



Lavenham Pre-School
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Dealing with Abuse, Threats and Violence towards Pre-school Staff.

1. INTRODUCTION

All Lavenham Pre-school staff have a right to expect that the Pre-school is a safe place in which to work and that prompt and appropriate action will be taken on their behalf if they are subjected to abuse, threats or violence by parents and other adults on the premises.

At Lavenham Pre-school any such behaviour against staff will not be tolerated and will be dealt with swiftly and in line with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure all understand their responsibility in following its guidance.

2. RATIONALE

The Lavenham Pre-school Trustees are responsible for the health and safety of the staff of the Pre-school. The Trustees believe that any form of violence, threatening behaviour and abuse against staff is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. A definition of the behaviour which would constitute abusive, threatening or violent can be found in the guidance. Where such behaviour occurs, the Trustees will take reasonable and appropriate action to support their staff.

3. GUIDANCE

3.1 Measures to avoid, prevent and minimise incidents

The Pre-school Manager will undertake the lead role in implementation of the policy and management of record keeping and risk assessments.

If necessary, a risk assessment will be produced identifying the potential hazards, actions to be taken to reduce the risk and monitoring procedures.

All Pre-school staff should consider their own safety and not place themselves at unnecessary risk.

3.2 Action when an incident occurs.

If a member of staff finds themselves in a situation where aggressive, threatening or abusive behaviour is used they should:

Speak calmly and, without raising the voice, asking the person to refrain and warn them that they will be asked to leave the premises if they do not behave in an acceptable manner.

Be assertive but not aggressive.

Be polite but firm.

Seek assistance from the Pre-school Manager or Deputy.

Think about an escape route should the need arise.

Walk away.

Call the police. Use 999 if:

- There is danger to life
- Likelihood of violence
- Assault is or believed to be in progress
- Offender is on the premises
- Offence has just occurred and arrest is likely

In non urgent cases call the Force Operations Room 101

4. REPORTING AND RECORDING INCIDENTS

All incidents must be reported and recorded so that the Pre-school can meet its statutory duties in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act and Regulations. It also enables evidence to be collected that may be required at a later date by insurers or if proceedings are brought. They will also be used internally to inform future policy and risk assessments.

The Pre-school would expect all cases of assault, and all but the most minor of other incidents, to be regarded as serious matters which should be reported to the Committee and followed up with due care, attention and rigour including reporting to the police, if necessary.

5. ACTION FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT

All parties involved should take into account the needs, views, feelings and wishes of the victim at every stage. As a Pre-school, we will ensure that sympathetic and practical help, support and counselling are made available to any victim both at the time of the incident and subsequently.

Support can be obtained from

- The Pre-school Manager, Deputy and/or a colleague
- Victim support or LA legal services will provide support when giving evidence in court

If necessary, the Pre-school will exercise its right to ban parents and others from the Pre-school premises if they behave unreasonably. The Pre-school will use the model letters contained in the appendix. Subsequent breaches may lead to prosecution by the police or legal services.

Throughout this process full records will be kept of each incident including details of any witnesses so evidence can be provided to the court.

Appendix A	Carrying Out A Risk Assessment Guidelines
Appendix B	Form ATV and Incident Report form
Appendix C	Model Letters
Appendix D	LEA Contact Details

▪ This policy was adopted by Lavenham Preschool *(name of provider)*

On November 2023 *(date)*

Date to be reviewed November 2024 *(date)*

Signed on behalf of the provider



Name of signatory Roy Mawford

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) Chair of Trustees

CARRYING OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT

There are steps which Pre-schools can take, by way of precautionary and preventative action, which help to avoid, prevent, minimise or mitigate incidents where staff might be subjected to abuse, threats and violence.

The following is a suggested aid to the process of risk assessment and planning which is based on an audit tool proposed by the National Task Force on Violence Against Social Care Staff.

It comprises **Six Steps**

Step One: Look for Hazards

- What actually happens to your staff when they are at work?

Look at your record of incidents. How do you know they reflect the true situation?

How do you know your instructions and procedures are being followed? What do your staff and their representatives tell you? You may think violence is not a problem at your workplace: their views may be very different.

- What else do you need to know?
- What are the activities which attract a high risk of violence? e.g.: refusing an appointment; delivering unwelcome information; meeting a parent following an incident involving their child (particularly if the parent is known to be aggressive and could therefore constitute a hazard).

Step Two: Identify who might be harmed and how

- Which of your staff might be affected, including temporary staff?
- What about administrative staff, such as receptionists? What about the caretaking, cleaning and catering staff who may work alone, very early or late, as well as in isolated locations within the Pre-school premises?
- Consider the level of training and skills required in the context of staff's relative vulnerability to assaults. When, how and where could their work bring them into contact with trespassers and potentially violent people? Consider not just physical assault; continued exposure to verbal and racial abuse or threats can create high levels of stress and anxiety, reduce morale and lead to sickness absence.

Step Three: Evaluate the risks – Check out your precautions

- Consider both the likelihood and the severity of harm which could be

caused. The likelihood is, in absolute terms, probably going to be quite small. However, there may be certain potential dangers that you can predict with a degree of certainty and the likelihood of a serious incident in these circumstances is therefore relatively high.

- Your personal experience or knowledge of particular families or individuals may help you to prepare in advance for potentially difficult circumstances. It is important that such knowledge is shared, as appropriate, with colleagues so that the whole Pre-school may be prepared and take suitable precautions.
- You need to check your existing precautions are adequate. When did you last do this? What are they? What else do you need to do?
- **Prioritise** the risks by reference to their potential seriousness and by the numbers of staff likely to be affected by them.

Step Four: Minimise the risks

- The most effective precaution is to avoid risks altogether. This is not always possible so consider the steps which can be taken to minimise the risk.
- Consider your findings so far and consider if there are any changes which could usefully be made to:
 - the jobs people do
 - the way they have to work. What protection do you provide for staff in isolated and / or vulnerable settings?
 - the way jobs are done and the way visitors to the school are received and treated
 - the workplace, including layout and means of calling assistance
 - the information given to staff and the way it is communicated. Are **all** staff included (e.g. uniformly or on a need-to-know basis)?
 - your response to incidents and procedures for dealing with them
 - your incident recording system. Are all staff aware of the importance of reporting and recording incidents and how to do it?
 - consider training. Is it directed at the risks and at relevant staff?

Step Five: Review and revise

- It is important to check that your risk assessment remains valid at regular intervals and in the light of incidents that occur
- Ensure that arrangements are in place:
 - to carry out annual reviews
 - to re-assess your policy and procedures after a significant incident
 - to involve others in the review process
 - to monitor that written procedures are being followed, modified and extended as and when appropriate

Step Six: Draw up an action plan

Review all the findings from Steps One to Five and identify the points for action

- Prepare an action plan which will address these points for action in terms of:
 - priorities
 - persons responsible

- timescales
- resources
- monitoring
- evaluation
- review

Appendix B

LAVENHAM PRE-SCHOOL REPORT FORM

Date incident took place:		Time:			
Person Reporting the Incident		Job Title:			
Nature of the incident:	Parental concern		Security		Other
	Bullying		Health & Safety		Please specify
Details of the incident					
Actions taken following the incident					
Further Action Required					

Signature Print Name

Letter 3 (b): Lifting a Temporary Ban

To be sent by the Headteacher or Area Education Manager (and amended accordingly)

RECORDED DELIVERY

Dear

On (insert date) I wrote to you informing you that I had temporarily withdrawn permission for you to come onto the premises of (insert name) School. To enable me to determine whether to confirm this decision for a longer period, I gave you the opportunity to let me have your written comments on this incident by (insert date).

I have not received a written response from you / I have now a received a letter from you dated (insert date), the contents of which I have noted. (delete either sentence as appropriate).

In the circumstances, I have decided that it is not necessary to confirm the decision, and I am therefore restoring to you the permission to come onto the school premises, with immediate effect.

Nevertheless, I remain very concerned at the incident which occurred on (insert date), and I must warn you that if there is any repetition of your behaviour on that occasion, I shall not hesitate to withdraw permission for you to come onto the premises again.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher / Area Education Manager