

# Aggressive and Violent Behaviour Safety Policy

## St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School

**This policy sets out the management of Aggressive and Violent Behaviour in the school, including responsibilities, training and records.**

St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School will undertake to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation with regard to the requirements and responsibilities in relation to the management, prevention and reporting of aggressive and violent behaviour involving pupils, staff and visitors. It will ensure best practice and extend the arrangements as far as is reasonably practicable to others who may also be affected by our activities.

### THE LAW

As legislation is often amended and Regulations introduced, the references made in this Policy may be to legislation that has been superseded. For an up-to-date list of legislation applying to schools, please refer to the GovernorNet website [www.governornet.co.uk](http://www.governornet.co.uk) and the Health and Safety Executive website [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk).

### DEFINITIONS

Violence is defined as:

- Aggressive physical contact which may or may not result in pain or injury
- Other non-physical aggressive behaviour directed towards staff or pupils including:
  - Verbal abuse.
  - Intimidating behaviour causing fear or concern.
  - Sexual or racial harassment.
  - Cyberbullying. (e.g. aggression or threats using email, internet or text messaging services)
- Violence to any property which may encompass a range of behaviour including:
  - Throwing a small item e.g. cup, board cleaner, book
  - Destruction or ransacking of a building
  - Violence towards staff or pupils
  - Damage to personal or School property

### MANAGEMENT

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- Planning for the avoidance of violence is undertaken in consultation with staff
- Where a potential violent situation is identified, a risk assessment is undertaken and kept up to date
- In consultation with staff, actions are to be taken to prevent or mitigate violent situations as identified by:
  - instances when they have been or may be afraid
  - as a result of previous or potentially violent situations or in risk assessments
- Staff are fully informed
- Violent Incident Report forms are completed and dealt with in accordance with the Reporting Procedure (below).

## **RECOGNISING POTENTIAL VIOLENCE**

Recognising the potential for violence is often possible. At other times, it will be more difficult as may not be premeditated or have an obvious cause. The analysis of any previous Violent Incident Reports can identify useful indicators of potential triggers and patterns of violent incidents. Whenever there is the potential for a violent or aggressive incident, a risk assessment must be carried out and recorded as a legal requirement, and action taken to reduce the risk to a tolerable level that is as low as reasonably practicable. The risk assessment must identify risks from all sources including staff, pupils, pupils' family and friends, and visitors or other parties that have the potential to become involved.

Factors associated with violence include isolation, stress, frustration, fear and experiences of violence in a person's past, especially in childhood. Contributory factors include the effects of alcohol and certain drugs. Situations involving sanctions are potential triggers of a violent reaction. These can include a move to physically restrain to prevent injury or even a misinterpreted move to provide comfort. Some psychotic states are associated with violence, and some physical illnesses can sometimes cause a person to react violently.

All threats must be treated seriously.

If restraint is to be used, it should only be as part of an overall strategy and used only in accordance with Physical Restraint Policy.

## **PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE**

Staff must feel secure in their work and this is to be facilitated by safe working practices, for example, by the proximity of a 'stand by' person, by pre-arranged interruptions, effective lone working systems or by the use of verbal telephone codes requesting assistance, as well as by conventional alarm systems. These should be identified as control measures in risk assessments. Response is to be tested on a periodic basis to ensure that it works effectively.

Staff working alone, including making lone visits to pupils' homes must follow Lone Working Policy.

Objects with the potential to be used as weapons must not be left lying around. Staff must also be aware that the wearing of items such as neck chains, pendant earrings, body jewellery etc. may increase the possibility of personal injury. Preferably, staff should not be left alone without the ability of raising an alarm, but where this is unavoidable other equally effective methods of reducing the risks must be considered.

All callers arriving at or telephoning the school must always be treated with courtesy, and waiting time must be kept to a minimum in order to reduce impatience or potentially violent situations.

It is often useful to have good working relationships with the local police. Violence can be followed or caused by loss of credibility. It is accepted that the staff may lose personal credibility or confidence during or following a violent incident and that this credibility will be regained in time or as necessary.

Staff should have an awareness and, where appropriate, be trained in the use of non-threatening postures and the value of maintaining physical distance from an aggressive source.

## **HANDLING AN AGGRESSIVE INCIDENT**

The following points of practice may help to defuse a potentially violent situation. The list is not exhaustive and other actions may be necessary and equally appropriate.

- When violence is threatened, staff should attempt to keep control of the situation
- Staff should communicate calmly with the violent person throughout the incident. They should use non-threatening verbal and body language to show that they are not acting out of anger, frustration or a desire to punish
- Attempts should be made to discuss with the violent person his or her frustrations and problems
- Assistance from other staff may be summoned. Any other pupils or adults in the vicinity who are at risk must be moved somewhere safe
- Physical safety of people is more important than the security of buildings or belongings
- There will be occasions when staff will need to retreat and help others to retreat to a safe distance, but only when this does not increase the risk of injury to any other person. Such decisions are not easy and are to be based on the balance of risks to all parties involved

## **AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR FROM PUPILS**

In the case of pupils they should not leave the pupil alone. They should also ensure that a pupil does not feel trapped. That can involve offering the pupil alternatives such as:

- coming with the staff member to a quiet room away from bystanders so that the staff member can hear the pupil's concerns
- sitting down and having a drink of water
- being joined by a particular member of staff well known to the pupil;
- being joined by a friend or family member.

One of the difficulties with which staff have to come to terms is the decision whether or not to use physical restraint. Therefore, the Physical Restraint Policy

Unless unavoidable, members of the public should not be involved in controlling an incident. Colleagues can immediately be requested to help, as appropriate, and police may then be summoned if circumstances dictate their presence.

## **AFTER A VIOLENT INCIDENT**

Any implement used in an attack must be retained, provided this can be done without causing further difficulty or risk of added injury.

Violent incidents must be reported and recorded at the earliest opportunity (see below).

Employees involved in violent incidents must always have the opportunity to discuss what has happened in detail with the Headteacher and with colleagues and counselling must be offered. (HCC counselling/support for employees at: [Employee Support Line \(ESL\)](#)).

The extent of immediate and delayed shock to all those affected by an incident must never be under-estimated. Any member of staff suffering shock or injury as a result of violence should seek medical attention and be offered appropriate support and advice.

A review of all the aspects of a violent incident, including a decision on any action to be taken against the aggressor or any plans for working with the aggressive party, must be decided upon and an action plan must be devised, implemented and locally recorded as appropriate.

The question of police involvement and prosecution must be given early consideration by the Head teacher, taking advice from HCC Children's Services as required.

### **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

All Violent Incidents are reported using Violent Incident Report (VIR) Form (CSRF-001) (Appendix 1).

As soon as practicable, staff must report the incident to the Headteacher who will advise on the appropriate action. Staff may, where appropriate, wish to be accompanied by a friend or representative.

Reporting of all violent incidents ensures that staff are aware of such incidents and that appropriate action has been taken to support those involved and reduce the risk of a similar incident occurring in the future. Records of all violent incidents are required to meet all legislative requirements and to enable the monitoring of trends, whilst assisting in determining policy direction and ensuring the effective targeting of training resources. Staff should be aware that teams and units submitting VIRs are not viewed as problem areas or as poorly managed, but rather as taking the appropriate and responsible approach which is to be strongly encouraged. Staff should always be strongly encouraged to complete the VIR form and under no circumstances should they be discouraged from completing a VIR form following a violent incident. The Head teacher and member(s) of staff, together, will complete the VIR form as soon as practically possible following the incident. This is in addition to the completion of any other related documentation including reporting in accordance with the School Accident Reporting Policy.

VIR forms are to be actioned/forwarded in accordance with the 'Routing Instructions' on the VIR form itself which are as follows:

- Original VIR Form will be stored securely by the Headteacher with other VIR records, not personnel files.
- Copy to: Children's Services Health & Safety Team, Clarendon House, Monarch Way, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 5PW.

### **ADDITIONAL SUPPORT & ADVICE**

The Head teacher, acting on behalf of, and with the consent of the member(s) of staff, may decide to inform the police of any incident or assault which occurs whilst carrying out official duties. Under certain circumstances staff may not wish the police to be informed and although that wish will be taken into account, the County Council has a responsibility to protect staff and, in the event of a serious offence, the police may have to be informed. The Headteacher will seek appropriate specialist advice from Children's Services Health and Safety Team and the legal section as dictated by the circumstances at the time of the incident.

If the police decide not to prosecute, the individual has a right to proceed with a private action.

Staff have the right to report the matter personally to the police and should inform the Headteacher if they decide to do so.

If staff wish to pursue a claim through the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, (CICA), they must apply in accordance with guidance at [Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority](#).

The [Employee Support Line \(ESL\)](#) is available to all staff who are victims of a violent incident. It was originally set up to support staff who had been involved in incidents of violence or abuse and offers confidential support, advice and counselling to all staff within Hampshire County Council.

### **TRAINING**

All staff who may have contact with members of the public, either face to-face or by telephone, must be made aware of this policy as part of their local induction/in-service training and in particular the section above, Prevention of Violence.

If Risk Assessment identifies control measures that require staff training, the Head teacher is to investigate with HCC Children's Services the provision suitable training courses.

Date to Staff: 22/10/14

Approved by Admissions & Pastoral Committee: 22/01/15

Review schedule: 3 yearly

Date for review: Autumn 2017

**APPENDIX 1**

<p><b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES REPORTING FORM CSRF-001</b></p> <p><b>Violent Incident Report Form (VIR)</b></p>
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To be used for reporting aggressive incidents/behaviour towards employees of Children's Services (not child on child) and to be completed in accordance with SGP 18-07 and instructions on this form

<b>School / Workplace</b>	
<b>District</b>	
<b>Local Serial No. (optional)</b>	

*Optional use of a local serial number is for each premises/school's own internal recording purposes if/where required*

<b>Type of incident</b>	Tick boxes which most accurately reflect incident
Aggressive physical contact with injury	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aggressive physical contact without injury	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-physical aggressive behaviour towards a person (eg. verbal abuse)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence towards staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violence towards property	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to personal property	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to council property	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual harassment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Racial harassment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cyberbullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Does this report relate to a weapon/implement brought on site (eg. knife)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<b>Date of incident</b>		<b>Time of incident</b>	
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<b>Details of incident</b>	Insert description of incident

Actions taken	Tick the boxes which identify the actions taken
Police summoned or involved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children's Services Health & Safety Team contacted	<input type="checkbox"/>
Positive handling techniques used	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground/floor responses involved	<input type="checkbox"/>
First aid provided	<input type="checkbox"/>
Debrief/support offered to young person and staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
F2508 Form completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk assessment undertaken or reviewed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual support plan devised or revised	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follow-up/restorative meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hospital visit or stay	<input type="checkbox"/>
HSE contacted	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exclusion from school	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Name/title of involved employee</b>	
<b>Occupation/work of employee</b>	

<b>Name of aggressor</b>	
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<b>Name of headteacher/unit manager</b>	
<b>Headteacher/unit manager signature</b>	
<b>Date of report/signature</b>	

<b>Completion instructions</b>	Ensure following is carried out before sending form:
Form to be fully completed, <u>printed and signed prior to forwarding</u> – <b>it is <u>not</u> an on-line form</b> A local form serial number may be inserted in the appropriate box for your own reference only	

<b>Routing instructions</b>	Please send your completed form <b>by post</b> to:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1 Children's Services Health &amp; Safety Team (Courier Route: C109) Clarendon House, Monarch Way, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 5PW</b></li> <li><b>2 Your branch management team as determined/required by each branch (not schools)</b></li> </ol>	

<b>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	Database Reference Number	<b>VIR No:</b>
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### ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMPLETION

#### When to complete

Form to be completed under following circumstances:

- Whenever aggressive behaviour or violence is targeted towards an employee
- If an employee wants a non-physical incident recording (eg. verbal abuse)
- If headteacher/manager considers there a need to report an aggressive incident
- For recording aggressive behaviour towards voluntary helpers, staff or visitors

#### When not to complete

Form not to be completed under following circumstances:

- Aggressive behaviour or violent incidents towards a child by another child
- Aggressive behaviour towards a child by an adult (alternative reporting exists)

#### When completed

When completed, the form should be:

- Copied and kept securely with other VIR record copies – not on a personal file
- Used with other records to analyse/trend incidents and responses
- Used as evidence when completing a challenging behaviour risk assessment or identifying appropriate control measures (eg. physical intervention training)
- Forwarded to the recipients referenced in this form's **Routing Instructions**

#### Other information

Please consider the following when completing the form:

- In addition to the immediate support provided at the workplace, the employee should be reminded of the Council's free and confidential [Employee Support Line \(ESL\)](#) 02380 626606. Headteachers and responsible managers will need to monitor the well-being of the employee as incidents can have delayed effects
- This VIR Form is effectively a separate accident/incident report form for the reporting of aggressive behaviour and violence towards employees. There is no benefit in reporting an incident twice so if this VIR Form is being used, the incident does not also have to be recorded/reported in the staff accident book
- Physical violence incidents resulting in a serious injury or causing the employee to be off work for more than 3 days are legally reportable to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) using the F2508 Report Form (also forward copy to CSHST)
- Involvement of the police will normally be for the employee to decide but headteachers or managers have an over-riding right to summon the police

#### Data Protection Act 1998

Personal data will only be used to record the incident and for no other purpose. Data will not be passed to any other organisation unless there is a legislative requirement to do so.