



DITCHAM PARK SCHOOL

Where every child is known and valued

Violence Policy

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| Compiled by | Bursar |
| Approved by | SLT |
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Violence Policy

INTRODUCTION

There are no circumstances in which violence towards any member of staff is acceptable, whatever form it takes, and no member of staff will be expected to accept exposure to violent behaviour as being part of their job.

The policy covers all full-time and part-time teaching and support staff, irrespective of whether they hold permanent or temporary posts; it also covers casual employees, such as daily supply teachers.

DEFINITIONS

The Health and Safety Executive has published the following working definition of violence at work:-

"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."

The definitions adopted by the School are:

- Physical assault: assault with or without a weapon, resulting in actual physical harm to the employee at a level of bruising/cuts/lacerations/hair pulling, or more serious injury.
- Physical abuse: attempted assault with or without a weapon which did not result in actual physical harm to the employee.
- Sexual assault: sexual assault resulting in actual physical harm to the employee at a level of bruising/cuts/lacerations, or more serious injury.
- Sexual abuse: sexual harassment or other forms of inappropriate sexual behaviour which did not result in actual physical harm to the employee.
- Threats: oral or written, or by actions to the person or to property, or both.
- Property damage or thefts: to the property of the employee, including leased cars as personal property.
- Other: any form of physical (including sexual) assault, or psychological abuse, or threats, not contained in the above, which the employee considers to have been sufficiently serious to warrant concern.

THE SCHOOL'S COMMITMENTS

The Governors acknowledge that they have a legal duty of care towards those who work at and attend the school, and a responsibility to ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that the School is a safe place in which both staff and pupils may work without fear of being subjected to violence or aggression. The Governors also recognise the damaging personal and organisational effects which may result from violence. Management of the Policy for Violence is delegated by the Governors to the Headmaster on a day to day basis.

In consultation with the staff, the Headmaster will maintain vigilance, aimed at identifying risks from violence and controlling these at an acceptable level within available resources. The



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outcome of any risk assessment for violence should be reported annually to the full governing body as part of the normal Health and Safety report system.

All members of staff will be advised of this policy by the Headmaster and of arrangements to evaluate and review procedures within the school.

The Headmaster will ensure that all staff who are likely to be affected are informed of any circumstances which are considered likely to carry a risk of violence or aggressive behaviour.

The Governors will support the right of any member of staff who has been subjected to violence to report the incident to the police. An employee will have no right to any benefit under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme unless the incident has been reported to the police.

STAFF COMMITMENTS

Staff at the School also have responsibilities under current health and safety legislation, and are expected to observe the terms of this policy statement and the supplementary guidelines. Staff are required to follow procedures as laid down, including the arrangements for reporting incidents of violence or aggressive behaviour. Failure to do this not only works against attempts to identify and control risks, but may also jeopardise the employee's right to any benefits under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme.

Being the subject of violent or aggressive behaviour will not be regarded as indicative of any failure or weakness on the part of the member of staff concerned, who will be supported and encouraged in coming to terms with any such incident. The Governors and Headmaster recognise that perceptions of violence vary as do reactions to it.

Every incident of probable violence or aggression must be reported and considered against the recommended definitions. Each will be followed up accordingly. Members of staff will be expected to bring to the attention of the Headmaster or other appropriate member of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) any hazards, risks or problems which they become aware of while undertaking their duties.

All members of staff will assess the inherent risk to themselves in each situation and to ensure their own safety.

DISCIPLINARY ISSUES

Any member of staff, or pupil of the School, who perpetrates an act of violence against an employee or a pupil will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary procedure.



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SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The policy relates to violence and aggression directed at staff in connection with their duties, from whatever quarter. It links in with other policies such as the School's Disciplinary Policy.

In the case of violent or aggressive behaviour on the part of parents, the Headmaster will remind them that they are on site by implied permission at certain times and for certain purposes by invitation. If necessary, the parents will be requested to leave the School's premises and should compliance with the request not be forthcoming, assistance from the police will be sought.

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