



Early Learning and Childcare Centre

REDUCTION OF VIOLENCE AT WORK POLICY

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance to the committee, manager and staff on the prevention of violence, threats of violence/aggression and how to deal with such incidents.

Ferryfield aims to minimise the incidents of violence and aggression, but recognises that due to the unpredictable nature of violence, it cannot be totally eliminated. Ferryfield recognises that the aggressor could be the general public, a member of staff or service users.

Definitions

- The Health & Safety Executive defines violence as “Any incident in which a person is verbally abused, threatened or assaulted by a service user, member of the public or a member of staff arising out of the course of their work”
- Physical Assault—“The intentional application of force to the person of another, without lawful justification, resulting in physical injury or personal discomfort.”
- Non-Physical Assault—“The use of inappropriate words or behaviour causing distress and/or constituting harassment.” This includes intimidating abuse, serious or persistent harassment, including racial or sexual harassment, victimisation, or bullying and/or threats with or without weapon.

Factors Which Influence Violent Incidents

It is widely recognised that changes to environment and routine can cause aggressive behaviour, similarly persons whose health has deteriorated can often display aggressive behaviour. The following points, whilst not exhaustive, should be considered when carrying out an assessment:

Physical conditions:

- People may be confused because of an illness, medication, intoxication or substance abuse. This may result in aggression and/or violent situations. In many instances, this may be through fear and frustration.

Information and communication:

- Aggressive outbursts can occur when people are asked for personal information, or need to discuss a highly personal situation for example relating to their parenting skills, substance misuse or a child protection matter.

Attitude and Inter-Personal Skills:

- Aggressors may have a perception that they are not being respected; feel they are being patronised or simply misunderstood.

Environment:

- Physical factors in the environment may contribute to violence and frustration leading to aggression.

Indicators of Violence

The best way to avoid becoming involved in violence is to prevent it happening. Such prevention is not always possible, but greater awareness of causes and early recognition of signs and signals could assist in reducing incidents of violent episodes. Remember violent situations do not just happen – they develop.

The following list of indicators to possible violent behavior is not exhaustive:

- Restless behaviour
- Deliberate provocative conduct
- Facial expression/body language
- Attention seeking
- Reactions to instructions
- Tension
- Threats
- Verbal abuse
- Influence of alcohol
- Possessive behaviour

Police Involvement

Police guidance regarding when to dial 999 is as follows: “An emergency call should be made whenever there is the immediate threat of injury to a person, or damage to or theft of property.”

- It is vitally important that all staff understand this and will take responsibility for the call if necessary.
- Management/supervisory authorisation are absolutely not required before calling the police. Staff should err on the side of caution and “If in doubt, call the police”.
- It is vitally important that the crime/incident number, person making the call and time of call are recorded.

Security Equipment

Several different types can be used to reduce the risk of violence to staff.

- Locks
- Intercoms
- Intruder/personal alarms

Managers actions in the event of Physical or Non-Physical Violence

- Ensure the Police are involved in all incidents of physical assault or non-physical violence.
- Ensure the member of staff assaulted seeks medical attention as soon as possible.
- Ensure witnesses are available to give statements to the police if they have been called. If this is not done the police can only act on the basis of what they have seen, which can result in a less serious charge.
- Ensure a record is kept of everybody present at the time to ensure witnesses are not inadvertently overlooked.
- Ensure all the effects of the incident are well documented, for example treatment received, time off work and any psychological damage.
- Ensure appropriate support is in place for staff affected.

Adopted by the Committee

Date

August 2016