St Cyprian's Greek Orthodox Primary Academy

ΠΑΝΤΑ ΙΣΧΥΩ ΕΝ ΤΩ ΕΝΔΥΝΑΜΟΥΝΤΙ ΜΕ ΧΡΙΣΤΩ ΙΝΑ ΑΡΙΣΤΕΥΩ

I AM STRONG THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

TO THE BEST THAT I CAN BE

Preventing Violence to Staff

Devised: July 2026

Reviewed & ratified by Full Academy Trust on:

Date: 15th JULY 2026

Signed:

Name: PETER TRAGOULIAS

Position: Chair of Finance Audit & Risk Committee

Date of next review: July 2027

Mission Statement:

'The aim of St Cyprian's Greek Orthodox Primary Academy is to provide its children with primary education of the highest quality in a supportive learning environment through the National Curriculum in the core subjects, enriched by the progressive teaching of the Greek language and Christian Orthodox religion.'

The term 'parents' in this policy also refers to carers.

1. APPLICATION

1.1. This policy applies to all employees of St Cyprian's Greek Orthodox Primary Academy who are subjected to violence in circumstances relating to their work. It also covers employees who are assaulted or harassed because of a connection with the Academy.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1. The aim of this policy is to reduce the risk of potential or actual injury to all persons included within the scope of the policy. The Academy will do this by ensuring that:

- members of the public are informed that violence and harassment towards employees will not be tolerated and action will be taken;
- employees do not put themselves at risk by challenging violent behaviour or harassment;
- all violence and harassment towards employees is taken seriously and the fear of violence expressed by employees is given due regard;
- the risks of violence and harassment to employees are identified, assessed and controlled / managed, so far as is reasonably practicable, by the headteacher;
- the reporting of incidents of violence or harassment is positively encouraged and will not be seen as an adverse reflection on the individual's ability to perform his / her duties satisfactorily;
- appropriate investigations are undertaken of all reported incidents of violence and harassment and any appropriate action taken;
- incidents will be monitored and the effectiveness of this policy and control measures evaluated;
- suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training on this area will be provided to all employees, particularly those working in statutory services with known violent / abusive pupils or parents; and

- full support will be given to employees who have suffered violence or harassment, including the provision of legal advice and representation following incidents which the police will not prosecute.

3. OPERATION OF THE POLICY

The school operates a zero tolerance approach to verbal abuse, aggressive and violent behaviour towards members of staff, parents and pupils. Persons behaving in this way or committing any other breach of this policy may be excluded from the school premises at the direction of the head teacher.

The head teacher has full discretion in the implementation of exclusion, prohibition, bans, disciplinary action and/or civil action where appropriate. A ban may be for a set period of time or indefinite. Even if a ban is permanent, it will be reviewed periodically, taking account of subsequently demonstrated patterns of behaviour.

3.1 Parental Rights

Every attempt should be made to maintain normal communications with parents/carers, including giving them the opportunity to participate in certain events.
Even where a parent/carer has been banned from the school premises, they retain their right to an annual consultation in relation to the educational progress of their child/ren. However, the school may determine who will be present at the meeting (e.g a senior member of staff might accompany the class teacher) and its location (e.g it may well be arranged off site).
The interests of the child should continue to be paramount.

4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented throughout the Academy.

4.2. Ensuring that the arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with violence and abuse at work are put in place by:

- providing adequate resources for putting the policy into practice.
- ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents of violence/ abuse.
- Following the 'Guidance on the Prevention of Violence to Staff' Appendix 1

4.3 Line Managers are responsible for:

- ensuring employees work in an environment that is as safe as possible
- undertaking risk assessments and reduce the risks identified.

- implementing recommended training for employees that is appropriate to their needs.
- ensuring accurate records are kept of incidents involving violence or abuse.
- ensuring there is support in place for employees who have been subjected to violence or abuse
- ensuring that risk assessments and safety measures are reviewed following a violent incident.
- working with other bodies i.e the police when appropriate to ensure that incidents are managed and resolved.

4.4 Employees are required to:

- co-operate with the requirements of this policy and any instructions given to them by the Academy
- conduct themselves in such a way as to reduce the possibilities of violent or abusive situations for themselves or other people.
- notify management of all violent or abusive incidents which have occurred.
- assist management to report and complete incident reports in an accurate comprehensive and timely manner
- undertake all training that is identified as mandatory to their role.
- be aware of how their own behaviour might be perceived by others.

4.5 The Health & Safety Representative will:

- regularly review this policy particularly when there is any significant change in legislation or best practice.
- monitor Academy compliance with this policy.

5 TERMINOLOGY

The definition of **violence** in the context of this policy is as follows:

> "Any incident in which a employee is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work." This includes verbal abuse, aggressive behaviour, harassment, threats or actual damage to an employee or his / her property.

The definition of **harassment** in the context of this policy is as follows:

> "Any incident in which an employee is intimidated, offended or harmed because of his / her ethnic origin, colour, race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation or disability. "

The definition of **employee** in the context of this policy is as follows:

> "Any person engaged in work for the Academy whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, other than contractors." Examples include: permanent

and temporary staff, agency workers, secondees, voluntary workers, work experience placements.

The definition of the term **family** in the context of this policy shall be held to include:

> "Employees' partners, parents, children (including step children, adopted children and children of unmarried parents), brother, sister or any person wholly or substantially supported by the employee or who is permanently residing with the employee."

The definition of **member of the public (MOP)** in the context of this policy is as follows:

> "Any person who receives a service from, or has enforcement action imposed on them by, the Council." Examples include: clients, service users, parents, pupils, tenants in council housing, residents in elderly people's homes or sheltered housing accommodation, proprietors of businesses.

6 TYPES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

- Shouting at members of the school staff, either in person or over the telephone
- Physically intimidating a member of staff, e.g standing very close to him/her
- The use of aggressive hand gestures
- Threatening behaviour
- Shaking or holding a fist towards another person
- Swearing
- Pushing
- Hitting e.g slapping, punching, kicking
- Spitting
- Breaching the school's security procedures

This is not an exhaustive list but seeks to provide illustrations of such behaviour.
Unacceptable behaviour may result in the police being informed of the incident.

Guidance on the prevention of violence to staff

INTRODUCTION

This guidance is intended to assist managers to assess the risks of violence and aggression towards staff and to implement measures to reduce those risks. It deals with incidents of violence and harassment involving members of the public (MOPs). Where such behaviour involves another employee, the appropriate line manager should follow the Council's disciplinary procedures.

Identifying if there is a problem

You may think violence and aggression is not a problem for your staff or that incidents are rare. Their view may be very different. Talk to staff and safety representatives. You need to find out what actually happens in the workplace. You cannot assume that people are following all instructions and procedures already in place.

Keep detailed records of all incidents including verbal abuse and threats and encourage staff to report incidents promptly and fully. Look at records of incidents. Can you be sure that these reflect the true situation? For a variety of reasons some staff may be reluctant to report incidents of aggressive behaviour which make them feel threatened or worried. They may for instance feel that accepting abuse is part of the job. Look for common causes, areas or times. The steps you take can then be targeted where they are needed most.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Who might be harmed and how?

Identifying who might be harmed is not simply matter of saying, 'all those who come into contact with the public'. All employees who might be affected, including temporary or agency staff need to be identified. Consideration will also need to be given to all staff who might visit high risk areas; not just those who are permanently employed there.

The level of staff training and skills affects their vulnerability to assaults. This needs to be considered during the risk assessment.

In deciding how people may be harmed, you should consider the potential effects on staff of repeated or severe verbal abuse or threats. Continued exposure to verbal abuse can create high levels of stress and anxiety, reduce staff morale and lead to sickness absence.

You should consider the potential risks that may arise out-of-hours to employees who live close to potentially violent MOPs. If you feel that a particular case has the potential for violence careful thought should be given

at the outset to the allocation of the case, especially if the employee is likely to "bump into" the MOP outside of working hours.

Risk assessments need to be based on good information about the work and to cover all foreseeable risks. However it may not be possible to risk assess every contact or visit each employee undertakes. A practical approach, therefore, would be to undertake generic risk assessments in the first instance.

Generic Risk Assessments

Generic risk assessments should be undertaken as follows:

a) group staff according to their job titles.

b) talk to employees and identify the type of contacts / visits each job group undertake. Bear in mind the purpose of each visit i.e. the same contact/s may be visited for different reasons at different times which could create differing risks.

c) Complete a risk assessment for each type of contact / visit a job group undertakes.

d) Consult employees and decide on suitable control measures to reduce the risks to employees within each job group arising from each type of visit undertaken.

e) Develop written safe systems of work, based upon the identified controls, for use when inducting and training employees.

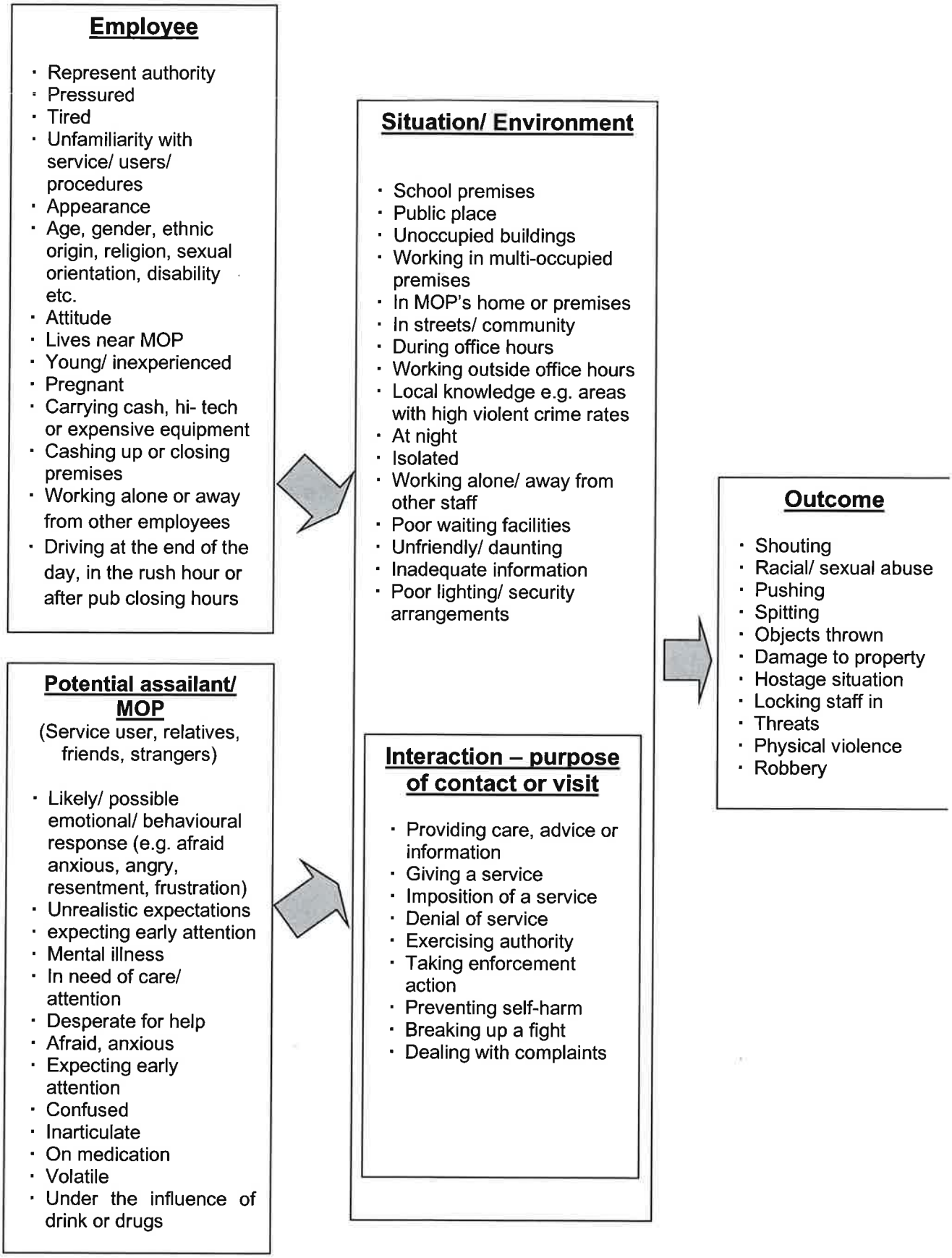
Specific Risk Assessments

Specific risk assessments should be undertaken for unusual or very hazardous contacts or visits or if incidents reported by employees gives cause for alarm.

Risk Factors

A number of factors should be considered when undertaking risk assessments and the model (diagram 1) below may be a useful guide for understanding challenging, difficult or potentially aggressive and / or violent interactions and the potential risk factors which can increase the likelihood of physical or verbal assault. Often the problem involves a combination of factors rather than a single cause.

Diagram 1:


Employee
· Represent authority
· Pressured
· Tired
· Unfamiliarity with service/ users/ procedures
· Appearance
· Age, gender, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability etc.
· Attitude
· Lives near MOP
· Young/ inexperienced
· Pregnant
· Carrying cash, hi- tech or expensive equipment
· Cashing up or closing premises
· Working alone or away from other employees
· Driving at the end of the day, in the rush hour or after pub closing hours
Potential assailant/ MOP
(Service user, relatives, friends, strangers)
· Likely/ possible emotional/ behavioural response (e.g. afraid anxious, angry, resentment, frustration)
· Unrealistic expectations
· expecting early attention
· Mental illness
· In need of care/ attention
· Desperate for help
· Afraid, anxious
· Expecting early attention
· Confused
· Inarticulate
· On medication
· Volatile
· Under the influence of drink or drugs
Situation/ Environment
· School premises
· Public place
· Unoccupied buildings
· Working in multi-occupied premises
· In MOP's home or premises
· In streets/ community
· During office hours
· Working outside office hours
· Local knowledge e.g. areas with high violent crime rates
· At night
· Isolated
· Working alone/ away from other staff
· Poor waiting facilities
· Unfriendly/ daunting
· Inadequate information
· Poor lighting/ security arrangements
Interaction – purpose of contact or visit
· Providing care, advice or information
· Giving a service
· Imposition of a service
· Denial of service
· Exercising authority
· Taking enforcement action
· Preventing self-harm
· Breaking up a fight
· Dealing with complaints
Outcome
· Shouting
· Racial/ sexual abuse
· Pushing
· Spitting
· Objects thrown
· Damage to property
· Hostage situation
· Locking staff in
· Threats
· Physical violence
· Robbery

The model can be used as a basis to ask risk assessment questions about potential incidents:

- Are there any factors or issues associated with the **client, member of the public or service user** that needs to be taken into consideration to help ensure a safe outcome from this situation?

- Are there any factors or issues associated with the **worker(s) potentially at risk** that need to be taken into consideration to help ensure a safe outcome from this situation?

- Are there any factors or issues associated with the **type of interaction** (e.g. way in which the MOP and the employee are brought together) that need to be taken into consideration to help ensure a safe outcome from this situation?

- Are there any factors or issues associated with the **location/workplace** (e.g. the environment in which the incident is taking place, administration procedures, etc.) that need to be taken into consideration to help ensure a safe outcome from this situation?

POSSIBLE PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Measures should be implemented to reduce the risk of violence and promote safer working. In practice, a combination of control measures may be required.

1. Reducing The Causes Of Violence

It may be possible to prevent a percentage of MOPs from becoming frustrated and violent by reviewing service provision. For example, by:

- Ensuring service boundaries are known at the outset
- Keeping waiting times to a minimum
- Providing regular feedback on waiting times for a service
- Providing regular feedback on reasons for delays in service, and revised time-scales.
- Ensuring complaints are dealt with in a timely and fair manner

2. Physical Environment And Layout

Reception areas
Environment can influence behaviour. Too little space can lead to tension; too much space can cause problems of supervision. Reception areas should be welcoming, relaxing and as pleasant as possible.

Reception areas should be easily identifiable and accessible and preferably be located close to the main entrance. Signs need to be effective, clear, appropriately positioned and in sufficient numbers.

The layout of the reception should not place employees in isolated positions. There should be a clear route of escape available.

Where appropriate the reception area may have notices displayed informing MOPs of the Council's policy on violence and harassing behaviour.

Interview rooms
Careful positioning of furniture is essential. The seating arrangements should enable the employee(s) to sit nearest to the door and alarm button (where available). The room should be checked at least daily for any items that may be used as weapons.

Interviews should not be conducted when other staff are not available to respond. This applies particularly outside normal office hours.

Where it is thought that the content of an interview may lead to a violent or harassing reaction, employees must inform their line manager before commencement. Consideration should be given to holding a joint interview. All appropriate employees, e.g. reception staff, must be notified.

Where possible, at least one interview room should have facilities to aid hearing-impaired MOPs, to reduce communication difficulties and consequent frustration.

Where reasonably practicable, one interview room should have at least two doors, one of which is specifically for employees' access/egress. This will enable employees to leave the room without having to pass the aggressor.

Alarm systems/ summoning help in the workplace
Reception areas and interview rooms should be equipped with alarm buttons, personal alarms or other means to enable employees to summon assistance easily in an emergency. Where this is not possible, it is the employee's responsibility to alert his / her line manager or colleagues of his / her whereabouts.

Staff must be informed, as part of their induction, how the system operates and how and when it should be used. Alarm systems should be tested weekly and maintained regularly.

All managers should include in their safe working procedures details of the response required when an alarm is activated or when an employee calls for assistance. This should identify responsible persons, including cover for absences. 'Alarm drills' should be held at least every six months.

All employees may summon police in an emergency situation. Time should not be wasted trying to consult with managers when a serious accident /

threat is occurring but they should be informed of action taken as soon as possible.

Security
The need for security measures such as entry control or surveillance systems will depend on the assessment of risks at individual premises. Factors that need to be considered when selecting any equipment include its ease of use by employees and the need for emergency access or escape.

In no circumstances should employees give out door fobs.

Any unaccompanied strangers, not wearing an I.D. card or Visitor's badge, in unauthorised parts of the building, should be asked what business they have and with whom. If an employee does not feel able to do this he/she should alert a manager or the site maanger. Employees should not try either to detain or evict an intruder by force.

3. WORKING PRACTICES

Employees will have to manage and respond to individuals who become angry. In the majority of situations, it is possible to defuse this anger. However, employees will receive the full support of the management if they feel it necessary to abandon a visit / interview. If this becomes necessary, the employee must discuss the incident with their line manager, as soon as possible after the event.

Interview Techniques
Every eventuality could never be covered, but the following guidelines may assist in conducting safe interviews:

- Someone else should know where the interview is taking place and interviews should take place in a room where the individuals are visible to others. If this is not possible, a checking procedure should be devised.

- As much as possible should be found out about the interviewee prior to seeing them. Read their files and discuss with colleagues/other departments and other professionals, as appropriate.

- Ensure there is a clear route to the nearest safe exit during the interview.

- Discuss issues in a straightforward manner without the use of jargon or terminology.

- A cooling off period may help. Breaks can be suggested with clear reasons given and a promise to return to continue. If the situation deteriorates, and it is safe to do so, the employees should retreat from the interview, clearly explaining the action being taken and the reasons why. A return should only be made if it is felt it is safe to do so.

- If there is a feeling of danger or potential violence, the alarm should be activated and the employee should withdraw.

- If an employee suspects that a MOP may be violent or aggressive, they should consult with their manager before arranging the interview. If necessary, appropriate control measures should be implemented. For example, it may be appropriate for two employees to be present during the interview.

Visits or Enforcement Action

A number of occupations visit MOPs in their homes, or are required to lone work as part of the service provision. When making a home visit, carrying out an inspection etc., employees are operating in a more isolated environment. The nature of the visit itself may raise the risk of violence or harassing behaviour.

The appropriateness of lone working and the risks involved must be assessed and appropriate control measures implemented.

If uncertain with a request over the phone to arrange a meeting, it should be routine procedure to call back and check the details.

Prior to making a visit, an employee should:

- Read the appropriate file(s) and where possible, seek information from other employees, departments or professionals.
- Ensure that other employees are aware of their whereabouts.
- Have, where possible, a means of communicating with colleagues such as a mobile phone or a radio linked to the duty officer system.
- Consider the timing of the visit, if that is within the employee's control.
- Decide whether it is appropriate to request the Police to attend.
- Discuss any concerns with his /her manager.
- Depending on the nature of the visit, give prior notification.
- Ensure a minimum of two members of staff make the visit at all times.

On arrival:

- The employee should check who he /she is talking to.
- If there is an aggressive reception at the door, or the individual appears drunk or otherwise out of control, the employee should not enter the premises.
- The employee should remain alert to changes of moods, movements and expressions.
- Agree a 'distress' signal if employees are concerned for their safety.
- If the area is deemed to be unsafe, cancel the visit.
- Do not accept any hospitality.

In order to prevent the aggressor detecting a pattern to the employee's movements, the manager and employee should consider:

- alternating the employee's starting and leaving times from work
- alternating the entrance and exits the employee enters and leaves by

The employee should keep a log of anything that appears suspicious and report concerns to their manager and the Police.

TRAINING

Employees who are at risk of violence and harassment need to be aware of the risks that they face and be capable of recognising the potential for danger either to themselves or to others.

The training should include:

- the causes of violent and aggressive behaviour;
- the policy and procedures for dealing with violence;
- safe working practices;
- the skill to defuse potential problems and manage aggression;
- what to do when feeling threatened;
- managing confrontation by using positive interpersonal skills;
- attracting the attention of colleagues;
- how to use security equipment, such as alarms;
- ensuring an escape route;
- how to escape from aggressive clients;
- breakaway techniques may be appropriate for some employees;
- training may need to include advice on when physical restraint is appropriate, acceptable methods of restraint and legal considerations;
- after-incident support and care, including awareness of the impact that incidents can have on employees and others, and of the arrangements for support.

It is important that managers are, and are seen to be, committed to the objective of reducing the risk of violence, even though they themselves may not be exposed to it. Managers should also receive appropriate training which might include:

- understanding violence and how it can develop;
- understanding the benefits of appropriate training and the skills necessary to defuse potential problems;
- understanding the effect that a perceived risk as well as a real risk can have on employee morale and stress levels;
- the role of managers in identifying employees' training needs and implementing the preventive strategy;
- the importance of supporting victims and others who may also be indirectly affected;
- the action to take during and following an event.

AFTER AN INCIDENT

Reporting an incident

Any employee, agency worker, work experience placement etc. who suffers violence including verbal abuse, threats or actual violence in circumstances relating to their work must inform their line manager of the incident as soon as possible. This will enable advice/support to be provided and further action to be taken to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of all employees where further contact with the perpetrator may be necessary.

The incident should be reported in accordance with the councils reporting procedures on the Council violence incident form as soon as possible and in any event within 2 working days of the incident. Wherever possible, the individual concerned should complete the form. Where this is not possible, a representative or the manager can complete the form on the individual's behalf.

Counselling

When there has been a violent or threatening incident, the manager should offer the employee the opportunity to receive debriefing from the Council's Occupational Health Unit. It may be appropriate for the employee to attend a specialist counselling service, for example, if they have suffered sexual harassment or racial abuse. The Occupational Health Unit will be able to advise on this.

All Managers should be alerted to the possibility of an employee experiencing a delayed reaction and that help may be required sometime after a violent or threatening incident.

Legal Assistance

Where there has been an actual assault, management should consider sending a formal letter to the MOP concerned, warning that legal action may be taken and indicating expected behaviour in the future. If necessary legal advice should be sought on the contents of this letter. Where continued threats are made, consideration should be given to further action to protect the employee and prevent reoccurrence of the behaviour e.g. withdrawal or limited access to services, an injunction. Each service should have clear guidelines setting out the criteria to be used if withdrawal of the service is considered

Staff should be encouraged to report any incident of assault sustained at work to the Police.

Where the Police are unable to, or decide not to, act in response to an incident, it may be possible for the Academy to take action on the employee's behalf or assist them to do so in their own name.

Monitoring and Review

It is essential to monitor incidents of violence and threatening behaviour. This will assist in determining the effectiveness of procedures and any control measures implemented as part of the risk assessment process. Managers must also monitor the implementation of control measures to ensure compliance.

Managers should review policies/procedures and control measures where monitoring has shown deficiencies.

Appendix 3

REPORT OF A VIOLENT INCIDENT INVOLVING AN EMPLOYEE

Please use black ink and write clearly. If required, please use an additional sheet of paper.

Employees name

Forename	Surname	Title	Job Title

Date of incident | **Time of Incident**

Exact location of incident

Incident details:

Please provide a full account of the incident:

Category: Assault / Verbal abuse / Threats / Racial / Sexual / Disability / homophobic / Other (please specify)

Description of Injury	First Aid	Doctor	Hospital
	Yes /No	Yes/No	Yes /No

Assailant's details:

Name (If known) **Alias (If known)**
Gender M / F

Address (If known)

Name and address / office location of any witnesses:

Incident reported to? Name: **Job title:** **Date:**	
Employee's signature:	**Date:**

Manager's preliminary response (A manager's investigation report must be completed and dispatched)

Did the incident occur during work time? Yes / No	Police notified: Yes / No Case No:
Warning letter to aggressor: Yes / No	**Debriefing/counselling offered: Yes / No**
Signature:	**Print name:** **Date:**
Job title:	Contact telephone number:

Any further action: