

Three Counties Academy Trust



Violence Towards Staff Policy #D16

Last updated: 23 November 2022

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Statement of intent

This policy sets out Three Counties Academy Trust policy and procedures to prevent, manage and respond to work-related violence within any of our schools. We will not tolerate any instances of work-related violence, including verbal abuse, to our staff. All instances of violence will be dealt with swiftly and fairly, and any affected staff will be responded to sensitively and provided with appropriate support.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and government guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- HSE (2009) 'Preventing workplace harassment and violence'
- DfE (2018) 'Controlling access to school premises'
- DfE (2019) 'School and college security'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust and school policies:

- Conduct for Learning (Behaviour) Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- First Aid Policy
- Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy
- Physical Intervention Policy
- School Security Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy

2. Definition of violence

The Trust will follow definitions used by the HSE for the purposes of this policy.

The HSE defines work-related violence as: 'Any incident, in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.' This can include verbal abuse or threats as well as physical attacks, and violence towards a member of staff's property.

The HSE defines an incident as: 'An unwanted, unplanned event that has the potential to cause harm/injury.'

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board will:

- Understand and follow their duty of care towards Trust staff and pupils and ensure the Trust is a place where both staff and pupils are safe from violence or aggression
- Ensure all staff are informed, through the Executive Headteacher or Head of School, of any circumstances which are likely to carry a risk of violent or aggressive behaviour
- Ensure a continuing programme of risk assessments of violence towards staff is maintained, in close consultation with the Executive Headteacher
- Ensure adequate training is provided for staff, e.g., on the use of reasonable force and de-escalation strategies
- Oversee the implementation of this policy and monitor its effectiveness

The Executive Headteacher in collaboration with Heads of School will:

- Undertake a work-related violence risk assessment, in liaison with the SLT, and review this annually
- Communicate the contents of any work-related violence risk assessments to all staff
- Ensure separate risk assessments are undertaken where there is a known risk of violence or aggression towards staff, e.g., a pupil with severe behavioural issues
- Monitor incidences of violence and abuse and initiate appropriate action if further measures are needed
- Ensure that all staff have read and understood this policy

The SLT within each Trust school will:

- Treat any reports of work-related violence, threats, or abuse seriously and respond to them promptly
- Record details of any incidents and provide support to any affected members of staff and pupils
- Establish an environment where staff members are encouraged to support each other and look out for each other

All members of staff will:

- 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 Executive Headteacher, Head of School or a member of the SLT
- Undertake any relevant training as directed by the Executive Headteacher or Head of School
- Assess the risk to themselves in each situation and do their utmost to ensure their own safety
- Understand that they should not accept or ignore any instances of work-related violence directed towards themselves or others
- Work with the police and any other relevant agencies where needed, e.g., due to an investigation

4. Preventing work-related violence

The security arrangements in the Trust Security Policy will be implemented and followed. The Trust uses CCTV, in line with the Surveillance and CCTV Policy, to monitor and survey our schools premises. The system will be used to focus on a potentially violent individual and identify perpetrators, with police involvement sought where appropriate.

Where a pupil is suspected of carrying a prohibited item or an item banned under the school's individual Conduct for Learning (Behaviour) Policy, a search will be considered by an authorised member of staff in line with the Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.

Where there is a risk of violence and aggression, or challenging behaviour, the Trust will conduct a risk assessment to identify hazards and implement mitigating measures. All staff

likely to be exposed to a pupil known to be at risk of being violent will be made aware of potential trigger situations and prevention measures.

Staff will be strongly encouraged to raise any incidents of violence or abuse, including threats, they experience or witness with their line manager, the Head of School or the Executive Headteacher. All staff will receive awareness training on work-related violence and parental violence and aggression and be informed of relevant Trust and school policies and procedures at induction.

5. Responding to incidents

Where a member of staff is being abused, threatened, or attacked, they will approach or alert a colleague for support and consider de-escalation strategies. Where available, a member of the school's SLT will respond and attempt to de-escalate the situation. Emergency services will be contacted where necessary. Medical assistance will be provided immediately where required, in line with the First Aid Policy.

Staff will use reasonable force where necessary to restrain a pupil being violent towards a member of staff, in line with the Physical Intervention Policy. Pupils will be sanctioned afterwards in line with the individual school's Conduct for Learning (Behaviour) Policy, with a suspension or exclusion considered in line with the Suspension and Exclusion Policy if appropriate. Where the behaviour of a member of staff caused or escalated the incident, the incident will be investigated and responded to in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Serious breaches of security or emergencies will be responded to in line with procedures outlined in the Invacuation, Lockdown and Evacuation Policy.

CCTV recordings of an incident will be retained where they may be required for a police investigation.

The following support will be provided for a member of staff subjected to work-related violence:

- **Debriefing** – A discussion will take place with the staff member's line manager or the Head of School as soon as possible to understand their experience and how they may be affected
- **Time off work** – Where necessary, the member of staff will be provided time to recover from the experience. An assessment will be made to see if specialist counselling may be required
- **Legal help** – In serious cases, legal assistance will be considered
- **Guidance and training** – Additional guidance and/or training will be considered for the staff member to help them feel more confident in responding to a further work-related violence incident

Any pupils who were also affected by an incidence of violence, including as witnesses, will be spoken to by an appropriate member of staff to identify where support may be required to help them deal with their experience.

6. Record keeping and reporting incidents

All staff will be made aware of the importance of reporting all incidences of work-related violence, including threats and verbal abuse, to their line manager, the Head of School or the Executive Headteacher. Incidents will be recorded in a work-related violence book in the Head of School's office. Information recorded will include:

- When and where the incident occurred
- An account of what took place
- Details of the victim(s), the assailant(s), and any witnesses
- An assessment of the severity of the incident and its outcome
- Any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident

Following an incident of violence towards staff, the Executive Headteacher will review, in liaison with the Head of School, any relevant Trust or school procedures to consider if lessons can be learnt to reduce the likelihood of future incidents and understand where increased vigilance may be appropriate.

In line with RIDDOR, the HSE will be notified in the event of an act of physical violence resulting in the death, specified injury, or incapacity for normal work for seven or more days of a member of staff.

7. Barring individuals from the premises

Where an individual's aggressive, abusive, or insulting behaviour or language poses a risk to staff or pupils, or makes them feel threatened, the Trust will consider barring the individual from the premises, which may include all Trust buildings and land. The Trust takes a zero-tolerance approach to violence towards its staff and will always take the decision to bar an individual where this is necessary to assure the safety of its staff and pupils.

The Trust will inform the individual that they have been barred, or of the Trust's intent to bar them, in writing – the letter will be signed by the Executive Headteacher. The individual will be allowed to present their side. The Trust will determine, considering the specific circumstances of the case and the risk posed, whether it is appropriate to bar the individual temporarily, until they have had the opportunity to formally present their side, or if they will first invite them to present their side by a set deadline.

After the individual's side has been heard, or if no response is received, the Trust will decide whether to continue with barring them. The decision will be reviewed within a reasonable time to be determined by the Governing Board considering the specific circumstances of the case.

If an individual who is barred from the premises ignores the ban and causes a nuisance or disturbance, the Trust will contact the police to have them removed.

8. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the published schedule at the front of this document and at any point material changes require it by the Executive Headteacher, Heads of School and the Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion in conjunction with the Governing Board. Any changes made to the policy will be amended by the Executive Headteacher and

will be communicated to all members of staff. All staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is 31st August 2025.

Signed by:

_____ Executive
Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of Trustees Date: _____