

# VIOLENCE AT WORK POLICY

Version		3.0	
Date		Aug 19	
Approved by Board of Directors		14/11/19	
Version	Date	Description	Revision author
1.0	Nov16	Trust Version Created	CDT
2.0	Oct 18	Revised in line with new procedures and guidance	AMV
3.0	Aug 19	Annual Review – minor changes to format only.	AMV

## Statement of Intent

The Beckfoot Trust recognises the duties and obligations under health and safety legislation and that these duties extend to the protection of staff against foreseeable violent incidents at work.

## The Definition of 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.

## Arrangements for Implementation of the Violence at Work Policy

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. This will include risk assessment to cover members of staff who are particularly at risk.
- 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 who will then inform a member of the School's Leadership Team.

The member of the Leadership Team (with support from the Trust Compliance Officer if necessary) will complete the reporting paperwork and discuss any forms of support appropriate to the circumstances. Reporting will be in line with the Trust's incident reporting procedures. The reporting procedures aim to allow the Trust to take immediate action when needed, but also to identify longer term trends and issues that need to be addressed.

## Training / Counselling

- 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.
- If a member of staff feels that counselling support would be beneficial following an incident this should also be discussed as part of the initial investigation (or at any time) with their line manager.