

Woodlands Academy of Learning



Violence & Aggression Towards Staff Policy

(Reviewed March 2021)

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Statement of intent

Woodlands Academy of Learning is committed to preventing violent behaviour directed towards our staff by parents/carers and pupils. No member of staff will be expected to accept exposure to violence as part of their job role.

Woodlands Academy of Learning employs a zero-tolerance policy on violence towards members of staff; under no circumstances is violence towards any member of staff considered acceptable.

In this policy, the term 'staff' refers to all temporary and permanent, full-time and part-time, teaching and support staff, as well as casual employees.

This policy relates to violence and aggression directed at staff, in connection with their duties, from parents/carers and pupils. The academy's Behaviour Policy deals with issues regarding the physical intervention of staff.

It is the responsibility of the headteacher and the governing body to maintain this policy and to ensure that it is carried out successfully within the academy

1. Definitions

- 1.1. Woodlands Academy of Learning accepts the Health and Safety Executive's definition of violence at work as:

"Any incident in which an employee is abused, threatened or assaulted by a member of the public in circumstances arising out of the course of his or her employment."

In terms of this policy, 'public' could be taken to mean parents, pupils, visitors, or other staff members.

- 1.2. Types of violence, threatening behaviour and abuse understood in this policy include:
- Shouting at school staff – either in person or over the telephone
 - Physical intimidation – standing very close to him/her
 - The use of aggressive hand gestures – fingers raised, a raised fist towards another person
 - Threatening a member of staff
 - Verbal abuse – abusive and aggressive language, oral or written.
 - Physical assault – assault causing minor injury, such as a graze, minor bruising, reddening of the skin, minor cuts/lacerations, or a more serious injury.
 - Physical abuse – attempted assault which did not result in physical harm.
 - Sexual assault – sexual assault resulting in physical harm such as bruising, cuts/lacerations, or more serious injury.
 - Sexual abuse – inappropriate sexual behaviour not resulting in physical harm.
 - Property damage or theft – damage to, or theft of, the employee's personal property.
 - Other – any form of physical assault or psychological abuse not defined above, which the employee considers sufficient to warrant concern.

- 1.3. Harassment is defined as:

"a pattern of persistent and unreasonable behaviour which is not abusive or overtly aggressive, but which can be perceived as intimidating and oppressive."

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1. The nominated governor will:
- Acknowledge their legal duty of care towards school staff and pupils and their responsibility to ensure the school is a place where both staff and pupils are safe from violence or aggression.
 - Oversee the implementation of this policy.
 - Advise all members of staff of this policy.
 - Ensure all staff likely to be affected are informed, through the headteacher, of any circumstances which are likely to carry a risk of violent or aggressive behaviour.
 - Authorise appropriate members of staff to exclude persons behaving inappropriately from the school premises, under Section 40 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.

- Maintain a continuing programme of risk assessments of violence towards staff, in close consultation with the headteacher.
- 2.2. The headteacher will:
- Report the outcome of the risk assessment of violence towards staff to the nominated governor annually.
 - Ensure that all staff have read and understood this policy.
 - Consider all reported incidents against the definitions outlined in [Section 1](#).
- 2.3. All members of staff should:
- Follow the procedures for preventing incidents, dealing with incidents, and recording and reporting incidents.
 - Report every instance of probable violence and/or aggression, and any hazards, risks or problems, to the headteacher.
 - Assess the risk to themselves in each situation and do their utmost to ensure their own safety.

3. Preventing incidents

- 3.1. Woodlands Academy of Learning will carry out an annual risk assessment of violence towards staff.
- 3.2. Staff will receive appropriate training as part of their induction, and follow-up training as required.

4. Dealing with incidents

- 4.1. When dealing with an incident, staff are advised to employ the following strategies:
- Be assertive but not aggressive
 - Speak calmly without raising their voice
 - Be polite but firm
 - Seek assistance
 - Maintain a safe distance from the aggressor
 - Think of an escape route, should the need arise
 - Be mindful of body language and stances to physically defend themselves
 - Walk away, where possible
- 4.2. All incidents will be logged and recorded on an Incident Report Form, which are kept in the school office.
- 4.3. The headteacher should be immediately informed of any incidents, and should liaise with the police where necessary.
- 4.4. The police should be called via 999, in cases of emergency, where:
- There is danger to life.
 - There is a likelihood of violence.
 - An assault is in progress.

- The offender is on the school premises.
 - An offence has just occurred and an early arrest is likely.
- 4.5. In the event of an emergency, staff should also acquire assistance from a member of the senior leadership team, if available, or the nearest member of staff.
 - 4.6. Where police involvement is required, but the incident is not considered to be an emergency, the local police should be contacted on 0845 1135000
 - 4.7. Woodlands Academy of Learning will ensure that help, support and counselling are made available to victims of violence at the time of the incident and in the long-term.
 - 4.8. Any member of staff or pupil who engages in an act of violence towards a member of staff will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary procedures.

5. Harassment

- 5.1. If a staff member becomes subject to harassment from individual parents/carers or pupils, this may constitute an offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
- 5.2. In cases of harassment, staff should make records of all incidents in writing, taking note of the date, location, and means of communication.
- 5.3. Staff should inform the headteacher, who will contact an external consultant for advice and support.

6. Banning from the school premises

- 6.1. Woodlands Academy of Learning has procedures in place for withdrawing permission for any parent/carer, who behaves unreasonably, to be on school premises.
- 6.2. Throughout the process, full records should be made of each incident, including witness details, should evidence need to be provided in court.
- 6.3. Any incident which could warrant banning from the school premises should be reported to the headteacher.
- 6.4. If a person who has been banned subsequently trespasses on the premises and causes nuisance or disturbance, this may be considered a criminal offence under Section 206 of the Education Act 2002.

7. Recording and reporting incidents

- 7.1. All incidents should be recorded on an Incident Report Form, copies of which may be obtained from the school office.
- 7.2. All incidents should be reported to the headteacher.
- 7.3. Evidence collected may be used later if court proceedings are brought against an alleged assailant.

- 7.4. Woodlands Academy of Learning may carry out risk assessments on individual pupils, whose behaviour constitutes causes concern.

8. Appendix 1: EXAMPLE - Violence towards staff risk assessment – parents and pupils

Woodlands Academy of Learning

Violence towards staff risk assessment – parents and pupils

Assessment conducted by:	Job title:	Covered by this assessment: All members of staff.
Date of assessment:	Review interval: Annual.	Date of next review:

Related documents
Violence Towards Staff Policy, Behaviour Policy.

Likely impact	Risk rating	Likelihood of occurrence		
		Probable	Possible	Remote
Harmful Causes physical or psychological harm.		High (H)	High	Medium
Problematic Causes anxiety, discomfort or poses a threat of physical harm.		High	Medium (M)	Low
Minor Causes embarrassment.		Medium	Low (L)	Low

Risk/issue	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	Recommended further action	By whom	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
Verbal abuse		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are trained in conflict resolution and defusing techniques. • People who threaten violence are reported to the police. • Means of summoning assistance is available. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate supervision is provided. 			
Physical/sexual assault		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are trained in conflict resolution and defusing techniques. • For known violent persons, two employees or a trained security presence is made available. • For consistently violent individuals, barring from the school premises will be considered. • Support systems are available for victims of violence. • Known problematic individuals are identified to staff. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A controlled entry/exit system is in place. • Main entrance is in view from the staff office. • Reception area is laid out in a way that reduces risk. • Parking area is free of visibility obstructions. • Visitors are always accompanied. • A suitable meeting area is laid out in a way that reduces risk. 			

Risk/issue	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	In place? Yes/No	Recommended further action	By whom	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
Physical/sexual abuse		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are trained in conflict resolution and defusing techniques. • People who threaten violence are reported to the police. • Adequate supervision is provided. • Means of summoning assistance is available. • Known problematic individuals are identified to staff. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence of other members of staff, security personnel or police is considered. 			
Property damage/theft		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are advised not to bring valuable personal property onto the school premises. • Where this is unavoidable, staff should avoid leaving personal property unattended or at risk of damage/theft. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are provided with lockers for personal property. • Staff can park their cars in a secure car park. 			
Other		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff report causes for concern to the headteacher. • Individual risk assessments are carried out where necessary. 					