

Violence, Threatening Behaviour and Abuse Policy



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Recognised unions have been consulted on this document via the Unity Schools Partnership Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee. It was accepted by Unity Schools Partnership on:		Date: September 2020
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1. INTRODUCTION

Unity Schools Partnership, acknowledges and accepts its legal obligation:

- to provide and maintain safe systems of work;
- to provide all necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable individuals to be safe;
- to provide and maintain a safe place of work for employers, pupils and visitors to the school

The employer will take all reasonable and practicable measures to this end and to fully those employees who may be subjected to violence, threatening behaviour and abuse.

The employer acknowledges that every employee has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and any form of abuse against staff is not acceptable.

The employer will take all reasonable measures to deter violence, threatening behaviour or abuse and take action against those responsible.

The employer will take a serious view of any physical, verbal and/or other form of abuse of staff which occurs outside school and which relates to their employment with the school.

It is recognised that staff also have obligations as follows:

- To take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others, including their colleagues and the pupils in their care;
- To cooperate with the employer on health and safety matters;
- To carry out activities in accordance with training, instructions, policies and procedures;
- To tell the school's/Trusts Senior Leadership or of any serious risks.

2. DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

- a) "assault" encompasses any intentional and violent physical conduct and includes verbal abuse as well as threats of and attempted physical assault
- b) "employer" includes any school / central team within Unity Schools Partnership;
- c) "manager" includes the Headteacher or principal, their designated deputies or in the case of central team their line manager
- d) "parent" includes a guardian or carer;
- e) "pupil" includes "student".

This policy sets out the action that will be taken to reduce the frequency of assaults, monitor their occurrence, train staff, support victims of violence and deal with incidents when they occur.

Support that will be offered by the school or Trust, and which is referred to in this policy, includes the following.

1. Maintaining a safe working environment and safe practices;
2. Identifying levels of risk of violence or other abuse faced by members of staff by conducting a risk assessment and then putting appropriate control measures in place;
3. Assessing who may be exposed to the risk of violence or other abuse;
4. Reviewing risk assessments at regular intervals or when there is any change to the risk of violence or other abuse;
5. Providing adequate training for all staff;
6. Ensuring, in the event of an assault, a structured and supportive response from management, including referral to the individual schools' confidential Wellbeing service and/or referral to Occupational Health;
7. Implementing a standard reporting and monitoring system;
8. Considering exclusion or the application of appropriate disciplinary procedures and sanctions in the case of pupil assailants;
9. Reference, if appropriate, to the police;
10. The use of statutory powers;
11. Relief from duty, if appropriate, following assault;
12. Providing medical advice;
13. Co-operating with recognised trade union representatives.

Where a member of staff suffers an assault away from their workplace, and if the assault arises in the course of or via the performance of their professional duties, support under these procedures will be provided

3. PREVENTION

The employer will:

- Record any allegations of assaults on staff and seek advice from the Trust's central Leadership team before taking appropriate action;
- Undertake regular, suitable and sufficient risk assessments;
- Use the employer's statutory powers to seek to prevent any person entering the school premises without lawful authority who causes or permits nuisance or disturbance to those people lawfully using the premises;
- Implement appropriate actions as identified by risk assessments.

Liaison with the police

The employer will establish and maintain close liaison with the local police. It will draw up a procedure enabling the police to be called and to respond promptly when incidents occur. The employer will work with the local police to confirm the circumstances in which they will pursue a prosecution against an assailant.

Dealing with offensive weapons and knives

If a member of staff becomes aware either that a pupil is in possession of an offensive weapon or that there has been an incident involving a weapon the following actions should be taken:

- Immediately inform the designated senior manager – all staff should be aware who this is;
- Immediately inform the Headteacher/Principal/other member of the SLT/Trust Leadership team;
Staff should not try to deal with the situation alone;
- The senior manager must decide whether it is necessary to contact the police
- The school should consider whether to deal with the matter as a disciplinary issue.

Searching a pupil is a step that should only be undertaken in exceptional circumstances and only with the pupil's consent. The granting of the consent should be witnessed by a colleague or adult witness and the search should be conducted in the presence of a colleague or adult witness. It is preferable for a child's parent to attend if a search is being undertaken.

If the pupil refuses to cooperate, the police should be called. No further action should be taken until the police arrive.

In some exceptional circumstances, action may have to be taken immediately. If this is the case, the pupil should be isolated from other pupils if possible. A colleague or adult witness should be present.

When a weapon or knife is confiscated by a member of staff it is important to:

- Ensure that the weapon is secure and given to the police immediately on their arrival, or
- Arrange for the weapon to be removed from the premises by a parent.

Pending the arrival of the police or a parent, the item should be stored in a secure place. The school should keep a record when weapons have been confiscated and returned.

In the event that a pupil has been found in possession of a weapon, the application of the school's discipline and behaviour policy must be considered. Depending on the particular circumstances, the school may wish to invoke disciplinary sanctions which might include detention or exclusion, whether on a temporary or permanent basis.

Assaults by adults

In the case of an assault by a visitor or intruder, the manager will immediately:

- Inform the police, requesting their immediate attendance;
- Take steps to ensure that all staff and pupils are safe and secure;
- Take appropriate steps to isolate the assailant

and subsequently:

- Liaise with the police
- If the assailant is known, send them a letter stating that their behaviour is unacceptable and that they are not permitted to come onto the school premises in future without an appointment. If they do so, and causes a nuisance or disturbance, s/he will be regarded as a trespasser and will be liable to prosecution for causing a nuisance or disturbance as a trespasser on educational premises
- Where appropriate, take action to prosecute them either directly or via the police.

Assaults by pupils

In the event of an assault on a member of staff by a pupil, the assailant should normally be removed from school immediately. In cases where it is impractical to remove them from the premises (eg where attempts to contact parents have been unsuccessful), the pupil concerned should be isolated from other pupils. Exclusion from the beginning of the next day should be considered. Further information is provided in individual schools' Pupil Behaviour policies.

The removal of the pupil, as a fixed-term exclusion, will allow for an investigation of the circumstances of the assault. Permanent exclusion procedures may then follow.

If/when the pupil returns to school, the manager will consult the assaulted member of staff about appropriate arrangements. They will not be required or expected to teach, supervise or support the pupil concerned.

Action if an assault occurs

If a member of staff is assaulted, the following action should be taken:

- They should be allowed access to a private area for as long as necessary where they can sit with a friend, representative or colleague;
- The member of staff should be allowed to leave the school and go home if they wish and the employer will make appropriate arrangements which may include arranging transport for them.
- The member of staff may have to attend a hospital, accompanied by a friend, representative or colleague;
- Similarly, they may have to attend their GP's surgery and may wish to be accompanied;
- They may also wish to seek an appointment with the employer's occupational health advisor and will be encouraged to access the Trusts confidential Employee Support service;
- A medical assessment of any injury should be made as soon as practicable, for example at hospital or by their GP.
- In cases of visual injuries, photographs should be taken if reasonably practicable, for example on a mobile phone.
- If the assault has occurred away from the premises, the school/Trust should be formally notified;
- A written record covering the circumstances leading up to the assault, the assault itself and any injury should be made as soon as possible;
- As soon as practicable after the assault, the member of staff should prepare a written statement on the incident and should be given the

opportunity to consult their trade union before submitting it

- Written statements should be obtained as soon as practicable from all witnesses. Wherever possible, they should be prepared on the day of the incident or as soon as possible thereafter;
- Any incident of violence must be reported to the Headteacher / Principal;, or in the case of a member of staff from the central team to their Line Manager;
- The relevant member of the SLT will undertake an investigation and prepare a formal written report as soon as practicable.
- The senior manager, acting on behalf of and with the consent of the member of staff, will normally inform the police of any assault on school/Trust premises. If the member of staff concerned does not wish the police to be informed, those view will be taken into consideration. In all cases, the member of staff has the right to report the incident personally to the police.
- The member of staff should be advised to contact their TU representative. In any discussions about the incident, the staff member may be accompanied by a representative of their TU or a staff colleague.

Further support for the victim of assault

The school will permit the assaulted member of staff to take reasonable paid time off to consult their trade union, the police or legal advisors and to attend court if a prosecution is initiated, or for the purposes of any other form of litigation.

Further Advice

If any staff, contractor or visitor requires any further information regarding this policy or support they should either ask their Headteacher **or** contact the HR Helpdesk at hrhelpdesk@unitysp.co.uk or telephone 01440 333401.