



Personal Safety Policy



The Stour Federation

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the policy is to protect staff during the course of their work Personal Safety Policy and other relevant people who may be affected by the school's operations. Personal safety is a shared responsibility between employer and employee. The Stour Federation is the employer of staff at all schools in the Trust.

The Stour Federation is committed to ensuring that all staff are able to work in a safe environment which, so far as is reasonably practicable, is free from violence or the threat of violence. Violence is unacceptable in whatever form it takes and whatever reasons are cited for it. Customers have responsibilities as well as rights, and one of these is not to abuse staff.

The Stour Federation Partnership does, however, acknowledge that within the spectrum of jobs and tasks undertaken by some staff, the potential for meeting aggressive behaviour and violence exists. All staff concerns for their personal safety shall be treated seriously and responded to appropriately.

The Stour Federation will comply with:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

2. SCOPE

The policy covers all staff including temporary employees, agency staff, consultants and other contracted persons (either contracted directly or through another employer), visitors, volunteers and anyone else who may be affected by The Stour Federation's operations.

This policy does not address issues arising from conflict between members of staff where other Human Resources procedures will apply. The aim of the policy and supporting guides are to increase staff awareness about a range of practical measures to enable them to work safely and to provide information on support available. The policy will also ensure managers fulfil their responsibilities to enable staff to work safely.

3. DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purposes of this policy the following definition of Personal Safety is taken from research undertaken by The Suzy Lamplugh Trust Research Institute:

'An individual's ability to go about their everyday life free from the threat or fear of psychological, emotional or physical harm from others'. This means that personal safety relates specifically to harm caused by other people's behaviour.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers Responsibilities

Managers must carry out specific risk assessments for staff, tasks and work environments and

take remedial action to eliminate or reduce the risks to the lowest practicable level. These must be recorded, in proportion to the risks identified, signed and dated. They must be reviewed and updated at least annually or when circumstances suggest they are no longer valid e.g. after an accident/incident.

Assessments must be shared with staff and others as necessary for example transport, accommodation providers, other users of the building, reception staff and anyone else that could be affected.

Managers must ensure that staff have access to this policy, information and training in line with the needs of the job role.

Report any incidents of verbal and physical abuse including near misses, whether injury is sustained or not, using the Health and Safety Executive Accident/Incident reporting system.

Provide staff that have experienced violence or other abuse (verbal or physical) or they are anxious about their personal safety, with the necessary support.

Where appropriate, provide security devices, equipment, emergency alarms etc. Where there are premises are shared with other occupiers, arrangements and action to take in an emergency situation must be agreed and co-ordinated between all parties.

Employee Responsibilities

Co-operate with managers in identifying foreseeable risks and following procedures and practices whether written or verbal, designed to protect your safety. Participate in any training designed to improve your safety at work.

If you encounter any new hazards during the course of your work that have not been considered previously during the risk assessment process or circumstances have changed, speak with your manager and share information with your colleagues as necessary.

Never knowingly compromise your safety and if you feel uneasy, report any concerns to your manager.

Report any accidents or incidents of verbal and physical abuse including near misses, whether injury is sustained or not, to your manager and complete appropriate forms as soon as possible after an incident has occurred.

5. ARRANGEMENTS

Risk Assessments

The level of detail recorded should be broadly proportionate to the identified risk. Any consideration on the use of personal alarms, panic buttons, CCTV cameras, 'buddy' systems etc. should be incorporated into this process.

A mobile phone can be useful to support local management arrangements as an emergency call can be made, but it will not keep someone safe, there will be areas where a signal is poor, staff may become a target for theft if seen using it and someone needs to be available to answer their call.

Reporting Incidents

The primary consideration will be for the well being of staff and customers and medical attention must be sought immediately, if required.

The manager must be notified as soon as possible after the incident, while details are still fresh, and all incidents must be investigated to see if further control measures are needed to prevent recurrence.

Examples of incidents to be recorded as a physical/verbal assault include incidents that have involved one or more of the following:

- Major injury or one which requires medical assistance from GP or hospital.
- A staff member requires time off work to recover from the injury or incident.
- The police are involved.
- Sexual assault.
- Verbal or physical abuse.
- Racial abuse.
- Serious or persistent threats of physical violence.
- Stalking.
- Firearms are involved.
- Legal action may be taken.

The Health and Safety Executive or Environmental Health need to be notified under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) by Directorate Health and Safety staff.

The manager must decide with the person whether the police should be informed. In the event of fire arms being used as a threat against staff the police must be informed on every occasion. A member of staff has the right to report the incident to the police in the case of assault, even if the manager doesn't support this course of action. The immediate actions of the person assaulted and other staff involved may be crucial to any subsequent prosecution.

Facts must be recorded accurately and immediately. The uncorroborated word alone of a member of staff against the word of another person may not be sufficient evidence to bring a prosecution.

Subject to advice being sought from the police, the following action should be taken:

- Name of person(s) involved and location of incident.
- List names and addresses of witnesses to the incident.
- Obtain a medical statement about injuries sustained.
- Retain any damaged clothing or other evidence.
- Retain any weapon used, if available.
- Do not remove any physical evidence unless it is likely to create a danger to others.

Support to Staff

Irrespective of whether the police are informed, managers should be guided by the person involved as incidents can affect people in different ways.

Action following an incident may include:

- Ascertain whether the person is in shock following an incident.
- Check whether the person wishes to have the support of another member of staff and arrange for them to sit away from the scene of the incident.
- Aim to offer time for debriefing if the person involved needs it, this may take place sometime after the incident.
- Check whether they need to visit their GP or go home early.
- Arrange any staff cover.
- Inform the person how to access staff care/support or agree with them to make contact

on their behalf to look at options for support.

- Agree with the person what further action should be taken against the assailant, which may involve discussions with other agencies.
- Contact with their Trade Union or local safety representative.
- Consult with the Human Resources over pay and benefits and any subsequent claim for industrial injuries or claim against the authority.

Review and Recommendations to Prevent Recurrence

While aggressive or violent behaviour towards staff is unacceptable it may not be possible in all cases to remove the service.

Managers should review each incident and determine whether any action to minimise the risk of subsequent incidents could be taken. This may be discussed with the individual involved in an incident, their Trade Union representative and other members of staff who might be affected.

Recommendations may include:

- A formal review as to whether a service will continue to be provided, which may involve discussions with other agencies.
- The customer being warned as to their future behaviour by nominated members of staff and the likely outcome if there is another incident.
- A formal letter sent to the customer by a manager.
- A review of the care plan or risk assessment (whichever is applicable) as soon as is reasonably practicable or at least within 10 working days.
- Consider what information needs to be shared with others.
- Seek guidance from other professionals e.g. GP or psychiatrist.
- Customers are only being seen in the office by appointment.
- Customers being banned from the premises.
- Communication with customers by telephone or letter.
- Review security of the environment where the incident occurred.
- Co-working with other staff or transferring customers to a different worker for an agreed period of time.
- Check understanding of procedures, safe practice and whether any further training is required for the individual or team members.
- Contact Insurance and Risk Management or Legal Services for advice. The law does not allow the County Council to prosecute on behalf of the individual; the action needs to be taken by the assaulted person.

6. RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessments must be reviewed at least annually or when there is a change in circumstances meaning that they are no longer valid or following an accident or incident.

7. MONITORING

This Personal Safety Policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if an incident has occurred. The Stour Federation will subsequently adopt any updates to the policy.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the Trust without exception. All staff

have responsibility for ensuring that they work within the remit of this policy and in the manner in which they have been trained.

Responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy lies with the CEO, Headteachers/Heads of School, Trust Board and Local Academy Councils.