

## Statement of Intent

At Thurlbear School we take the safety of all those involved with the school as our number one priority. All our staff are entitled to carry out their work without threat of verbal abuse or physical violence. The school employs a zero-tolerance policy and any display of aggression or abuse of any description will be taken seriously.

This Statement of Intent forms part of the Violence to Staff Policy.

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Next review date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Definitions**

Thurlbear School accepts the Health and Safety Executive's definition of violence at work as:

"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."

In terms of this policy, 'public' could be taken to mean parents, pupils, visitors, or other staff members.

Types of violence, threatening behaviour and abuse understood in this policy include:

Verbal abuse – abusive and aggressive language, oral or written, including social media.

Physical assault – assault causing minor injury, such as a graze, minor bruising, reddening of the skin, minor cuts/lacerations, or a more serious injury.

Physical abuse – attempted assault which did not result in physical harm.

Sexual assault – sexual assault resulting in physical harm such as bruising, cuts/lacerations, or more serious injury.

Sexual abuse – inappropriate sexual behaviour not resulting in physical harm.

Property damage or theft – damage to, or theft of, the employee's personal property.

Other – any form of physical assault or psychological abuse not defined above, which the employee considers sufficient to warrant concern.

Harassment is defined as:

"a pattern of persistent and unreasonable behaviour which is not abusive or overtly aggressive, but which can be perceived as intimidating and oppressive."

## **Roles and responsibilities**

The Governing Body will:

Acknowledge their legal duty of care towards school staff and pupils and their responsibility to ensure the school is a place where both staff and pupils are safe from violence or aggression.

Oversee the implementation of this policy.

Advise all members of staff of this policy.

Authorise appropriate members of staff to exclude persons behaving inappropriately from the school premises, under Section 40 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.

**The Headteacher will:**

Report the outcome of the risk assessment of violence towards staff to the Governing Body.

Ensure that all staff have read and understood this policy.

**All members of staff should:**

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 Headteacher.

Assess the risk to themselves in each situation and do their utmost to ensure their own safety.

**Preventing incidents**

Thurlbear School will carry out an annual risk assessment of violence towards staff.

**Dealing with incidents**

When dealing with an incident, staff are advised to employ the following strategies:

- Be assertive but not aggressive
- Speak calmly without raising their voice
- Be polite but firm
- Seek assistance
- Maintain a safe distance from the aggressor
- Think of an escape route, should the need arise
- Be mindful of body language and stances to physically defend themselves
- Walk away, where possible

All incidents will be logged and recorded on an Incident Report Form, which are kept in the school office.

The Headteacher should be immediately informed of any incidents.

In the event of an emergency, staff should also acquire assistance from a member of the Senior Leadership Team, if available, or the nearest member of staff.

Any member of staff or pupil who engages in an act of violence towards a member of staff will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary procedures.

## **Harassment**

If a staff member becomes subject to harassment from individual parents/carers or pupils, this may constitute an offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

In cases of harassment, staff should make records of all incidents in writing, taking note of the date, location, and means of communication.

Staff should inform the Headteacher.

## **Banning from the school premises**

Any incident which could warrant banning from the school premises should be reported to the Headteacher.

If a person who has been banned subsequently trespasses on the premises and causes nuisance or disturbance, this may be considered a criminal offence under Section 206 of the Education Act 2002.

## **Recording and reporting incidents**

All incidents should be recorded on an Incident Report Form, copies of which may be obtained from the school office.

All incidents should be reported to the Headteacher.

Evidence collected may be used later if court proceedings are brought against an alleged assailant.