the Team-teach approach in line with the Local Authority Positive Handling Policy. See the Model Positive Handling Policy.

Details of courses and their costs can be obtained by emailing Karen.farr@oxfordshire.gov.uk or the Inclusive Practices Development Officer, peter.wild@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Further contacts

- HR – See [HR contacts](#) page.
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing – Tel: 01865 797222 healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk
- Employee Assistance Program - Tel: 0800 882 4102
- Occupational Health Service - Tel: 01865 415500 oxford.clinic@people-am.com

Related Policies & Procedures

- [Dignity at Work - Bullying & Harassment Policy](#)
- Domestic violence
- [Health and safety | Schools](#)
- [Sickness & Absence - procedure for managing school staff](#)
- [Stress at Work Policy](#)
- Responding to Assaults on Education Employees
- [Model Positive Handling Policy](#)

Monitoring and Review

16. In introducing this procedure, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken to take account of the Equality Act 2010

January 2013 (amended September 2015)