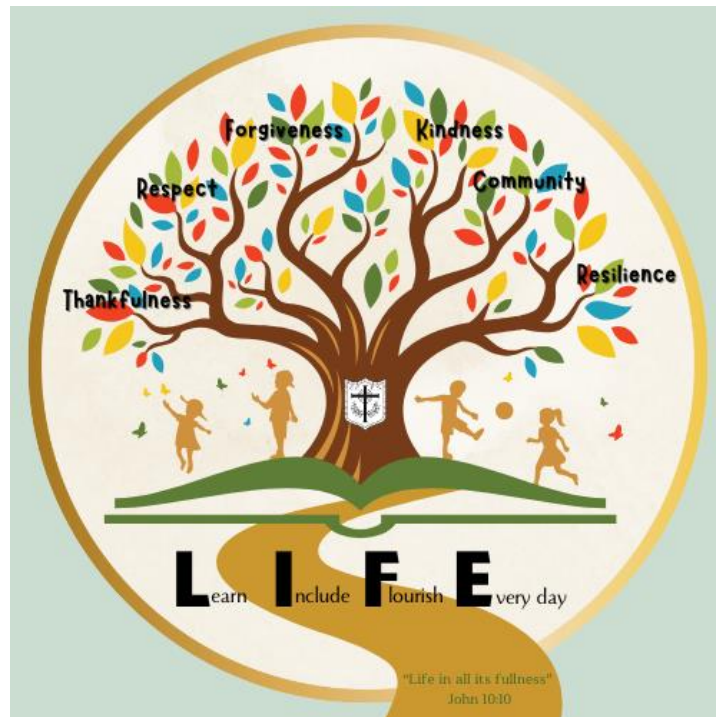


Cotgrave Church of England Primary School



VIOLENCE TO STAFF POLICY

Reviewed	Autumn 2011			
	Autumn 2013			
	Spring 2014			
	Summer 2017			
	Autumn 2020			
	Spring 2025			



Cotgrave Church of England Primary School

Violence to Staff Policy

(Modelled on the Nottinghamshire County Council Violence to Staff Policy Document 2009)

Roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body

The governing body will ensure that a policy is in place, and is followed by staff, for recording and reporting, significant incidents where violence has been used towards a member of staff.

This policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed by the governing body at least triennially.

1. Introduction. In a close community such as a school there exists the opportunity for violence to erupt between staff, pupils, families and other members of the public. As good employers the Governors will follow the Health and Safety Act 1974 and will take whatever action is necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of the staff. This policy describes the way in which the Governors will undertake this task.
2. Responsibilities. Governors provide the policy which is revised triennially or after an incident of violence. Staff will maintain awareness, undertake risk assessments, take measures to minimise risk, opportunities and potential areas of conflict, deal with incidents appropriately and take follow up action. The Head Teacher will act as Staff Coordinator for matters involving violence. Governors and Staff will receive the necessary training.
3. Definition of Violence. Violence is defined as 'any incident in which an employee is abused, threatened or assaulted by a pupil or member of the public in circumstances arising out of the course of his or her employment.' Violence can be:
 - a. Physical: Hitting, throwing, threatening and aggressive behaviour.
 - b. Non Physical: Verbal, gestures, letters/emails of a sexual, racial, ageist etc nature.
4. Maintain Awareness. The Head Teacher will regularly remind the staff of the threat of violence. Teachers will regularly remind pupils of the need to solve their differences by non-violent means in accordance with the 'Behaviour' policy.
5. Assess Risk. 'Five Step Risk Assessments' ¹ will be carried out wherever appropriate. The Head Teacher, with the staff, will lead the process of risk assessment. This assessment will cover lessons learnt from the previous year where appropriate and follow the format at Appendix 1. This process will allow the staff to review how causes are removed, opportunities minimised and reactions to violence improved.
6. Minimising Opportunities and Reducing Causes. The Head Teacher and the staff will consider the risk of violence and decide on how to minimise the opportunities in all areas. They will consider:
 - a. Higher Risk Activity. Violence can occur in almost all aspects of school life but there are some areas where violence may be more likely. For example:
 - Home visits.
 - Parent/pupil interviews.
 - Working with pupils with behavioural difficulties.
 - Working outside normal working hours.
 - Working in isolation, lone working.
 - Working at a remote site e.g. remote sports area.
 - Call-out following activation of fire or intruder alarms, outside of normal working hours.
 - Dealing with Intruders and trespassers.

¹ Look at hazards; Decide who might be harmed; Evaluate the risks; Record the findings; Review the assessment.

- b. Environment. The general design and physical environment of buildings may be improved to reduce the likelihood of violence. Adequate lighting, open plan, pastel shades etc.
 - c. Spotting Early Signs. Violence rarely occurs instantaneously. More often it is the result of a build-up of tension which may not be obvious to a member of staff involved. Staff will be trained to recognise the signs of build-up.
 - d. Communications. Good communications skills can be employed by the staff to reduce tension and therefore make violence less likely. Staff will be instructed in how best to communicate in order to reduce potentially violent situations.
 - e. Working Practices. Working practices and patterns will be considered in relation to risk assessment. Sometimes, specific activities can be altered so that they are carried out in ways which lessen the risks. School managers need to be aware that staff fears of violence can create a situation where their own uncertainty may make violence more likely and can result in unacceptable levels of stress.
7. Control Measures. After action has been taken to reduce the opportunities for violence to occur and the causes have been reduced control measures will be activated. Standard procedures for some activities, areas and types of incidents are provided in the school's staff handbook which is updated annually. These procedures may help to ensure that staff faced with a potentially violent situation will react in an informed and consistent way. The school will implement procedures for:
- a. Access Control and Alarms. The school has a full range of physical measures and alarms which prevent unauthorised access and alert staff members of an incident.
 - b. Reception. Reception of people entering the building with or without permission.
 - c. Identification. Identifying visitors or workmen during their time in school.
 - d. Interviews. Interviewing parents and dealing with a parent/carer who is known to be violent or aggressive.
 - e. Working Late.
 - f. Security. Securing the premises and dealing with burglar alarm call out.
 - g. Intruders. Dealing with intruders on site.
8. Reactions to Violence.
- a. Pupils. The school will have a 'Physical Intervention' policy which will direct the way in which pupils are dealt with.
 - b. Others. Whether the violence is physical or non-physical it will be dealt with using the minimum of force. Staff will be trained to:
 - Stay calm and speaking slowly so as not to be drawn into a heated argument.
 - Avoid aggressive body language such as hands on hips, wagging fingers and looking down on the aggressor.
 - Avoid confrontation in front of an audience. The fewer people involved in an incident the easier it is for an aggressor to back down.
 - Ask another, preferably more senior member of staff to talk things through with the aggressor.
 - If in any doubt as to physical wellbeing, considering summoning appropriate assistance which could include the police.
 - Use physical force only as a last resort and then only in extreme circumstances.
9. Follow Up. After an incident involving violence the Governors and Head Teacher will take the following actions as soon as possible:
- a. Precautions. Take immediate precautions to ensure that the incident cannot reignite.
 - b. Medical. Offer medical assistance, advice and support as necessary.
 - c. Debrief. Debrief staff and pupils involved.

- d. Record. Record the Incident on the form at Appendix 2. Where injury has occurred fill in an SR3.5 form and return it to the Health and safety Section, Notts County Council Education Department.
- e. Police. Notify the Police in all cases of physical attack or serious threatening behaviour, unless the employee objects.
- f. Staff Support. Determine the support required by the staff member and implement it. This could be: Time away, Counselling, Compensation, Legal advice, ex gratia payment for loss/damage to property.
- f. Standard Warning Letter. If the Head Teacher believes it necessary write a letter to the perpetrator of the violence warning of the consequences of future aggressive action. A model letter is at Appendix 1.
- g. Policy. Investigate the incident and review the policy and training.

Cotgrave Church of England Primary School

The Cross, Cotgrave, Nottingham, NG12 3HS



Head Teacher:

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First Class

Private and Confidential

Dear

Violence to Staff: Warning

It has been brought to my attention that you have against a member of my staff. It is my duty to warn you that this is entirely unacceptable behaviour within a school.

The Governing Body and I, as Head Teacher, will not tolerate violent or abusive behaviour to any members of staff in this school. I must remind you that the school site is private property, and that you have no legal right to enter the school without prior invitation/appointment.

If this behaviour continues, then I shall have no option but to take this matter further.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

www.cotgrave-pri.notts.sch.uk

APPENDIX 2

Violence to Staff - Risk Assessment

Introduction

Schools need to have a realistic view of security and violence and consider sensible measures which are proportionate to the problems identified. Schools have a clear legal duty to assess the risks to staff and reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable. Security measures can help to reduce the risk of violence. All schools should carry out regular security audits with the support and guidance of Local Authority staff and representatives of other agencies such as the Police. These measures alone cannot guarantee personal safety of school staff, pupils and visitors. The aim of risk assessment is to ensure that physical control measures are effective, clear procedures are in place and staff are competent to carry out their activities safely. Risk assessment will therefore need to consider all hazardous activities, assess the level of risk in relation to all factors and ensure the introduction of control measures to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. This document is intended to outline the framework of risk assessment in relation to the management and control of violence in educational establishments.

Principles

Anyone carrying out a risk assessment must be competent to do so. The best way of ensuring and demonstrating competence is to provide training for staff. Such training, tailored to the needs of the school is available on request from the Local Authority. It is important to ensure that staff are given adequate time and appropriate support to enable them to carry out risk assessments. Risk assessments are most effective when carried out as a group exercise involving two to three people. The process should be co-ordinated and monitored by a senior school manager. The manager with responsibility for co-ordinating health and safety management in the school is usually best placed to carry out this role. It is important to involve staff in the risk assessment process. Good consultation at all stages of the process will help to ensure that all risks are identified and that control measures are appropriate and realistic. The significant findings of the risk assessments must be recorded as well as the proposed action or procedure to reduce or remove the risk. Schools will need to retain copies of the completed risk assessment forms and ensure that all staff are made aware of the actions taken or the procedures to be introduced. The assessments will need to be reviewed if new information comes to light or if a serious incident occurs. In any case the assessments need to be reviewed annually to ensure that they are still relevant.

Practice

Risk assessments should be carried out in such a way that examines all aspects of the school activities, environment and location. Whilst generic risk assessments are only used as a guide more detailed assessments are often required if there are specific problems. Schools will therefore need to consider the risk of violence and ensure that specific control measures are in place to remove or reduce the risk to an acceptable level. Activities to consider in more detail include:

- home visits;
- parent/pupil interviews;
- dealing with serious disruptive behaviour by pupils;
- working outside normal working hours;
- working in isolation, lone working;
- call-out following activation of fire or intruder alarms, outside of normal working hours;
- working at a remote site e.g. remote sports area;
- dealing with intruders.

The Local Authority approved a policy for how and when to physically intervene with a pupil, this guidance can be found in The Code of Practice: Guidance on physical intervention between staff and pupils. Schools

should already have behaviour policies which refer to this code of practice. Where a child requires repeated physical management it may be appropriate to agree an 'Individual Handling Plan'. Where a plan is agreed with reference to the Code of Practice on Physical Intervention, a risk assessment should also be carried out.

All of the activities listed above will need a detailed risk assessment, preferably before the activity takes place. The process for conducting such risk assessments is contained in the Health and Safety Executive guidance 'The Five Steps to Risk Assessment'. Brief details of this are shown below.

To assist in this exercise there are also a number of 'generic' or general risk assessments included for guidance. If they are suitable to be used as they are this is acceptable so long as the reasoning of the 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment' has been followed and applied. These generic risk assessments are not intended to be definitive and should be reviewed and adapted to suit the individual requirements at your school. There may be other factors that are unique to your school or activities which have not been included. These generic risk assessments can therefore be used as the basis for discussion by your risk assessment group.

Follow up action

It is important to ensure that schools produce a plan of action which deals with the improvements recommended by the risk assessment process in order of priority. The priority must be based upon the level of risk and not the cost. Changes to procedures are often all that is needed and these often involve very little cost. However, where cost does restrict immediate action, short term measures must be introduced to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Risk assessments need to be reviewed regularly. This is likely to be annually unless things change in relation to activities, layout etc, which mean that the assessment needs to be reviewed more regularly.

Five Steps to Risk Assessment

Step 1: Look at the Hazards: List all activities carried out in school or in your department and identify the hazardous activities. Group similarly hazardous activities together as much as possible to allow generic assessment. You must record your assessments along with details of any changes made or planned. The Risk Assessment pro-forma attached as part of this appendix provides one way of carrying out and recording your assessments. At this stage you must be clear about the differences between hazard and risk. Hazard is defined as anything that has the potential to cause harm, i.e. fall from a height, a violent person etc. Risk is defined as the chances, great or small, that the hazard will actually cause someone harm. Risk Assessment should not be carried out in isolation. You will need to talk to the people involved in the activity being assessed. It is also useful to walk around the area concerned and look afresh at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ignore the trivial and concentrate on significant hazards which could result in serious harm or affect several people.

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed: The identification of all people who you could reasonably foresee may be harmed is a fundamental requirement of risk assessment. Caretakers, cleaners, visitors and contractors should not be forgotten. Expectant mothers may need special consideration as they may be at greater risk as a result of their condition.

Step 3: Evaluate the Risks: Once all the hazards have been identified it will be necessary to make a judgement on the likelihood of harm occurring. In order to do this you must consider the worst possible outcome and the probability of occurrence. For example, the use of unsafe electrical equipment has the potential to cause a very serious or even fatal injury. Having identified all hazards and decided which are significant we now need to identify and consider the efficiency of existing controls. You should now be able to decide whether any significant risk remains. Further control measures would then be needed to control the risk. The outcome of your assessments should be an action plan in the form of a prioritised programme of improving control methods. This allows a sensible planned approach. It is not always possible to do everything 'over-night'. We are often held back for reasons of finance or time. We therefore need to consider all hazards in terms of the level of risk. The greater the level of risk then the greater the need to do something about it.

Step 4: Record your Findings: The Risk Assessment pro-forma should be used to record all assessments. The action plan should be used to produce the school action plan. This should list all significant risks identified from the exercise and target dates for introduction or improvement of control measures.

Step 5: Review your Assessment: The regulations require assessments not only to be suitable and sufficient, but also to be maintained to ensure that they remain valid. This means that they must be kept under review and updated periodically i.e. annually or when changes are made to the activity.

How to use the risk assessment forms:

1. Look at the hazards and activities in your school, particularly where violence could apply.
2. Consider who is at risk. Deal with the most serious first.
3. Consider how they are at risk.
4. Do you have suitable control measures in place?
5. If your control measures are not as suggested in the example, do they adequately control the risk?
6. If control measures are suitable and in place the resulting risk should be low.
7. Tick the box to show that the control measures are in place.
8. If control measures are not in place put an 'X' in the box, and decide if the resulting risk is high, medium or low. Make a note of the control measures that are needed in the comments - actions box.
9. Put control measures into practice. Ensure staff are aware of and use the control measures.
10. Sign and date the assessment and enter the review date.

RISK ASSESSMENT PRO-FORMA

Hazard/Activity	Risk Hazard	Persons at Risk	Control Measures	Comments - Actions	Residual Risk Rating	3x
			•			
			•			
			•			

EXAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT

Hazard/Activity	Risk Hazard	Persons at Risk	Control Measures	Comments - Actions	Residual Risk Rating	3x
Parents arriving at reception	Assault on reception staff	Reception staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layout of reception places physical barrier between receptionist and visitor • Receptionist has a means of calling for help or support quickly • Layout enables receptionist to leave area safely if situation requires it • Reception staff have had training in how to deal with aggressive visitors 		Low	
Parents being interviewed by teacher	Assault on teacher	Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good layout of interview room • Interior of room should be visible from outside • Furniture allows distance between interviewer and possible aggressor • Interviewer has means of escape if necessary • Interviewer trained in de-escalation techniques 		Low	
Assault on teacher in classroom	Assault on teacher	Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good communication in school ensures teachers are aware of potentially violent pupils • Teacher to be aware of school policy on violence • Consideration given as to whether training on breakaway techniques or restraint is necessary • Behaviour management policy in place at school • Teacher to be aware of Code of Practice on Physical Intervention 	Low		

Cotgrave Church of England Primary School

Violent Incident Register

Date, Time and Location of incident:	
Employee (Personal details of person assaulted):	
Name:	Age: Gender:
Post Title:	
Perpretrator (Personal details of perpretrator of assault):	
Name:	Age: Gender:
Relationship to victim:	
Details of incident (including activity at the time):	
Follow-up (including post-incident support):	
Report compiled by: Name and Role:	Report countersigned by: Name and Role:
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date: