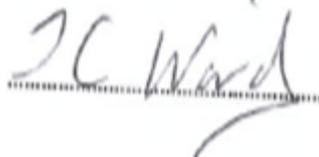




Violence in School Policy

September 2020

Date	Review Date
April 2021	April 2023

Head teacher:		Date:	20/04/2021
Chair of Governing Body:		Date:	20/04/2021

The Governing Body of Girnhill Infant School recognise their duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure the health and safety of school personnel and under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to have a duty to manage risks in the workplace.

Therefore, we aim to create a safe and secure academy environment where violence, threatening behaviour, the possession of offensive weapons or abuse to any member of the school community is not tolerated.

We consider violence and aggression includes any form of physical attack, attack against property or possessions, serious verbal abuse and threats or anti-social behaviour.

Violence and aggression to school personnel is an issue that we take seriously and we will do everything reasonably practicable to reduce risk.

We wish to work closely with the Academy Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

Aims

The underlying aim of this policy is to create a safe and secure academy environment for all members of the school community. The school will therefore:

- Make it widely and explicitly known that it will not accept or tolerate violent, shouting or threatening behaviour towards its staff or anyone else acting on its behalf;
- Take appropriate preventive action to minimize potential risks, through environmental design, work procedures, risk assessments, instructions, information and training;
- Take effective and appropriate steps to deal with violent incidents by investigating all reported incidents, reviewing the service provided to the assailant, and taking all further appropriate legal action that is possible;
- Use the disciplinary procedure where violence occurs between employees;
- Be fully supportive of staff who experience violence, including the provision of counselling;
- Work in partnership with the Police and other Agencies to identify assailants and take steps to distribute information relating to those persons, in order to prevent or discourage repeat violent offences.

Roles and Responsibilities Role of the Governing Body - the Governing Body has:

- Appointed a member of staff to be the Coordinator for Health and Safety;
- Delegated to the Headteacher the task to undertake Risk Assessments as they believe this process is the key to controlling any risks at work;

- Nominated a link governor to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the coordinator and to report back to the Governing Body.

Role of the Headteacher

The main role of the Headteacher will be to undertake Risk Assessments by assessing:

- Identified hazards;
- Assessing the risk
- Assessing who is at risk;
- Identifying risk control measures;
- Recording and reviewing the assessment when appropriate.

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- All Risk Assessments are realistic and practical;
- Identified risk control measures need to be acted upon;
- All incidents are recorded in the academy log book;
- All incidents are recorded on the appropriate Local Authority forms;
- Warning letters are issued to assailants about the inappropriateness of their behaviour;
- When necessary take all further appropriate legal advice and action necessary.

Role of the Co-ordinator - the Co-ordinator will:

- Work with the Headteacher to undertake the Risk Assessments;
- Review and monitor;
- Annually report to the Governing Body on the effectiveness of this policy.

Role of Academy Personnel - Academy personnel will:

- Work with the Headteacher on the Risk Assessment process by completing a fact-finding questionnaire on the likelihood of them being subjected to violence or abuse in any form;
- Prevent violent incidents occurring by avoiding situations that will provoke violent or aggressive behaviour from pupils who are known to have these tendencies;
- Undertake training to recognise the signs of potential violent or aggressive situations developing;

- Report any incident of violence and aggression;
- Ensure that all incidents are reported to the Headteacher.

Offensive Weapons

The Governing Body of Girnhill Infant School has adopted a zero tolerance approach to offensive weapons in school. We have clearly identified what constitutes an offensive weapon and have an unambiguous protocol to follow in situations involving offensive weapons. This protocol indicates very clearly that any student found in possession of any item that may be construed to be an offensive weapon may be subject to permanent exclusion from the school.

The Criminal Justice Act 1988 provides that it is an offence to have a blade or sharply pointed article in a public place without lawful authority, with the exception of a folding pocket knife. The latter is a knife with a cutting edge of no more than three inches and it must be readily foldable at all times.

An offensive weapon is defined, for the purpose of the Violence in Schools Policy, as "anything designed, adapted or intended to be used in causing injury". The following examples are included to assist in determining if an object is an offensive weapon:

- A sharply pointed or bladed instrument is an offensive weapon;
- If a knife locks and has a blade of more than 3 inches it is an illegal weapon;
- A baseball bat used in a game in P.E. is not an offensive weapon;
- A baseball bat used to physically or emotionally threaten or injure an individual is an offensive weapon.

It should be noted that that this list is not exhaustive.

Dealing with an Incident Involving Offensive Weapons

If a member of staff is informed by a parent, or pupil, or other member of staff that a pupil may have in their possession an illegal or dangerous or offensive weapon, or they have reasonable grounds to suspect this, they will inform a member of the senior management team immediately.

The senior member of staff should immediately inform the Headteacher.

It is important to recognise that searching a pupil is a step that should only be undertaken in exceptional circumstances, and only if you have obtained the pupil's consent. The granting of consent and any subsequent search would be witnessed by a

colleague or adult witness. It is preferable for a child's parent to attend if a search is being undertaken.

Staff should be mindful that any attempt to carry out a search without the pupil's permission may result in an allegation of assault. Even though conducting a search with consent from the pupil is within a teacher's authority, it could still potentially result in such an allegation. Staff should operate within the statutory guidelines laid down in the 2006 Education and Inspection Act.

If the child or young person refuses to cooperate the police will be called and staff will take no further action and wait for the police to arrive. If there is any doubt regarding safety the Police will always be contacted immediately.

If a pupil is found to be in possession of such a weapon the Police will be called immediately, the weapon will be confiscated and the Police will conduct investigations as appropriate.

School responses to incidents involving the possession or use of offensive weapons may include any or all of the following, as appropriate to the individual circumstances of the incident:

- Permanent exclusion;
- Fixed term exclusion;
- Informing police and/or other external agencies;
- Informing the Governing Body;
- Letter to and / discussion with parent/carer;
- After academy detention;
- Withdrawal of privileges.

Dealing with other Incidents

When confronted with an incident academy personnel should:

- Stay calm;
- Look for signs that could result in unpredictable behaviour;
- Seek assistance;
- Converse in a calm controlled manner;
- Not turn their back on the 'aggressor';

- Defuse the situation by listening and suggesting that the conversation takes place at some other time and place;
- Move to a place of safety;
- Only use restrictive physical intervention with a pupil as a last resort as set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

- All school personnel must report all incidents of violence and aggression in accordance with the academy accident and emergency procedures;
- All incidents resulting in injury will be reported to the Local Authority;
- The Local Authority will report any incident that involves a member of the academy personnel having more than 3 days off work to the Health and Safety Executive.

Investigating Incidents

The Headteacher will investigate all incidents and may decide to:

- Conduct further investigation;
- Offer counselling to the victim;
- Liaise with the police;
- Take legal action;
- Liaise with Trade Unions and the Local Authority;
- Exclude a pupil or temporarily withdraw service from the party that was responsible for the incident;
- The police will be informed of all cases of severe disturbance, assault or potential violence.

Training for Academy Personnel

Academy personnel will undertake training in:

- School safety and security procedures;
- Personal safety awareness, basic breakaway techniques and safe methods of work;
- Identifying and dealing with potentially difficult situations;
- Physical restraint of pupils.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed in line with the Policy Review Overview document, or when the need arises, and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Governing Body.