

The Lotus Academy Trust



Supporting children to find opportunities in every difficulty

The Damara School



Specialist SEMH Independent School

Managing Abuse, Threats and Violence Policy

Approved by: Trust Board

Initial Ratification: 31 August 2019

Review: October 2020, September 2023

Next review due by: September 2026

Definition

This policy applies to all staff, pupils and visitors in the school. The term “staff” includes school employees, parents, Governors, volunteers, visitors and contractors. Any incident in which a member of staff, visitors or pupil is abused, threatened or assaulted by another person.

This includes:

- severe verbal abuse whether written or oral
- threat where this is judged likely to turn into actual violence
- serious or persistent harassment (including racial or sexual harassment)
- threat with a weapon
- major or minor injuries
- fatalities
- actual physical attack

Aims

The School recognises that abusive, threatening or violent incidents at work present a risk to the health and safety of staff, visitors and pupils and the obligations of the school to minimise the risk.

Violence is not considered to be an acceptable part of any job, nor is it part of the duties of any employee to accept violent or abusive behaviour. We recognise the potentially damaging effects of these on individuals, their work performance and the school as a whole, and are committed to combating it.

The aims of this policy are:

- to reduce the risks to staff and pupils from violence and abuse
- to fulfil legal and other obligations by ensuring the safety of staff and pupils
- to protect staff and pupils from all forms of violence whenever possible, and to provide after-care should staff or pupils be subjected to violence
- to ensure that everyone in the school is aware of and fulfils their responsibility for safety from violence at work
- to ensure that all staff conform to regulations regarding pupil restraint and searching for potential weapons

At all times, the safety of staff and pupils takes priority over the protection of property

The school is committed to ensuring that the following measures take place:

- an audit to identify risks, hazards, problems or other issues and the implementation of change as necessary.
- monitoring incidents of violence to staff and pupils
- communication of the policy to ensure that everyone is aware of it and their responsibility with respect to it
- allocation of specific roles and responsibilities in support of the policy
- sanctions to be taken in the event of violent behaviour by a staff member or pupil of the school
- after-care procedures to be made available
- evaluation and review of the policy and procedures at agreed intervals and the continued development of best practice in the light of experience

Each member of staff has an obligation to undertake the following:

- the requirement to operate all the procedures as laid down.
- reporting of incidents of violence and abuse.
- reporting, using the Significant Incident form, of hazards, risks or problems that individuals identify or become aware of in the course of their work

Procedures, Working Patterns & Practices

Visitors

- All visitors to the site must report to reception
- Staff to alert reception if they are expecting a visitor
- All visitors are given an identity badge at reception when they sign in
- Visitors to the site not wearing a badge should be directed, and if necessary, escorted, to reception
- Contractors who arrive on site before the reception office is open must report to the Headteacher and will be issued with a badge when they sign in. Contact details for the school will be provided to all hirers and contractors
- When dealing with possible trespassers, staff should seek assistance before tackling the problem
- Any concerns to be reported immediately to Reception
- Detailed procedures for the handling of a critical incident on site are to be found in the Leadership Office

Staff

- Reception duties are undertaken in the foyer
- Pupils must be escorted by at least one member of staff. Seek leadership support if more staff is needed
- Parental/other interviews outside school hours take place in the leadership room. Another member of staff is informed that the interview is taking place and remains on site until the meeting has finished. Parental interviews in school hours may take place in suitable rooms in the school
- Opening times: 7:30 am - 7 pm
- All staff should have left the site by 6.00 pm and no lone working should take place unless agreed by the Headteacher
- Should staff wish to work late they should be accompanied by other colleagues and the Senior Leaders informed
- Staff working in the holidays should ensure that the building is locked at all times
- Staff wishing to come on site out of hours or in the holidays need to seek the permission of the Headteacher and arrange a start and finish time. Any such arrangements must fit in with Headteacher's off duty periods
- Staff undertaking home visits must give details to reception before leaving and report back either personally or by telephone when they reach the venue and the visit is finished
- There are written procedures controlling access of pupils and visitors to laboratories and workshops (and other practical areas). These are included in the Health & Safety section of the Staff Handbook
- Staff should be mindful of items which could be used as weapons. As far as possible such items should be held in a secure area

The after-school 'catch up' procedures have been formulated for the protection of staff and pupils

Security Equipment

- A mobile telephone is available from the office and may be borrowed as required
- Two walkie-talkie radios are kept by Senior Leaders for use by staff

Site Team Security

The personal safety of the site team is paramount. It is recognised that Site Team are often alone on the site and are therefore very vulnerable.

To ensure personal safety the following procedures are applied:

- In the event of a Site Team member discovering an intruder or trespasser on the school site, the police must be called immediately
- The Site Team member should not intervene before the arrival of the police
- Site Team members must carry their mobile phones when undertaking security patrols. The mobile phone must be switched on throughout the patrol
- All incidents of trespass, intruders or vandalism, must be reported to the CEO and Administrator, and recorded in an "Incident Book"
- Incidents will be reviewed termly by the Health and Safety Trust Committee

Training

- Policy and procedures to be included in Health & Safety section of Staff Handbook
- Managing abuse, threats and violence will form part of the induction programme for new staff

Behaviour Consequences

Abusive, threatening and/or violent incidences against staff and pupils is a serious offense and as such, all sanctions will be applied using the Behaviour Policy. In the event that the Police is called out, this must be recorded on a Significant Incident Form. The school will support any pupil or staff who is a victim of abuse, threats and/or violence.

Reporting, Monitoring & Evaluation

- Incidents of violence should be reported on a form available from the Administrator
- The Administrator is responsible for monitoring the incidents and will coordinate any aftercare required
- All incidents will be referred to the Leadership Team and the Health and Safety Trust Committee
- Monitoring of working patterns & practices is ongoing by the Administrator
- The policy and procedures will be reviewed by the Health and Safety Trust Committee as part of their health and safety brief A report will be made to this Committee termly
- Changes will be communicated in writing to staff