



## VIOLENCE AT WORK POLICY

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## Introduction

The Beckfoot Trust adheres to the following principles:

### **What Is Violence?**

1. Education Service Advisory Committee (ESAC) working definition of violence is: - “any incident in which an employee is abused, threatened or assaulted by a student, pupil or member of the public in circumstances arising out of his or her employment”.
2. This deliberately wide definition has been adapted from earlier HSE publications to include violence by pupils or students. Most people accept that physical force against an individual is an example of violence, but violence can take many other forms, including:
  - a) Verbal abuse and threats (with or without a weapon);
  - b) Rude gestures – innuendoes;
  - c) Sexual or racial harassment
3. Where there is no physical injury, there can still be considerable emotional stress; threats may indicate a risk of actual injury. Malicious damage to an employee’s property can also cause distress and fear of future physical attack.
4. People will have different perceptions about behaviour they find threatening or offensive, or which causes distress rather than simple annoyance.
5. ESAC recommends a broad definition of violence is adopted to help bring together information on all aspects of this topic, so that appropriate action plans can be developed.
6. A wide variety of service and jobs are performed in education; some of these can give rise to risk of violence to staff.
7. Managers will need to look carefully at tasks carried out by their employees and consider which occupational groups may be at risk. Some staff will carry out a number of activities and may, therefore, face risks from more than one source.

### **Statement of Intent**

The Beckfoot Trust recognises the duties and obligations imposed on them under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and that these duties extend to the protection of staff against foreseeable violent incidents at work.

This Policy supplements the schools' Health, Safety and Welfare Policy and agreements contained in Employee' Conditions of Service and will, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure: -

- a) A commitment to introduce, monitor and improve measures for combating violence at work to employees.
- b) Full support to staff who have been subjected to violence at work, in whatever form sustained. The reporting of incidences of violence will not be seen as an adverse reflection on the individual's ability to perform their duties satisfactorily.
- c) The monitoring and investigation of all reported incidents of violence and, where necessary, notification to the police.
- d) The provision of legal advice and representation providing the employee was acting in accordance with his/her duties.
- e) That where there is an allegation of violence against an employee by another employee, an investigation will be carried out and disciplinary action taken where appropriate.
- f) The adoption of ESAC Violence to Staff in the Education Sector as a guideline to this Policy.

## **Reporting Incidents of Violence at Work**

People will have different perceptions about behaviour they find threatening or offensive, or which causes distress rather than simple annoyance. As such, any member of staff that considers they may have been (or might in future be) subject to Violence at Work, should report the incident to their line manager or a member of the Safety Team who will then inform a member of the School's Leadership Team.

The member of the Leadership Team or a member of the Health and Safety Team will then meet with the member of staff to complete necessary reporting paperwork and discuss any forms of support appropriate to the circumstances.

## **Training**

Any member of staff that feels additional training would help them to feel more secure in school, should refer their request to their line manager.