

Frequently Asked Questions

Violence and Aggression at Work

1. Violence and aggression, what is it?

Any incident in which an employee is abused, threatened or assaulted by a member of the public in circumstances arising out of the course of his or her employment. The public will be deemed to include clients, pupils, parents, contractors and colleagues.

2. What is the law?

Under section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 a duty is placed on employers to ensure so far as is reasonable practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees. Under Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees of the risks to which they are exposed whilst they are at work.

It is therefore the responsibility of the managers/head teachers to carry out a risk assessment to determine the degree of risk.

3. Will I receive training?

All employees who have to deal with situations which may become difficult will be trained in how to handle awkward situations if training is deemed appropriate following the risk assessment. The training will be tailored to the specific needs of the group of employees attending and will raise employees' awareness and include how to defuse situations and calm things down, how to avoid getting into these situations in the first instance, recognise the danger signals and what to do if a violent situation occurs etc.

4. What is the reporting procedure?

Any employees who feels that they have experienced an act of aggression, either physical or verbal must report the incident verbally as soon as is

reasonably practicable to their head of service/head teacher or the most senior manager available at the time. This will be followed up by a written statement within 48hrs and forwarded to your manager and directorate Health and Safety officer who will investigate the incident.

5. What do I do if I am threatened or assaulted?

In the event of a physical or verbal assault, employees who suffer shock or injury should obtain immediate medical attention. Where appropriate employees will be referred to a doctor as soon as practicable for a medical report. In certain cases the police may need to be involved.

6. What support is there for me if I am threatened or assaulted?

Employees who have been the victims of physical or verbal incident may need practical information and emotional support. The STRESS LINE retained by the Authority is available to offer this support.

The free phone number for the 'STRESS LINE' is **0800 783 52 73**.

The Occupational Health Section is also available to provide practical information and emotional support.

Any information divulged will remain confidential and no information will be feedback to the council without the employees' permission.

7. What happens if I am off sick as a result of my assault?

Employees who are absent from work due to an injury sustained in the course of your employment are entitled to receive a sickness payment as detailed in the appropriate conditions of service. In exceptional circumstances, directors have discretion to extend an employee's entitlement to occupational sick pay.

8. Do I have to report a violent incident?

All accidents/incidents should be reported to your supervisor/manager, an accident form completed and forwarded to your Directorate Health and Safety Officer and the Corporate Health and Safety Unit.

Under RIDDOR – An accident has been defined as including ‘an act of non-consensual physical violence done to a person at work’. This makes injuries to employees arising from such acts reportable if they fall into one of the categories in under RIDDOR, i.e. results in you being off work for 3 days or more.

RIDDOR 95’ stands for Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, which came into force on 1st April 1996.

RIDDOR 95 requires the reporting of certain work-related accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences. It applies to all work activities, but not to all incidents.

9. Where Can I Get Further Information?

You can get further information from your Directorate Health and Safety Officer, telephone the HSE Infoline on 08701 545500 or you can access the following web sites. You must have external Internet access to view these sites:

- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/violindx.htm>
- Caerphilly County Borough Council Violence at Work Policy

Last updated on 10th January 2006