



Protocol for Violence to Staff or Pupils

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Violence to staff or pupils is a serious assault which is generally made with intent towards a member of staff or another pupil / between pupils which may or may not be unprovoked. Sometimes a staff member may be injured when a member of staff is handling a child or trying to separate two pupils. In this incidence the same general protocol will be followed but consideration in terms of outcomes and restoration will be made.

1. De-escalate

- ❖ Ensure the safety of the victim.
- ❖ Ensure the safety of the perpetrator.
- ❖ Ensure the safety of any other children or witnesses.
- ❖ Use strategies to calm down the pupil(s).
- ❖ Separate pupils where necessary and be mindful of reducing the exposure of any children who are in a state of anxiety and distress for the safety of witnesses and the dignity of the child.
- ❖ In the case of an assault against a member of staff another member of staff may need to de-escalate the child/children involved if they are emotionally compromised. This will give the staff member the opportunity to gather themselves and seek support if necessary. Staff should look out for this and if they think a colleague needs a break / to step back then say “Ms/Mr X you go and take a break and I will take over here” or the member of staff may ask to be relieved saying, “I just need a minute can you take over please.” A member of staff should radio for support and ask to be relieved in this case if no other adult is with them. No comment should be made to the child about this.
- ❖ Staff should consider their language use and actions during this time. It may be unhelpful to re-emphasise the behaviour or express disappointment or make threats of punishment whilst your main aim is trying to calm the child down. Sometimes a distraction technique is necessary e.g. for a child with a fixed mind-set. This may involve introducing an activity or book to switch their interest. This does not mean that outcomes will not take place, it is a way of ensuring calmness and safety for all in the first instance.
- ❖ Staff should always avoid personalisation in the initial stages of de-escalation. This is not acceptable and may damage future relationships with the child. There may be a time and a place during reflection and restoration for talking to a child about how patterns of behaviour made someone else feel but this must be done when all adults are calm and words have been carefully considered.
- ❖ Once the child is calm then ensure the child is placed in an area with a suitable activity/work. This may mean putting them back into class but it is important to make sure they are separated from the victim until review and outcomes have been decided upon. Consideration should also be made about play times and lunchtimes. It is important to explain to the child “Ms Moran/Glover are going to look at what happened but because x is in your class I think it’s better if you go to x until this has been sorted.” or “You may go into class where I expect you to work sensibly, Miss Moran/Mrs Glover will speak to you soon/later”.
- ❖ On rare occasions where a pupil cannot be calmed down. A member of senior staff may take the decision to ask a parent to come in and try to calm their child down.
- ❖ The calming room is available for pupils. If this has been used this must be recorded on the door and any handling recorded in the handling book.
- ❖ Re-assure the victim that the incident is going to be investigated, check they are ok and explain that someone will speak to them too.

2. Referral and Information Gathering

- Inform a member of senior staff. (If possible this should be done at the first moments as senior staff can support with de-escalation and give advice on where to place pupil. This is the preferred school protocol but may not always be possible until after de-escalation).
- Staff should record the details of the incident using the standard white log. Staff should stick to facts and avoid personalisation.
- If a staff member has been injured they must also meet with the Business Manager to Log this online.
- After the initial incident log a member of senior staff may interview people involved for further information.

3. Outcomes

Review of information and decision on outcomes: The Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will review the incident and will decide on outcomes. They will need all of the information to do this. Every effort will be made to do this quickly but can depend on events in school eg another safeguarding incident may take precedence. We will aim to resolve the situation on the same day or by the end of the following day.

A decision will be made based upon: the nature and severity of the incident, what led up to the incident; whether the incident could have been avoided or was triggered by a breakdown in support; the needs of the child eg (ADHD, ASD); the child's previous behaviour and any extenuating circumstances eg a change in behaviour due to traumatic home circumstances.

Outcomes may include: internal isolation or time out; restoration eg giving back to the school community or resolving a conflict with another pupil; the loss of a reward (but a curriculum trip will not be taken away unless managing pupil safety is a concern and measures can not be put in place. This decision would only ever be authorised by the Headteacher or Deputy) or a child placed on a target card or program. On some occasions it may be appropriate to involve external support such as the Community Police but only with the agreement of the child's parents. Likewise, in exceptional circumstances school may decide to involve the Police.

**Isolation can mean isolation from any other pupil with a senior member of staff or time spent in a partner class. If calm children will complete an appropriate activity or learning. The time limit will be decided by the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher who will make this decision based upon the nature of the incident as above. Wherever possible it is important that children continue with their learning so for example in an outside incident when the victim is not in class with the child and the child is calm it may be appropriate for them to return to class whilst it is being investigated.*

**On rare occasions a suspension or permanent exclusion may be issued. It is schools policy to try to avoid or limit the use of such an outcome except in extreme circumstances as for many of our vulnerable pupils this reads as a further rejection and isolation from the school community and they will be missing valuable learning time. Also, in some instances an exclusion may be welcomed by the child. Only the Head Teacher and in her absence the Deputy Head Teacher can agree to issue an exclusion – this is a legal requirement.*

Outcomes will always include: restoration in the form of an apology either written or verbal to the victim.

Outcomes will be explained to the child and to the child's parents as well as the victim and the victim's parents: An incident recap form will be used with the child so they are clear about what has happened and what the outcomes are as well as what school expects in the future and what support or strategies they can use next time. A copy of this can be shared with parents in a sealed envelope. Parents receiving this will have received a verbal explanation and will be asked to contribute too.

Restoration between Pupil and Victim: This will take place with the Head, Deputy or Child Welfare Officer as a mediator. Staff are asked to come to the meeting with a fresh start approach. When a child offers their apology it is important that staff recognise the child's apology and restoration ends on a positive note. No personalisation should come into this unless led and agreed with the Headteacher or Deputy before for example in an attempt to work on empathy with the child but this would only be done in a controlled manner.

Further Support for Staff: If any staff member feels they require further support over an incident then they should speak to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. We understand that people are human and may need more time to reflect in order to move on. However, we ask that this is done away from the child and staff are always mindful of the balance of power and experience between an adult and a child in school so that an adult's emotions are not pushed onto a vulnerable child learning to control and manage theirs.

4. Reflection and Future Planning and Support

- ❖ Staff may be asked to meet with the Deputy Head or Headteacher to reflect on the incident including their own behaviour and actions to try and reduce future risk.
- ❖ The behaviour team will review the child's support plan and implement any changes necessary and work with staff, pupil and parents.
- ❖ Sometimes external help will be sought from agencies such as the behaviour support team.
- ❖ Governors will be made aware of any incidents.