

Violence and Assaults against School Staff

Policy Statement

Trustees of Cotswold Beacon Academy Trust recognise that their employees may be at risk of violence in the course of their work. Violence for the purposes of this policy is defined as an incident in which an employee is verbally, physically or sexually abused, threatened or assaulted, by a pupil, another staff member or member of the public in circumstances arising out of, or in the course of, employment with the school.

The Trust, 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. Trustees and Headteachers 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.

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 Trust, their Headteacher and their Line Manager on matters relating to their health, safety and welfare at work.

The Trust will identify and risk assess activities and individuals in relation to assaults on employees wherever possible. Steps will then be taken to minimise these identified risks and the measures adopted will be monitored. Where employees have been subjected to violence in the course of their work, the Trust and Headteachers will give support, including paid time-off work where necessary, but will not subsidise or conduct an employee's own legal proceedings.

Depending on the age of the assailant, violent incidents may constitute a criminal offence and should be referred to the police.

What to do if you are verbally abused, threatened or assaulted

- Try to stay as calm as you can
- Get help from a colleague, line manager or SLT
- Telephone extension 400 for assistance
- In an emergency where you need immediate assistance, activate the fire alarm
- Report the incident as soon as possible to the Headteacher or Business Manager and record it fully as an incident
- Talk to your Headteacher or Business Manager about the support that is available to you following the incident.

What happens next?

Employees must report any incident to the Headteacher or the Business Manager. All incidents should be reported upwards to the Headteacher (or CEO/Chair of Trustees if the incident involves the Headteacher). 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.

All incidents must 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.

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 following an incident 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.

It is important to keep under review the measures outlined in the risk assessment and any associated action plans to ensure they are adequate. 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.

Specific Incidents

Dealing with weapons - If a member of staff has grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a weapon, or there has been an incident involving a weapon, they should immediately inform their line manager or a member of SLT. Employees are not expected to, and should not, deal with the incident on their own.

Assault by visitors/intruders - In the case of an assault by a visitor or intruder, the manager dealing with the incident will in the first instance inform the police, requesting their prompt attendance, and ensure that all staff and pupils are safe and secure using lockdown procedures if necessary. If abusive, aggressive or insulting behaviour or language from a parent presents a risk to staff or pupils, or makes them feel threatened, schools have common law powers to bar the parent in question from the premises.

Assaults by pupils - Where an employee is assaulted by a pupil, the pupil's conduct will be dealt with via the school's pupil behaviour policy. The pupil will be removed from lessons and isolated from other students while the incident is investigated. As part of this process, an individual pupil behaviour risk assessment will also be carried out and the outcome shared with all employees that have contact with the pupil in question. The school's safeguarding lead will also be consulted following an assault by a pupil as there may be child protection issues to consider. Where a pupil has assaulted an employee, and they return to school, the member of staff will not be required to teach or supervise the pupil in question for the remainder of the academic year if they do not feel comfortable doing so.

In case of a query regarding this Policy please email HSW@marling.school

Links to other policies

- Lone Working Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy.