Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School
"Nurturing curiosity and inspiring imagination"



2026-27

Health & Safety Policy

Violence and Aggression Policy

Part 3 of 3

Violence and Aggression in the Workplace

DOCUMENT STATUS

Produced By	Version	Date	Action
Warrington Borough Council	2	22.11.22	Adopted by school's Resources Committee
	3	03.10.23	Adopted by school's Resources Committee
		01.10.24	Reviewed by school's Resources Committee
		20.10.26	Reviewed by school's Resources Committee

Legislation

- The Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977
- The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996

This policy should be read with due regard to the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2018

Review Frequency
Annually

Approval
Governing body free to delegate to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher

WARRINGTON
Borough Council

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND RESILIENCE TEAM
GUIDANCE NOTE (GN) 23

VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION IN THE WORKPLACE

Issued by:

Warrington Borough Council
Families and Wellbeing Directorate
Community Safety and Resilience Team
1 Time Square
Warrington
WA1 2EN

Issued in:

September 2023

Version:

3

Document Control

Description and Purpose

This Violence and Aggression in the Workplace guidance note is intended to provide the procedures for WBC staff to follow in order to comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Record of Amendments

Active date	Review date	Amendment reference	Reasons for Change	Version	Number of pages
February 2019	February 2021	New Document		1	39
January 2022	To be updated with the arrival of new legislation or every three years going forward. (January 2025)	Document updated 2 year review	Updated	2	30
September 2023	To be updated with the arrival of new legislation or every three years	Document updated	Update	3	30

Author	Approved by
J Howard	**T Whitfield & D Watson**
A Wills	**D Watson**

Contact Department	Email	Telephone ext.
Community Safety & Resilience Team (Health & Safety)	Health&safety@warrington.gov.uk	01925 442174

Target audience

All WBC staff	Y	OTHERS							

Relevant legislation (if any)
The Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 **The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999** **The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)** **Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977** **The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996**

Contents		Page no.

1.	Introduction	6
2.	Legislative background	6
3.	Definition of “what is violence at work”	7
4.	Employer’s responsibility	7
5.	Employee’s responsibility	9
6.	How can the risk of violence be managed	9
7.	Risk assessment	11
8.	Dynamic risk assessment	12
9.	Incident reporting and investigation	12
10.	Steps to take after an incident	13
11.	Reporting incidents of verbal abuse and threatening behaviour	14
12.	Information, instruction and training	15
13.	References	17
14.	Further information and contact details	17
Appendix 1	Tips on coping with threats and violence	18
Appendix 2	Schedule of tasks- to assist in developing a violence at work risk assessment	21
Appendix 3	Risk assessment pro forma	23
Appendix 4	Example safe system of work	25
Appendix 5	Abuse, aggression and violence at work incident investigation checklist	27

1. Introduction

1.1 This Guidance Note supports Warrington Borough Council's Health, Safety and Welfare Policy. Directorates may, if appropriate, add to this information sheet with specific guidance and safe systems of work relevant to their service activities.

1.2 Warrington Borough Council (WBC) recognises that some members of staff who have face to face contact with the public, particularly whilst working in the community or in reception areas, are more likely to face aggressive or violent behaviour from members of the public. In these circumstances, there may be an increased risk to situations involving violence, verbal abuse and threatening behaviour.

1.3 Effective managerial action is required to ensure the safety, security and wellbeing of all front line staff. Violence at work should not be tolerated and must be monitored with appropriate actions taken against members of the public who display inappropriate behaviour to WBC employees.

1.4 It is the Council's intention to implement and maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, such preventative measures as are necessary to ensure that the risk of encountering harassment or violence at work are assessed, and appropriately controlled.

2. Legislative background

2.1 Health and safety law applies to risks from violence, just as it does to other risks from work. The main pieces of relevant legislation are:-

2.2 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act (1974)
Employers have a legal duty under this Act to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees.

2.3 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Employers must consider the risks to employees (including the risk of reasonably foreseeable violence); decide how significant these risks are; decide what to do to prevent or control the risks; and develop a clear management plan to achieve this.

2.4 The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
Employers must notify their enforcing authority in the event of an accident at work to any employee resulting in death, specified injury, or incapacity from normal work for seven or more days. This includes any act of non-consensual physical violence done to a person at work.

2.5 Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (a) and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 (b)
Employers must inform, and consult with, employees in good time on matters relating to their health and safety. Employee representatives, either appointed by recognised trade unions under (a) or elected under (b) may make representations to their employer on matters affecting the health and safety of those they represent.

3. Definition of "what is violence at work"

3.1 The Health and Safety Executive's definition of work related violence is:-

'Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work'.

3.1.1 This can include verbal abuse or threats as well as physical attacks. This guidance note explains what you can do to address the issue of work related violence and provide access to a range of information.

3.2 Who is at Risk?

Employees whose job requires them to deal with the public can be at risk from violence. Those at increased risk are those employees who are engaged in:

- Providing a service;
- Have contact with service users;
- Education;
- Cash transactions;
- Work alone or away from a workplace;
- Give advice or training;
- Carry out enforcement duties or inspections;
- Representing the authority.

3.2.1 The above list is not exhaustive, there may be other areas within the authority that have not been listed.

3.3 Even where there is no physical injury, there can still be considerable emotional stress. This can include cyber-aggression through texts, email messages or social networking sites. Threats may indicate a risk of actual injury, while malicious damage to an employee's property can cause distress and fear of future physical attack. People have different perceptions about behaviour they find threatening or offensive. Something which causes distress to one person may simply annoy another; and what one finds threatening may be shrugged off by others. It is important that you treat each reported incident seriously to ensure that everyone is aware of the Council's commitment to reducing "violence at work".

4. Employer's responsibility

4.1 All Managers/Head Teachers have a responsibility to ensure that their staff have been made aware of this guidance note and the newly developed Unacceptable Actions Policy (this Policy has been developed by the Deputy Director of Corporate Services, updated by the Director of Children's Social Care and the Contact Centre Manager) and that they understand their responsibility in reporting any incident of violence or aggression whilst at work. Schools should be able to access this policy via the Human Resources link on the My School Services Site, if you have signed up to their services via a Service Level Agreement.

4.2 Why should you be concerned?

The impacts on your staff could cause:-

- Physical injury;

- Work related stress – which can have long-term effects on health;
- Fear and anxiety;
- Job dissatisfaction and poor performance.

4.2.1 Impacts on your service area/school could be:-

- Lost staff time from injuries and stress;
- Higher staff turnover, leading to increased recruitment and training costs;
- Damage to the reputation of the Council/school;
- Potential compensation claims by staff.

4.3 Managers/Head Teachers should:-

- Treat any reports of work-related violence, threats or abuse seriously and respond to them promptly;
- Record details of the incident where appropriate and give all employees involved in the incident full support during the whole process. You should also respond and consider seriously any suggestions made by staff about how to improve violence prevention and management, and give feedback to staff about their suggestions, including whether it will be taken forward and if not, why not;
- Set a positive example by reporting all incidents of violence and abuse and not tolerating abusive behaviour from customers and members of the public;
- Respond to and, where possible, resolve incidents, ideally before they escalate;
- Monitor incidences of violence and abuse and initiate appropriate action if more measures are needed;
- Where possible, direct staff to appropriate support and advice after an incident has occurred. Encourage other staff members to support their colleagues, including those that might have witnessed the incident. If victims are particularly traumatised by the event, provide support where possible, such as time off work or changes to their tasks; referral to the employee support services. The Employee Support Officer provides a confidential support service to staff who may be experiencing difficulties at home or work. Referral to the Employee Support Officer can be made directly through self-referral or via the persons Line Manager with mutual consent. The Employee Support Officer can be contacted by tel: 01925 442384, or via email jcottrell@warrington.gov.uk (this service is not available to school staff);
- Carry out your own investigation and where required work with the police and offer any assistance needed to help in their enquiries. (An investigation checklist to assist in this process is available in appendix 5 on page 26)

4.4 Managers/Head Teachers have a responsibility to respond to any reports of violence.

4.5 Managers/Head Teachers must be aware of the:-

- Different types of abuse and violence;
- Circumstances in which they are likely to occur through risk assessment;
- WBC incident reporting procedures (further information is included in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 05 Accident, Incident and Ill Health Reporting which is available on the Intranet and the My School Services Site.

4.6 Managers/Head Teachers are responsible for:-

- Completion of risk assessment for dealing with violence at work;
- Responding urgently to any identified risks involving abuse, aggression and violence; ensuring preventative measures are put in place.

- Arranging employee training Working with Aggression, which is available via the WBC Training Team;
- Publicising this Guidance Note with all appropriate staff;
- Investigating incidents thoroughly;
- Supporting employees following an incident;
- Recognising the impact of all types of abuse, aggression and violence;
- Being sensitive to the needs of employees and the risks they face in their work.

4.7 Managers/Head Teachers must ensure that employees are informed about potentially violent customers, service users, members of the public and any measures put in place to protect them. They must decide if:-

- These people should only be seen by a specific trained member of staff;
- Accompanied visits are necessary;
- Visits or meetings to only take place in a specific controlled location.
- These people should only be dealt with by letter or email.

5. Employee's responsibility

5.1 All staff have a personal responsibility for their own safety and behaviour and for ensuring that they comply with this guidance note and any risk assessments and safe systems of work that have been completed by their Line Manager/Head Teacher or Supervisor in relation to the tasks they carry out during their working hours.

5.2 There are a number of things that staff can do to help prevent work- related violence:-

- Be aware of this guidance note and comply with it;
- Offer good customer service and be aware of the customer's needs;
- Recognise the potential for work-related violence and take action to resolve it early on. Staff should take positive action, for example, contact a manager for assistance if you think a customer or member of the public might cause problems;
- Don't accept instances of work–related violence directed towards you or others. Staff should report any instances of violence, threats or abuse, including any details about when it happened, who was involved and any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident;
- Be supportive of colleagues who are victims or witnessed work related violence;
- Suggest additional measures to managers which might help to prevent and manage work-related violence.

5.3 Staff have a responsibility to act in a way that does not incite or increase the likelihood of violence.

6. How can the risk of violence be managed?

6.1 Employers need to consider the potential hazards faced by employees and assess the risks to any person who may be affected by the risk of violence at work. Employers should ensure that measures are in place to control and mitigate or avoid (where possible) such risks.

6.2 There are four key stages to any approach to managing violence:

Stage 1 - Find out if you have a problem;
Stage 2 - Decide what action to take;
Stage 3 - Take action;
Stage 4 - Check what you have done.

6.3 It is important to remember that these four stages are not a one-off set of actions. If stage 4 shows there is still a problem then the process should be repeated again. Stages 1 and 2 are completed by carrying out a risk assessment.

6.4 Stage 1 - Find out if you have a problem

Employers have duties, under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, to assess risks of injury and ill health to which employees and others are exposed at work. Under the law they must also take steps to combat and reduce the risks. The duties cover the reasonably foreseeable risks of violence.

6.5 As a first step, you need to examine carefully those aspects of work which might result in employees and others being exposed to violence. You will then be able to decide whether you need to do more than you currently do to prevent harm. You will need to look at hazards in the work itself, at working practices and procedures, any past incidents and at the physical aspects of your premises, including the security of the building/school.

6.6 Stage 2 – Decide what action to take

Having found out that violence could be a problem for your employees you need to decide what needs to be done. Complete a risk assessment by following the steps in this section and section 7 of this guidance note.

6.7 Identify which employees are at risk - those who have face-to-face contact with the public are normally the most vulnerable. Where appropriate, identify potentially violent people in advance so that the risks from them can be minimised.

6.8 Check existing arrangements, are the precautions already in place adequate or should more be done? Remember it is usually a combination of factors that give rise to violence. Provide employees with appropriate training and information they might need to identify clients with a history of violence or to anticipate factors which might make violence more likely.

6.9 The threat of violence does not stop when the work period has ended. It is good practice to make sure that employees can get home safely. For example where employees are required to work late, employers might help by ensuring a safe parking area is available.

6.10 Employees are likely to be more committed to the measures if they help to design them and put them into practice. A mix of measures often works best. Concentrating on just one aspect of the problem may make things worse in another. Try to take an overall view and balance the risks to your employees against any possible reaction of the public. Remember that an atmosphere that suggests employees are worried about violence can sometimes increase its likelihood.

6.11 Stage 3 – Take Action

Share this guidance note and any completed risk assessments with staff, discuss at a team meeting or the Time to Talk sessions so that all employees. This will help your employees to co-operate with you, know and follow procedures properly and be aware of the need to report verbal or physical incidents.

6.12 Stage 4 – Check what you have done

Check on a regular basis how well your arrangements are working, consulting employees or their representatives as you do so. Keep records of incidents and examine them regularly; they will show what progress you are making and if the problem is changing. If your measures are working well, keep them up. If violence is still a problem, try something else. Go back to Stages 1 and 2 and identify other preventive measures that could work.

7. Risk assessment

7.1 A risk assessment is a careful examination of what could cause harm to people in connection with their work, it is a practical exercise aimed at getting the right control measures in place. A risk assessment alone will not reduce the occurrence of work-related violence, but the actions you take following on from it should do. Your risk assessment will help you develop systems and identify further training needs for staff who may have to deal with work-related violence.

7.2 You should involve staff in the risk assessment process, not only is this a legal requirement, but they will almost certainly have useful information about how the work is done that will make your assessment more effective and realistic.

7.3 The Risk Assessment Process

7.3.1 Step 1: Identify the hazards

Gather information about the hazards in your workplace. For violence, it's helpful to think in terms of risk factors at the same time. A hazard is something that can cause harm: in this case violence at work. Risk factors are aspects of work that make violence more likely.

7.3.2 Step 2: Who might be harmed and how?

Work out whether and how violence, or the fear of violence, could affect staff in your workplace. Think about all the individuals you have in your workplace at any time, this may include receptionists, maintenance officers, shift workers, young workers, front line staff and lone workers. These groups of staff may be exposed to the additional risk of verbal abuse and violence at work, talk to these groups to identify any concerns including environmental factors, identify any previous incidents and why these incidents occurred.

7.3.3 Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Work out what you are already doing, whether your control measures are working properly and if there is anything else you need to do. Make sure you ask your staff for their ideas and feedback. (Remember you may not be able to fully eliminate the risk however you will need to reduce the risks as far as reasonably practicable).

7.3.4 Step 4: Record your findings and implement them

You need to decide who is responsible for any actions in your risk assessment and ensure the control measures are implemented, the risk assessment should be recorded and shared with all relevant members of staff.

7.3.5 Step 5: Review your risk assessment and update if necessary

You should review your risk assessment regularly in case the hazard, risk factors or control measures have changed. You also need to review the effectiveness of any control measures

in place by asking staff and monitoring incident rates. This will make sure the measures are being used properly and are effective.

7.4 Line Managers/Head Teachers and others who are responsible for compiling risk assessments should be aware that there is further information and guidance detailed in the Council's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 04 Risk Assessment which is available via the WBC Training Team, further information and general enquiries relating to the above training course can be made by email: training@warrington.gov.uk.

7.5 Warrington Borough Council has a poster intended to be displayed in reception areas of Warrington Borough Council premises and schools, this poster is a reminder to the public that staff are here to assist them in getting the right advice and support. Acts of verbal abuse and aggressive behaviour towards staff is not a normal part of the job and will not be tolerated.

7.6 The staff verbal abuse poster is available on the Intranet (click here) and schools can access via the My School Services Site. This poster was updated in 2017, please ensure that you are displaying the correct poster.

Please note: that it has been agreed by the Council's Central Health and Safety Committee that this poster should be printed off and displayed in colour in A3 size and no smaller.

8. Dynamic risk assessments

8.1 It is not always possible to identify all the hazards relating to a role, especially where the work place or area is in the community or otherwise outside of the employer's immediate control. In such situations workers and especially lone workers should be trained to undertake a "dynamic" risk assessment at the work location on arrival.

8.2 A dynamic risk assessment is the continuous process of identifying hazards and the risk of them causing harm, and taking steps to avoid or mitigate the risk in rapidly changing circumstances.

8.3 This would cover situations where the actual presence of hazards cannot necessarily be detected in advance such as the influence of alcohol, drugs or the threat posed by animals or other hostile elements. It is vital that in such circumstances workers are empowered to make the decision as to whether or not it is safe to work.

9. Incident reporting and investigation

9.1 Incident reporting is an essential element for preventing violence and aggression. Incident reporting provides documentary evidence for:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of control measures;
- Identifying and modifying those control measures in need of improvement or replacement;
- Supporting the provision of appropriate resources and training;
- Supporting further action such as court orders;
- Reporting to the HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR);

- The evaluation of trends.

9.2 A member of staff who has been the subject of violent/abusive behaviour or damage to personal property must report the incident to their Line Manager/ Head Teacher as soon as is practicable. Staff must report all incidents of violence, even if they are of a minor nature.

9.3 If the violence or aggressive behaviour is of a more serious nature the member of staff should also consider reporting the incident to the police (by calling 101).

9.4 The Line Manger/Head Teacher should ensure the incident is recorded on the appropriate WBC incident report form (HSA2 form) or the near miss form (HSA4 form), the information should then be inputted onto the WBC accident/incident online reporting system which is available on the Intranet or via the My School Services Site for Schools.

9.5 All incidents must be investigated thoroughly by the Line Manager/ Head Teacher. Incident investigations should be carried out as soon as possible after the event, an Abuse, Aggression & Violence at Work Incident Investigation form is available to assist you in this process and can be found in Appendix 5 on Page 32.

9.6 Information from the investigation should be used when carrying out a post incident review of your risk assessment.

10. Steps to take after an incident

Supporting Employees after an Incident

10.1 Employees harmed physically or psychologically by violence may need support. Experience has shown that the immediate care and concern of Line Managers/Head Teachers and colleagues is much appreciated and may limit or prevent any serious long-term effects.

10.2 Post incident procedures:

- First and foremost the affected person/s must be supported;
- Later, but as soon as possible, staff should be encouraged to begin the post – incident procedures.

10.3 These procedures include:

- Completion of the HSA2 incident report and investigation forms;
- Sensitive debriefing of the incident. Staff can sometimes be brought together soon after a violent incident to discuss what happened. The process of debriefing may have two functions to; establish the details of what happened and to provide emotional help;
- Reminding staff they can seek the support and advice of their professional association/trade union.

10.4 Post incident practices: Types of support

10.4.1 The following identifies the types of support/actions which may be required following violent incidents (this list is not exhaustive and not all items will be appropriate in all cases):

- Encourage the employee to seek medical attention or attend hospital;
- Look after the employee's belongings including their vehicle if they leave them behind;
- Contact the relatives or friends of the staff member;

- Acknowledge that the staff member has experienced an extreme event and establish appropriate arrangements to allow them to talk about it including during a meeting where they are encouraged to recount the events from a personal perspective;
- Acknowledge and respect the employee's feelings whether this is anger, fear, resentment or guilt;
- Demonstrate a team/shared concern for the staff members welfare;
- Be aware of any need for 'time out', either away from the scene of the incident or perpetrator involved.

10.5 Employee Support

10.5.1 The effects of violence and aggression can be severe, some people cope more easily than others and some people may experience emotional ill-health, such as post-traumatic stress. Where management support is unable to address the individual's emotional concerns there is the option to seek expert advice from the Councils Employee Support Officer. Managers can refer a member of staff or staff can make a self-referral, or you should consider making a referral to your Occupational Health provider.

10.6 The Employee Support Officer can be contacted by tel: 01925 442384, or via email jcottrell@warrington.gov.uk (Unfortunately this service is not currently available for school staff).

11. Reporting incidents of verbal abuse and threatening behaviour

11.1 Managers/Head Teachers are responsible for:-

- Ensuring that all employees within their service are aware of the need to report incidents of violence at work to their Line Manager/Head Teacher;
- All verbal and physical incidents to employees must be recorded onto the online reporting system by the Line Manager/Head Teacher;
- The Line Manager/Head Teacher will need to discuss the incident with their member of staff to identify the full facts relating to the incident and to identify if further training, support or counselling is required following the incident;
- The employee or the Line Manager/Head Teacher may also want to take further action against the perpetrator.

11.2 This may include:

- The employee reporting the incident to the police, to investigate further;
- The Manager/Head Teacher contacting the perpetrator to discuss unacceptable behaviour;
- The Manager/Head Teacher organising a letter to be sent to the perpetrator outlining unacceptable behaviour along with the actions or restrictions to be taken to protect Council / school employees.

11.3 Managers/Head Teachers must ensure that the incident is fully investigated, that risk assessments are reviewed and that safe systems of work (where required) are updated and shared with all relevant persons. Further information is available in the SOP 05 Accident, Incident & Ill Health Reporting System which is available on the Intranet and the My School Services Site for Schools.

12. Information, instruction and training

12.1 People who deal with customers and clients by telephone may experience aggression and verbal abuse. Verbal abuse (and the fear of abuse) can have a serious impact on an employee's mental wellbeing and can lead to distress and anxiety, and longer term stress related ill health.

12.2 Key areas of good practice

Being aware of the risk and understanding the causes of aggressive behaviour:

- How long the caller is kept waiting?
- Is the call answered in a pleasant and helpful way?
- Do staff have the necessary knowledge of the products or services the council/school provides?
- Are staff fully aware of signs of the caller's emotional state? Keeping calm and assertive at any sign of aggressive behaviour can help to defuse a potentially abusive call.
- Do staff have to stick to a script?
- Do staff have targets to meet?

12.3 Providing training for staff

Training can prevent conflict situations from arising or escalating into violence. Such training should enable staff to recognise and leave situations that they consider unsafe. It is recommended that staff that come into contact with members of the public, clients and visitors should attend the Working with Aggression training course.

- Induction training – to provide comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the services provided by the Council/school;
- Continuous development – working with the customers, dealing with conflict or higher level specific training to deal with aggressive customers and defusing difficult situations;
- Ongoing training to keep up to date with new systems and information.

12.4 Implementing policies and procedures to inform and support staff

- Ensure staff are fully aware of the Councils/school policies, SOPs/GNs, information, instruction and training in dealing with aggressive calls, including how to terminate a call and seek management support;
- Ensure staff are aware of policies on disclosure of information, security, information, health and safety procedures, provision of employee support systems e.g. complaints and reporting procedures and counselling;
- Ensure the setting of targets are achievable and manageable;
- Ensuring that the working environment is safe – adequate temperature, lighting, noise levels, suitable work station/DSE assessments and appropriate equipment is provided to enable staff to carry out their work;
- Ensure that there is the provision for staff to take time out for a break following a difficult telephone call.

12.5 Customer–friendly equipment and systems

- Are there sufficient staffing levels to effectively handle customer calls?
- Is there a front-end messaging system for customers, is it clear and informative?

- Does the system support staff when they have to move from one software programme to the next?

12.6 Most common successful measures

The HSE asked organisations to list the most successful ways of managing and preventing violence to their staff. Please see list identified below: -
(The provision of training and information was predominant)

- Conducting a risk assessment of the tasks carried out by staff was seen as essential. Employers need to find out if there is a problem, decide what action to take, take action and review the action;
- Providing staff with some form of training for personal safety/lone working and violence prevention training had been undertaken by all those that the HSE contacted. Training was provided in house or by an external organisation and could be formal or informal. The key training messages conveyed were: Staff not to go into a situation if they feel at risk.
- The use of conflict resolution of defusing techniques. These include being aware of non-verbal communication; how to behave in a non-confrontational way; the importance of good customer care; being polite and listening to clients or customers;
- Staff to be aware of their surroundings. Be vigilant at all times and be aware of the situation you are in. Be aware of your own actions and how others may perceive you;
- If you feel threatened, make your excuses and leave. Make sure you can leave the premises quickly if you need to.

12.7 Communication

Good communication and sharing of information between employees and with external organisations and other professional bodies where appropriate is seen as essential. This includes the need to:

- Liaise with the police. The police may be able to assist by providing advice on personal safety and related issues; helping with specific visits or incidents; and also providing local knowledge of the area;
- The use of work diaries and information boards to show the location of lone workers during the day was seen as essential;
- The use of an early warning or flagging system, this alerts colleagues about potentially violent clients or problem areas;
- Violence prevention measures that have the full commitment and support of Senior Management.

12.8 Work equipment and environment

- Use of mobile phones and other communication devices;
- Personal alarms;
- Panic alarms in buildings (reception areas), to alert other colleagues who work nearby;
- CCTV in operation and recording facilities.
- Use of the Care call Lone Worker monitoring Service (for more information regarding this service please contact Kathy Long on 01925 442386)

13. References

HSE online: - www.hse.gov.uk

HSE links to:-

Violence at Work – A Guide for Employers

HSE Case Studies (various sectors)

Violence at Work

Legal Requirements

Risk Assessments for Work Related Violence

Dealing with Customers

Managing telephone verbal abuse

Operational Guidance - Work Related Violence

Violence at Work Stats

Other Links:-
Preventing Workplace Harassment and Violence

14. Further information and contact details

Further Health and Safety advice can be obtained by visiting the Intranet click on the link Community Safety & Resilience (Health & Safety) Intranet page

Please note you can also contact the Health and Safety Team via email at health&safety@warrington.gov.uk

Schools can obtain Health and Safety advice by visiting the My School Services Site click on the link My School Services (Health & Safety) site.

If you have any questions or would like further information please contact: -

The Community Safety and Resilience (H&S) team:	Tel: 01925 442174
WBC Training Team:	Email: training@warrington.gov.uk
School Staff Training Section	Tel: 01925 442667 or Tel: 01925 442676
WBC Employee Support Officer	Tel: 01925 442384
Care Call Lone Worker monitoring Scheme	Tel: 01925 442386
Insurance Team - Alison Weir Email: Alison.Weir@warrington.gov.uk	Tel: 01925 442613

Appendix 1

WARRINGTON
Borough Council

Coping with Threats and Violence

For an angry or hostile encounter:-

- Stay calm by taking deep, slow breaths;
- Listen attentively;
- Maintain eye contact;
- Be courteous and patient;
- Keep the situation in your control;
- Maintain a calm, quiet tone of voice;
- Attempt to avoid arguing or making statements that might intensify the individual's angry / hostile demeanour.

For a person shouting, swearing and threatening:-

- Signal a co-worker or supervisor that you need help;
- Have someone call for assistance;
- Do not make calls yourself;
- Avoid statements and /or behaviours that could escalate the individuals threatening statements /behaviour.

For someone with a weapon:-

- Stay calm;
- Maintain eye contact;
- Stall for time;
- Keep talking… but follow instructions of the person with the weapon;
- Don't risk harm to yourself and others;
- Don't ever try to be a hero;
- Never try to grab a weapon;
- Watch for a safe chance to escape, then contact the police if they have not already been contacted.

Tips for dealing with abusive or threatening phone calls:-

You are not expected to tolerate verbal abuse or threats and you are free to discontinue the conversation if the situation persists.

- Try to maintain a calm manner and tone of voice;
- Try to establish the cause of the callers upset;
- Ask the callers name & telephone number and arrange to call back at a later, agreed time;
- Try not to take any remarks personally, they are often aimed at the Council/school;
- Do not retaliate or insult the caller;
- If the caller's abusive or threatening behaviour persists, inform them it is the Council's/schools policy to terminate such calls and hang up;
- Report the incident using the WBC online accident/incident report form HSA2.

Tips for personal safety when visiting clients at home or at other premises:-

- Consider if the meeting could take place at a safer venue;

- Ensure you are aware of and able to follow your Safe Systems of Work;
- Review any sources of information that may be available regarding the client and the premises i.e. local registers, corporate information, police etc.;
- Assess if client information justifies taking extra precautions i.e. taking a colleague or other professional to accompany you on the visit;
- Ensure a responsible person at your base knows where you are visiting or working, who you are visiting, when you are visiting or working and when you expect to finish;
- Agree communication procedures and methods e.g. mobile phone, two-way system, care call lone worker monitoring system, etc.;
- Agree an emergency response in the event of danger or no communication;
- Consider if a personal attack alarm is required;
- Always make appointments for home visits;
- Arrange visits during daylight and working hours;
- Plan travel arrangements and parking if needed, avoid parking or walking in poorly lit areas;
- Visit the bathroom prior to the visit;
- If someone attempts to take something from you let them have it, but throw it onto the floor to distract them, allowing you to escape;
- Be on time for appointments. Contact the client if you are going to be late;
- Do not peer through letterboxes;
- State clearly who you are, where you are from and provide I.D.;
- Clarify who you are talking to;
- Do not enter premises unless invited by a responsible adult;
- Ensure that any family dogs are safe or under control before entering;
- If you feel uneasy do not enter premises or a particular room;
- Only sit if the client intends to do so and choose a seat near an exit;
- Ensure your mobile phone, two-way system or panic alarm is accessible;
- If you start to feel threatened or an incident occurs collect your belongings, stand slowly and move towards the exit. Briefly explain why you are leaving and how the meeting can be re-arranged;
- If someone attempts to prevent you leaving, stay calm, be assertive, talk and ask questions, this may deter or distract the person enough to allow you to escape;
- If you have a personal attack alarm, use it or shout to draw attention and distract the assailant;
- After the visit report back to base at the earliest opportunity or as directed in the safe system of work.

Tips for personal safety when working in isolation from other colleagues:-

- Consider if the activity could be avoided or working alone avoided;
- If working alone, ensure a responsible person at your base knows where and when you are working and when you expect to finish;
- Ensure you are aware of and able to follow your Safe Systems of Work;
- Ensure you are trained and competent to carry out the work;
- Ensure appropriate equipment for the task is available and fit for purpose;
- Ensure all safety devices and emergency stops on equipment are in working order;
- Ensure any relevant personal protective equipment is available, serviceable and compatible;
- Ensure you are aware of procedures in the event of an emergency e.g. fire, abuse, accidents;

- Dress appropriately for the activity and avoid wearing valuable jewellery or items that can be grabbed;
- Ensure an effective communication system is in place;
- Consider if a personal attack alarm system is appropriate;
- Sign off/report back at the end of the activity as directed in the safe system of work.

Training
Providing information, instruction and training may be delivered at section level and include training on local safe systems of working or on a more general basis with generic safety training such as; Lone Working and Personal Safety, Dealing with Customers, Working with Aggression and Dealing with Conflict. Contact the WBC Training Team for further information on these training courses, email: training@warrington.gov.uk

Supervision
Continuous contact with employees identified as at risk from violence or aggression or regular contact at specified times by meetings, phone calls, and visits or communicating electronically.

Mobile phones
Allows communication with staff working alone, who may be at risk from violence or aggression. They may provide reassurance to the 'lone worker' and may be of some use in discouraging an assailant.

Emergency 999 calls can be made and coded messages sent to base office. However they may be difficult to operate under stress and there may be reception constraints which will limit its use in an emergency.

The mobile phone itself may be the cause of violence or aggression if someone attempts to steal it. Senior Managers/Line Managers/Head Teachers should ensure that all employees that have been provided with or use a mobile phone for work are made aware of the Councils Mobile Phone Policy.

Personal attack alarms
The aim of a personal attack alarm is to shock and distract an assailant and attract the attention of others in the vicinity. They may create enough confusion and disorientation to allow an opportunity for escape or draw the attention and assistance of others in the area. They must be readily at hand in order to be useful and in order to summon assistance people must be within earshot. Remember to test the personal attack alarms periodically to ensure they work.

Panic buttons
Concealed alarm buttons linked to security, police or to other colleagues to draw immediate attention or assistance in high-risk situation. Depending on where they are linked to they may provide fast effective response in summoning local assistance or emergency services. They are often used on receptions or in interview rooms and are dependant on having a rapid, effective and available response team.

Lone Worker Monitoring System (Care Call)
The lone worker monitoring system identifies where and whom an individual is visiting and the expected time the visit is going to take, the lone worker can log into the system when lone working and out of the system when they are back in the office or when they have finished a visit to site. The member of the Carecall team will contact the individual if they have not logged out of the system by the expected time. If the individual cannot be contacted the system will automatically start the alert response.

Appendix 2

WARRINGTON
Borough Council

Schedule of tasks to assist in developing a violence at work risk assessment

To be undertaken in accordance with the information in the GN 23 Violence and Aggression in the Workplace

Directorate/Service area:				
Staff affected:	Date of assessment:	Name of assessor:		
Description of work activities where staff might be exposed to verbal or physical violence (e.g. lone working, cash handling, reception areas).				
Is there history of previous incidents?	Yes	No		
If yes, briefly describe the number and type of incidents: -				
State the number of people exposed to the risk of verbal or physical violence	Working location:	Job titles and roles:		
	Yes	No		
Nature of violence:	Physical	Verbal		
Identify the Frequency of exposure:	Constantly	Infrequently	Monthly	
	Weekly	Daily		
	Other (state below)			
Details of Control Measure already in place:				
Initial risk of verbal or physical violence perceived as:	Low	Medium	High	
If risk is medium or high, detail additional control measures required to reduce the risk:				
Following the implementation of additional control measures as specified above the perceived residual risk following risk assessment is:	Low	Medium	High	N/A
Further actions required from re assessment to be detailed in separate risk assessment				
Signed:	Position:	Date:		

Appendix 3 - Example Risk Assessment Pro forma

(Please note that the hazards identified in this risk assessment are a starting point and should be expanded upon to ensure the risk assessment is tailored to your area of work)

RISK ASSESSMENT REFERENCE NUMBER: TITLE OF TASK / ACTIVITY:	
DIRECTORATE:	DATE OF ASSESSMENT:
DEPARTMENT:	REVIEW DATE:
LOCATION:	VERSION NUMBER:
NAME OF ASSESSOR:	SIGNATURE: SIGN
POSITION OF ASSESSOR:	

WARRINGTON Borough Council

SEVERITY (S)		LIKELIHOOD (L)					L x S = RISK RATING SCORE (RR)	
		1. RARE	2. UNLIKELY	3. POSSIBLE	4. VERY LIKELY	5. ALMOST CERTAIN		
1	NO INJURY	1	2	3	4	5	LOW (L) 1-8	NO FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED
2	FIRST AID	2	4	6	8	10	MEDIUM (M) 9-15	FURTHER CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED AND IMPLEMENTED BEFORE PROCEEDING.
3	3 DAY INJURY	3	6	9	12	15		
4	MAJOR INJURY	4	8	12	16	20	HIGH (H) 16-25	DO NOT PROCEED

HAZARD	POTENTIAL HARM	PERSONS AT RISK		EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES	RISK RATING			L/M/H	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED	NEW RISK RATING			RESIDUAL RISK L / M / H
		STAFF	OTHER		L	S	RR			L	S	RR	
What could cause harm	What injuries could occur			Are there any control measures in place to stop people getting hurt	2	3	6	L	No further action required				
Frustration	Verbal /physical abuse, intimidation, physical harm – bruising, cuts fracture.				3	4	12	M	If risk rating is M or H is that acceptable or do you need to reduce it to L. If yes enter further controls here and rescore	2	4	8	L
Provocation													

HAZARD	POTENTIAL HARM	PERSONS AT RISK		EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES	RISK RATING			L/M/H	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED	NEW RISK RATING			RESIDUAL RISK L / M / H
		STAFF	OTHER		L	X S =	RR			L	x S =	RR	
Personality clash													
Stress													
Lack of medication													
Lack of food/water													
Allergic reaction													
Incontinence													
Tiredness													
Sexual awareness													
Relevant pre-existing medical conditions													
Change of routine													
Prejudice													
Substance abuse													
Domestic abuse													
Perceived criticism													
Perceived injustice													

HAZARD	POTENTIAL HARM	PERSONS AT RISK		EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES	RISK RATING			L/M/ H	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED	NEW RISK RATING			RESIDUAL RISK L / M / H
		STAFF	OTHER		L X S = RR					L x S = RR			
Attention needing/seeking													
Mental illness													
Challenge from authority													
Change of adult personnel													

Appendix 4

Safe System of Work
(Example only)

Activity	**Meeting Clients in their Own Home**	
Section	**Home Care**	**Location: various off site**

All staff undertaking this activity must be aware of the following control measures and adopt them when performing this task. If it is not possible to comply with these measures please seek advice from your line manager immediately.

1. Prior to any home visit ensure you are aware of all relevant information regarding the client and their premises. Ask your line manager and colleagues.

2. Plan your visit and inform all parties concerned. Make sure your line manager or a responsible colleague knows when and where you are going and make sure the client is expecting you.

3. Fill in the details of your planned visit in the 'Home Visit Register'- who, where, when and for how long.

4. Know and follow the arrangements for raising the alarm in the event of an emergency

5. Make sure you have available and charged your mobile phone

6. Make sure you have available and working your personal attack alarm

7. Allow adequate time for your journey

8. If, at any time, during the visit you feel threatened or uneasy leave at the earliest opportunity and report to your line manager as soon as possible

9. Do not take chances with your own or any other person's safety.

10. After the visit report to base

11. Report any incidents of violence, abuse or aggression to your line manager and complete an accident/incident report form.

12. If in doubt or if you do not fully understand any of the above ask your Line Manager.

Personal Protective Equipment required: Yes: No:	Mobile phone Personal attack alarm

Issue Date:		Review Date:	
Authorised by:		Ref. No:	Revision No:

Appendix 5

WARRINGTON
Borough Council

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND RESILIENCE TEAM

Checklist for Consideration

Abuse, Aggression & Violence at Work Incident Investigation Checklist

Issued by:

Warrington Borough Council
Families and Wellbeing Directorate
Community Safety and Resilience Team
1 Time Square
Warrington
WA1 2EN

Issued in:

December 2021

Version:

2

Abuse, aggression & Violence at Work Incident Investigation Checklist

Details of the staff member who was verbally abused, threatened or physically abused?
Name:
Job Title:

When did the incident happen?
Date: Time:

Where did the incident happen? (Street name if outside/ building name/exact location in building – floor, room number).

Give a brief description of the incident including any activities that were being carried out at the time. (Include details of anything unusual or different about the working conditions on the day)

What happened? (Circle as appropriate)

Verbal Abuse	Threat of Violence	Physical Violence
Intimidating Behaviour	Damage to Public Property	Damage to Private

Please give details of any injuries received or emotional wellbeing suffered:
Please state if following the incident the person required

First aid	Hospital treatment	counselling	other

If other please state:

Have you completed the Councils online verbal or physical incident report form (HSA2) and has it been submitted? YES/ NO.
If yes what date was it submitted?
If no, then the appropriate on line reporting form should be completed and submitted as soon as possible.

If available give details of the assailant
Name: Sex: MALE / FEMALE
Address:
Was the person under the influence of: ALCOHOL / ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES?
Or appear to be ill or suffering from a mental health illness: YES / NO

Was there anyone else present at the time of the incident?
YES / NO
If yes take their details and ask them for a witness statement.

Were there adequate Safe working procedures in place for the task?
YES/NO
If yes, were they being followed? Give details:

Was there a risk assessment in place for the tasks being carried out? YES/NO
Had the risk assessment been communicated and shared with staff? YES/NO
Was the risk assessment current, up to date? YES/NO
Does the risk assessment need to be reviewed / updated following the incident? YES /NO
If yes, explain what adjustments need to be made to the risk assessment and who will carry out these adjustments.

Did the arrangement in place for carrying out the task influence the incident?
YES/NO
If yes explain how:

Did the area where the incident occurred / workplace layout, or any environmental conditions (including site security) influence the incident?
YES/NO
If yes explain how:

Were the people involved competent and suitably trained? YES/NO
If not explain why:

Insert appropriate training course details and dates attended. (Circle course attended)
Working with the Customer Working with Aggression Personal Safety Lone Working
Other (Please state)

Was any personal protective equipment provided? (If required) YES/NO
List equipment being worn at the time of the incident:

Was it sufficient? YES/NO
Was it being used or worn correctly at the time of the accident? YES /NO
If no explain why:

Was the person able to summon help or assistance during the incident?
YES/NO
If No state why.

Was assistance provided?
YES /NO
If No, please explain what were the reason why no assistance was available?

Was the person able to get to a place of safety?
YES/NO
If No state why.

Were any checks undertaken prior to meeting with a client/customer or visiting site to identify if there had been any previous reported incidents issues of verbal or threatening behavior?
YES/NO
If Yes what action was taken to ensure the staff members' safety?

What initial action has been taken following the incident?
Telephone call made to assailant to advise on any further action
Warning Letter sent to assailant
Marker placed on system against assailant
Police informed and dealing with incident
Other (please state)

Incident Analysis and Conclusion

What were the immediate causes of the incident?

What were the underlying causes of the incident?

What risk control measures should be implemented in the short term?

What risk control measures should be implemented in the long term?

Are there any trends or common causes which suggest the need for further investigation? YES / NO
If yes give details:

Recommendations to be actioned following the investigation

Recommendation 1

Date recommendation to be actioned

Recommendation 2

Date recommendation to be actioned

Recommendation 3

Date recommendation to be actioned

Recommendation 4

Date recommendation to be actioned

Recommendations to be actioned by: