



Managing Aggressive Behaviour towards Staff Policy

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POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out the Fallibroome Trust's approach to prevent, manage and respond to aggressive behaviour towards staff at work. The Trustees will not tolerate instances of aggressive behaviour towards our staff and give their full support to ensuring a safe working environment. All employees have the right to be treated with consideration, dignity and respect.

GOVERNANCE

The Local Governing Body is a committee of the Fallibroome Trust. The Local Governing Body will adopt and comply with all policies communicated by the Trustees. The Local Governing Body is responsible for setting out the policies and practices for staff. The Local Governing Body may delegate these matters to:

- The Principal/Headteacher;
- A sub-committee of the Local Governing Body; or
- A sub-committee and the Principal/Headteacher.

Where this procedure refers to the Local Governing Body representative this can be any one of the above.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff working on our premises and includes agency workers and contractors.

DEFINITION OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

The Health and Safety Executive defines work-related violence is: *“any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work”*.

Aggressive behaviour can range from verbal abuse to a physical attack. Verbal abuse and threats are the most common forms of aggression and abuse.

Examples of aggressive behaviour can include, but are not limited to:

- Intimidating or bullying behaviour
- Offensive or abusive language, verbal abuse, swearing, unwanted or abusive remarks which makes staff feel unsafe
- Physical violence towards a member of staff or other school users such as pushing or shoving
- Assault/abuse causing actual physical injury or distress
- Verbal or written aggression (letter, emails) which causes distress
- Assault on others including members of an individual’s family
- Invading personal space
- Offensive gestures
- Unreasonable and/or abusive behaviour
- Refusal to cooperate with reasonable requests including COVID security measures
- Threat or fear of any of the above

It is also important to recognise that aggressive behaviour towards staff at work is not limited to the workplace and can take place in the community, travelling to and from work, in isolated areas or even at the home of the employee.

Aggressive behaviour may be directed by a pupil, their relatives or carers, employees, visitors, members of the public, those who are using school premises for extra-curricular activities or non-education related reasons or others which produces damaging or hurtful effects, physically or emotionally, in others including staff members.

Where an alleged perpetrator is a member of staff, incidents will be addressed through the Trust Disciplinary Policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LINE MANAGERS AND STAFF

Line Managers

All Line Managers have a responsibility to implement this policy and to make sure their staff are aware of it and understand it.

Line Managers should:

- Treat any reports of threats, aggressive or abusive behaviour at work seriously and respond to them promptly
- Record details of the incident where appropriate and give all employees involved in the incident their full support during the process.
- Respond to and consider any suggestions made by staff about how to improve aggression prevention and management, and give feedback to staff about their suggestions, including whether it will be taken forward and if not, why not
- Set a positive example by reporting all incidents of aggression or abuse and not tolerating abusive behaviour from pupils, their relatives or carers, employees, visitors, members of the public, those who are using school premises for extra-curricular activities or non-education related reasons or others
- Respond to and, where possible, resolve incidents, ideally before they escalate
- Monitor incidences of aggression and abuse and initiate appropriate action if more measures are needed. Review and amend this policy and the risk assessment as necessary
- Where possible, direct staff to appropriate support and advice after an incident has occurred. Encourage other staff members to support their colleagues, including those that might have witnessed the incident. If victims are particularly traumatised by the event, provide support where possible, such as time off work or changes to their duties
- If an investigation is needed, work with the police and offer any assistance needed to help in their enquiries

Line Managers have a responsibility to act in a way that does not incite or increase the likelihood of aggression or abuse. They also have a responsibility to respond to any reports of aggression or abuse. Any manager found to be encouraging or inciting aggression or abuse or not resolving potentially aggressive or abusive situations may be subject to disciplinary action.

Staff

All staff have personal responsibility for their own behaviour and for ensuring that they comply with this policy.

There are a number of things that staff can do to help prevent work-related aggression:

- Be aware of the Trust's policy and comply with it.
- Recognise the potential for aggressive behaviour towards staff at work and take action to resolve it early on. Staff should take positive action and, for example, contact a Line Manager if they think pupils, their relatives or carers, employees, visitors, members of the public, those who are using school premises for extra-curricular activities or non-education related reasons or others who might cause problems.
- Don't accept instances of aggressive behaviour towards staff at work directed towards themselves or others. Staff should report any instances of aggression, threats or abuse, including details about when it happened, who was involved and any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident. Serious incidents should be reported in the SMARTLOG incident book but minor incidents and incidents of verbal abuse should be reported to Line Managers as they occur.

- Be supportive of colleagues who are victims or witness aggressive behaviour towards others.
- Suggest additional measures to Line Managers which might help to prevent and manage aggressive behaviour towards staff and others.

Staff have a responsibility to act in a way that does not incite or increase the likelihood of aggression or violence. Any staff member found to be encouraging or inciting aggression or violence may be subject to disciplinary action.

PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

Risk assessment

The Trust adopts a risk-based approach to the prevention of workplace aggression and abuse which involve risk assessment, implementing control measures, training, monitoring and review.

Line Managers and staff must work together to identify the potential for aggression and abuse that may come from:

- the work environment
- the job role
- the actions of other people who work with you
- the circumstances or individual factors of pupils, their relatives or carers, employees, visitors, members of the public, those who are using school premises for extra-curricular activities or non-education related reasons or others with whom you normally expect to work with

Staff who may be at risk will be identified and prioritised through this process:

- Making a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks
- Identifying measures needed to comply with legal requirements
- Reviewing the risk assessment
- Recording the risk assessment
- Implementing preventive and protective measures

In a school setting, high risk staff groups include, but are not limited to:

- Reception staff
- After hours and/or letting staff
- Staff who regularly work alone
- Staff who do break duty
- Staff who work in close contact with pupils or families who may present a risk of aggression or abuse

Where a risk assessment indicates that a risk of aggression or abuse exists, actions must be taken to reduce the risk as far as reasonably practicable. Measures which prevent the occurrence of aggressive incidents are preferable to those that reduce the severity of incidents.

Local line managers are responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and the appropriate control measures implemented.

Training

Line Managers are responsible for identifying the training needs for staff as part of the ongoing risk assessment process. It is important that training records are monitored so that refresher training can be given when needed.

The following training should be provided:

- All staff, including new staff, should receive awareness training through SMARTLOG on:
 - Managing aggressive behaviour towards staff
 - the Trust Managing Aggressive Behaviour towards Staff policy and procedures
 - how to prevent abuse at work
 - reporting procedures and what to do following an incident.

This may be through formal training or a briefing from Line Managers, depending on the risk potential for the staff members.

- Line Managers will be trained as above, as well as on how to handle complaints and trouble among pupils, their relatives or carers, employees, visitors, members of the public, those who are using school premises for extra-curricular activities or non-education related reasons or others

ACTIONS FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT

Even with effective risk management strategies in place, incidents of aggression and abuse at work may still occur. It is therefore an essential that appropriate procedures are in place following an incident.

The support that staff must receive will include:

- 1) As a priority, support with their immediate needs e.g. first aid or medical treatment.
- 2) If a staff member is abused, threatened or attacked they should approach their Line Manager or a colleague for help. Line Managers should respond to the situation by talking to the perpetrator, explaining that their behaviour is not acceptable.
- 3) The police should be informed of a serious incident involving physical attack or serious cases of threatening or verbal abuse. Police should also be informed of persistent cases of aggression, threats and abuse.

- 4) Any CCTV recordings of incidents should be kept in case the police need them. All incidents should be recorded in the SMARTLOG incident book and less serious incidents reported to Line Managers.
- 5) Staff members will be encouraged to provide support to any victims or witnesses of aggression or abuse through appropriate training, and Line Managers should provide support including, where needed, allowing time off work for individuals to recover.
- 6) A debriefing for all employees directly involved. Debriefing allows the details of the incident to be established and provides emotional support. The intention of debriefing is to create a supportive system for employees to learn from the experience and to enhance the development of good practice. Debriefing will normally be in 2 stages details of which are available on the intranet. A record of the debrief including the support provided and actions required should be made

REPORTING AND RECORDING SYSTEMS

Staff have a responsibility to report incidences of aggressive behaviour towards staff. All incidents, including physical attacks, serious or persistent threats and verbal abuse, must be recorded in the **SMARTLOG** incident book with details of when the incident occurred, who was involved, descriptions of the perpetrator and any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident.

Any incidents resulting in major injury to staff or that cause staff to be off work for three days or more must be reported under the **RIDDOR** Regulations 1995.

Any incident which results in a member of the public being taken directly to hospital from the premises must also be reported. Line Managers should contact the **HSE Incident Contact Centre** on 0845 300 9923 to report the incident.

Less serious incidents should still be reported to Line Managers as they occur and Line Managers should make a note of these. If Line Managers notice an increase in reports, several reports within a short period or reports about the same perpetrator, Line Managers should record the details, ask staff for more information and take action. The action may include contacting the police about a persistent offender, reviewing the risk assessment and considering further prevention measures, or increased vigilance by Line Managers or staff to prevent a more serious incident occurring.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed in line with changes in legislation and best practice or every three years.