Violence in the education sector

Education Service Advisory Committee


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This is guidance prepared, in consultation with HSE, by the Education Service Advisory Committee which was appointed by the Health and Safety Commission as part of its formal advisory structures. The guidance represents what is considered to be good practice by the members of the Committee. It has been agreed by the Commission. Following this guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow this guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance as illustrating good practice.

INTRODUCTION

1

The Education Service Advisory Committee (ESAC) of the Health and Safety Commission considers and advises on problems which may cause harm to the health and safety of people working in the education sector, and others who may be affected.

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Employees and volunteers in the education sector may be at risk of violence from pupils and their parents, and from other visitors; many of them consider violence at work to be one of the most serious problems that they face. As well as causing injury and distress, violence may harm the education process and cost money through absenteeism, higher insurance...
premiums and compensation payments.

Incidents involving intruders in schools in recent years have put staff, pupils and visitors at risk. Tragic events such as those at Dunblane Primary School in March 1996, and the subsequent report of Lord Cullen's Public Inquiry,¹ have emphasised that employers need to consider the protection of the school population as a whole from intruders. This publication provides guidance to employers in the context of health and safety law.

There is no simple solution to violence, and it is not the role of employers or staff to solve fundamental problems of violence in society. However, there is much that organisations can do to avoid and reduce the risk of verbal or physical assault in the workplace, where risk assessment shows that such assaults are foreseeable.

This guidance replaces and updates Violence to staff in the education sector published in 1990. It retains an emphasis on schools, but the general principles outlined are applicable throughout the education sector. This publication does not address the issue of pupil on pupil violence, other than where this creates a risk to staff; nor does it consider the particular problems experienced by high-security research departments within universities, although some of the general advice given may be relevant.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS GUIDANCE?

Employers such as local education authorities (LEAs), governors of colleges, grant-maintained, voluntary aided or independent schools; and senior managers such as Directors of Education:

This guidance is for you. You are responsible for ensuring risks are assessed, and for devising and implementing policies and strategies for managing the risks which are identified. This includes any risks from violent incidents in the workplace. It is important that you are seen to be actively committed and to support measures to control the risk. You are also responsible for monitoring their success or failure and introducing new measures or revising strategies as a result of your findings.

School or college managers such as headteachers, principals and departmental heads:

This guidance is for you. You are responsible for implementing the health and safety policy and strategy. You therefore need to know what these expect from you, in general terms and in relation to any risks from violence. This guidance will help you to ensure that local management systems and training programmes take account of the
issue of violence and its impact on staff, and that there is an upward flow of information to senior policy makers.

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Others who can influence policies and practice, including anyone who might have a role in developing personnel, safety or security policies and procedures; for example governors of LEA schools, personnel staff, and health and safety or security advisers.

Your responsibilities depend on your role. For example, although employers have the legal responsibility for health and safety management, they may arrange for some or all of the work to be done at the level of an individual school or college. You may be involved in such work and find this guidance helpful.

VIOLENCE

What is violence?

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Most people accept that physical force against an individual is an example of violence, but violence can take other forms, including verbal abuse and threats (with or without a weapon). HSE defines work-related violence as:

‘any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work’.

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Even where there is no physical injury, there can still be considerable emotional stress. 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 your commitment.

An outline of the problem

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Awareness of violence at work, and of the need for preventive measures, has increased greatly over the last few years. There have been some well-publicised cases of teachers and lecturers who have suffered serious injury.

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Some employers have developed systems for reporting acts of violence or aggression
against staff, and some teaching unions have commissioned surveys of their members. These sources of information have produced figures showing significant levels of threatening behaviour and physical violence suffered by school staff, often at the hands of pupils. They have also highlighted the level of concern felt by staff about actual and potential violence in schools and colleges.

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A survey was commissioned by Lord Elton’s Committee of Enquiry into Discipline in Schools, in 1989. This survey, which examined teachers’ perceptions of and concerns about discipline, found that of approximately 2500 secondary teachers surveyed during one week, 15% (one in seven) had suffered verbal abuse, and overall about 0.5% (one in 200) had experienced incidents of a clearly violent nature.

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Teaching staff in mainstream schools were the principal subjects of Elton’s enquiries, but the risk of violence exists also for many other groups of workers in the education sector. Unfortunately, there is little or no statistical information available on these other groups, although research into the number and type of violent incidents in schools is being carried out. Improved data will be available in future from reports sent to HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). The definition of ‘accident’ in these Regulations includes ‘an act of non-consensual physical violence done to a person at work’.

15

There have been incidents where staff and pupils have received serious and, in some cases, fatal injuries, following an attack by an intruder. Lord Cullen’s report The public inquiry into the shootings at Dunblane Primary School on 13 March 1996 emphasised the need for employers to prepare a safety strategy for the protection of everyone in school against violence.

Who might be at risk?

16

A wide variety of services and jobs are performed in education, some of which can give rise to an increased risk of violence. Examples are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Activities (and those who perform them) associated with risk of violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caretaking, looking after premises</td>
<td>Site supervisors (eg caretakers), porters, security staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working alone</td>
<td>Cleaning staff, library staff, headteachers, principals, teachers, lecturers, site supervisors, maintenance and administrative staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The list in Table 1 is by no means complete, and some staff may face risks from more than one source because they are involved in a variety of tasks. You will need to research and assess the extent of the risk, taking account of the views of staff, as the first step in deciding whether you need an action plan to combat violence.

**HOW CAN THE RISK OF VIOLENCE BE MANAGED?**

18

There are four key parts to any approach to managing violence:

- find out if you have a problem;
- decide what action to take;
- take action;
- check what you have done.

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If you are going to manage risks of violence successfully you need to show that there is commitment at the top of the organisation. This is best expressed in a clear policy statement, including a statement of your views and the actions you propose taking to tackle violence at work. This will show that you consider the risk of violence to be a serious matter. The statement will need, in particular, to give clear commitments to supporting staff who have been subject to violence and to taking positive action to minimise identified risks.
Statement of employer’s intent

This may include, for example:

- a commitment to introduce measures for reducing the risk of violence at work;

- a declaration of full support for people who have been assaulted or who have suffered verbal abuse;

- encouragement for employees and pupils to use the reporting procedures and reassurance that employees who report incidents will not be viewed as ‘failures’;

- confirmation that all reported incidents of violence will be investigated and all assaults will be reported, by a senior manager, to the police (except, in minor cases, where the victim objects);

- an offer of support following incidents, including situations in which the prosecuting authorities do not proceed, eg by providing legal advice and representation;

- a commitment to send a letter, where appropriate, to people who make threats or verbally abuse employees, warning them that legal action may be taken.

Find out if you have a problem

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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. 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, and at the physical aspects of your premises, including their security.

ASSESSING THE RISK

Employers need to:

- **decide if there is a problem:** You should identify any instances or situations where people could be harmed. Talk to staff; they may have noticed things which are not immediately obvious. You could use your accident and incident reports to find out about incidents of violence, and a premises security survey could also give useful information. Published information on violence at work will also help;

- **decide who might be harmed, and how:** Think about people who may not be in the workplace all the time, for example maintenance staff. Do you have new staff who may be at greater risk because they do not know what to do in difficult situations? Do you have staff who work alone in a
vulnerable area? Are contractors or pupils vulnerable?

- **evaluate the risks and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done:** Decide whether the risk is significant, and if so whether you have taken precautions to reduce the risk or control it so that harm is unlikely. Precautions may include changes to working practices or providing staff with adequate information, instruction and training. Whatever you do, you will need to decide whether precautions reduce the risk as far as reasonably practicable;

- **record your findings:** You must record the significant findings of your assessment. This includes how people could come to harm and your most important conclusions about reducing the risk;

- **review your assessment from time to time and revise it if necessary:** If you bring in new procedures which could lead to a new and significant risk you must review and revise your assessment. It is good practice to review your assessment from time to time anyway.

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Table 1 gave examples of activities and jobs where there may be a risk of violence. Other activities, jobs or work settings may also offer potential for violence, so you need to consult staff at all levels to find out where problems may lie (you may also need to include contractors’ staff, such as cleaners and caterers). They may have first-hand knowledge or experience which indicates where there is potential for a violent incident.

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If you have trade union safety representatives, you will find it helpful to consult them. Their training and experience can make a valuable input, for example in deciding what data should be collected and how this can best be done. Where employees are not represented by trade union health and safety representatives you may still need to consult them or their elected ‘representative of employee safety’. Appendix 3 summarises the legal requirements on consultation with employees.

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As part of your assessment, you need to consider the risk from intruders to employees, pupils and visitors. This can be done by carrying out a security survey which takes into account the level of crime in the area, the design of the buildings and any existing security measures. Detailed guidance on how to carry out a security survey is given in the DfEE booklet *Improving security in schools.*

24

Helpful information may be available from trade unions or other employers with experience of managing risks from violence. Local police crime prevention officers can also help. The information you gather from such sources should help focus your attention on areas where potential for violence is greatest in terms of both the severity of incident and the numbers affected, so that resources are directed to areas where they are needed the most.

**Decide what action to take**
To be effective, measures for dealing with violence at work need to be based on proper analysis of the problems and careful thought about the alternative strategies available. There are no ready-made solutions; it is likely that it will take time, careful planning, and a combination of approaches to achieve the objectives.

Issues to consider include:

- the physical aspects of premises;
- working practices and patterns;
- staff training;
- pooling of information; and
- contact with the police.

**Physical aspects**

The general design and physical environment of workplace buildings can sometimes be improved to reduce the likelihood of violent incidents.

An easily identifiable and accessible reception area, which allows office staff to receive visitors, direct them to their destinations, answer queries etc, can help reduce the numbers of unauthorised visitors wandering around the school/college. Think about:

- location: preferably close to the main entrance;
- signs: to be effective, signs giving directions or instructions should be clear and unambiguous, appropriately positioned, and there need to be enough of them;
- appearance: ideally a reception area will have good lighting, subdued colouring, robust furniture and perhaps some reading material for visitors who may have to wait for attention;
- ease of contact with colleagues: it is important for reception staff working alone to be able to summon assistance;
- access control, eg ‘visitor’ badges: everyone, including parents and students, needs to know about arrangements for identifying visitors.

Where there is no reception area, which is the situation in many primary schools, locating the school office near to the entrance will help office staff see anyone entering the building.
Other examples of building design that can help to reduce the risk of violence include:

- ensuring that any landscaping does not act as a screen for potential intruders;
- avoiding potential missiles on school/college grounds, eg pathways of loose pebbles, detachable stones or paving slabs;
- ensuring prompt repair of minor damage and the removal of graffiti - the level of care for the working environment can affect the standard of pupils’ behaviour;\(^2\), \(^3\)
- building design that combines durability and ease of maintenance avoids circulation bottlenecks and provides good sightlines for the supervision of pupils.

**Security**

In some cases your risk assessment may show that intruders create risks to people. The problems of property theft and damage, however, are not within the scope of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

The report of the Working Group on School Security,\(^4\) set up in December 1995 following the murder of a headteacher, recommended that schools should continue to review their security arrangements. Information obtained from a security survey of the premises will help identify areas where improvements can be made. Possible security measures include:

- restricting public access to the school or college grounds;
- external lighting;
- restricting the number of entrance/exit points (while retaining emergency exits);
- erecting high-level perimeter fencing;
- installing entry control or surveillance systems.

The need for such measures will depend on the assessment of the risks at individual schools and colleges. Security systems can help to prevent or deter intruders, but before you install this type of equipment, consider whether it is appropriate to the risk. Factors to consider when selecting any equipment include its ease of use by staff, the need for emergency access or escape and the level of crime in the area.
You may need to consider also how staff could get help if an incident occurred, particularly where there are outlying buildings. Panic buttons, telephones and personal alarms may help, as could closed-circuit television; but it is important to remember that schools vary greatly: what is appropriate for one school or college may be inappropriate for another. Risk assessment should take individual situations into account when identifying which measures are reasonably practicable.

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You need to train staff to operate any equipment and to respond to alarms appropriately; they may need regular practice in operating security equipment so that they remember how to use it in an emergency. Make sure your procedures do not put them at additional risk, for example by responding alone at night to a burglar alarm. Also remember that any temporary staff may need to be informed about security systems.

35

Local crime prevention officers will be able to provide information on the level of crime in your area. They will also be able to give advice on security arrangements. Some have specialist knowledge in ‘designing-out’ crime at the drawing board stage and are known as ‘architectural liaison officers’.

36

More information and ideas on security systems and on many aspects of school building design, including security lighting, graffiti removal and vandalism, are available in guidance produced by DfEE. 3,5-8

Working practices and patterns

37

It has been mentioned that particular activities or jobs within an organisation can create the potential for violence (see Table 1). Sometimes activities can be altered so that they are carried out in ways which reduce the risks. For example, staff who work in buildings remote from the main occupied areas, or who work at night may be alone and vulnerable to attack by intruders. They include cleaning staff and caretakers or site supervisors. Working in pairs, and providing a means of calling for help might reduce the risk.

38

Where activities or jobs cannot be altered or adapted, specific precautions or techniques may help reduce risks. For example, there are ways of handling angry visitors which can help to defuse a confrontational situation and avoid violence. These include:

- avoiding confrontation in front of an audience, particularly groups of pupils: the fewer the people involved in an incident, the easier it is for the aggressor to back down without losing face;
- staying calm, speaking slowly so as not to be drawn into heated argument, giving
Training in interpersonal skills and how to defuse difficult situations will give staff confidence in using these strategies.

Some staff are required to visit people in their homes outside normal working hours. This may involve travelling to areas where violent incidents have been known to occur. The visit may be to an anxious, aggressive person who could act violently or in a threatening manner. Precautions could include:

- avoiding home visits, for example by arranging a mutually convenient meeting place;
- avoiding evening visits wherever possible;
- checking records beforehand to see whether the person, or someone else in the household, is known to be potentially violent;
- visiting in pairs;
- carrying a personal alarm and mobile phone - employers could keep a pool of this type of equipment for use by visiting staff when necessary;
- leaving an itinerary of the visitor’s movements with a responsible contact; and
- periodic reporting to base or to a responsible contact.

The Report of the DHSS Advisory Committee on Violence to Staff (Skelmersdale Report) includes a checklist on home visiting. It is reproduced as Appendix 2.

Violence directed at school staff often stems from attempts to separate pupils during playground fights. If your risk assessment shows this to be a problem you should develop clear guidelines on whether, and how, intervention should be attempted. Much will depend on the extent of the risk in the circumstances; the age of the pupils involved will be one important consideration. Staff also need to understand what they are allowed to do under education and other legislation in situations where it is essential to restrain pupils.
Staff training

Staff who may be exposed to violence need to be aware of the risks they face and be capable of recognising the potential for danger either to themselves or to others within the school. Remember, it is not only teaching staff who are involved - other groups which might be affected include administrative staff, lunchtime supervisors, cleaning and maintenance staff, technicians and caretakers. The staff training programme could include:

- the causes of violent and aggressive behaviour;
- the policy and procedures for dealing with violence;
- safe working practices;
- what to do when feeling threatened with violence;
  - managing confrontation by using positive interpersonal skills;
  - attracting the attention of colleagues;
  - how to use security equipment such as alarms;
- ensuring an escape route;
- how to escape from aggressive people;
  - breakaway techniques may be particularly appropriate for staff in special schools for pupils with challenging behaviour. Training should include advice on when physical restraint is appropriate, acceptable methods of restraint and legal considerations.
- after-incident support and care, including awareness of the impact that violent events can have on staff and others, and of the arrangements for support.

It is important that line managers are, and are seen to be, committed to the objective of reducing the risk of violence, even though they themselves may not be exposed to it. ESAC strongly recommends that managers also receive appropriate training, which might include:

- understanding violence and how it can develop;
- understanding the effect that a perceived risk as well as a real risk can have on staff morale and stress levels;
- the role of managers in identifying staff training needs and implementing the preventive strategy;
- the importance of supporting victims of violence; and
- the action to take during and following a violent incident.
Pooling of information

45

You may have found out from others or you may already know that some of your pupils, students, or their relatives, are potentially violent or have aggressive tendencies. For example, youth workers may know that a young person attending a youth centre is aggressive or comes from a family where there is a history of violence.

46

There may be occasions when sharing such information could help to prevent violence. This is a sensitive area however; the question of confidentiality and the need to avoid ‘labelling’ should be carefully and fully discussed with the relevant professionals and trade unions. Nevertheless, relevant factual information can and should be recorded and shared.

47

Schools need to observe restrictions on the disclosure of information on pupils, as set out in The Education (School Records) Regulations 1989.

The role of the police

48

It is useful to develop and maintain good links with the local police because they are likely to be called on for help during incidents involving violence. Establishing these links will help to develop an understanding of each other’s working methods, responsibilities and constraints. Internal guidance on violence prepared for employees could include information on the powers and duties of the police, and guidelines on circumstances when the police should be called. DfEE is producing guidance for schools and the police on how they can best work together to deal with troublemakers in and around schools.

49

Staff morale and confidence can be improved if they see that there is a genuine commitment on the part of employers and the authorities to pursue prosecution in cases of assault.

50

Crime prevention officers will on request provide information on local crime prevention initiatives such as ‘Schoolwatch’ schemes, and advise on the security of buildings. They can also put you in touch with the architectural liaison officer who will advise on building design.

Take action
51

Some risk-reduction measures are inexpensive and require only minor changes to existing work practices; they can be put into effect immediately. Others may take longer to implement because of the need for careful planning. An action plan, including a schedule of time-scales, will help you to monitor progress and will give your staff confidence that positive action is being taken.

52

In drawing up an action plan you need to consider:

- priorities for the provision and maintenance of risk-control measures such as training, building alterations, alarm systems;
- the standards of training required by different groups of staff;
- responsibilities for implementing change and how those with responsibilities are to be held accountable;
- design standards for buildings, alarm systems etc.;
- objectives, and targets for their achievement within specific time periods; and
- your arrangements for liaison with contractors - they will need to know your rules for getting access to the premises, out-of-hours working etc.

53

You must consult your employees before making any changes that may affect their health and safety (see Appendix 3).

Check what you have done

54

It is important that you monitor the effects of your approach to controlling violence to find out whether it is working. You can then identify strategies that are ineffective, or which have unforeseen consequences, and modify or replace them. Active monitoring involves checking that systems and procedures are working without waiting until something goes wrong. It can be carried out by designated managers, by safety committees or by special joint management-employee committees. Reactive monitoring, which involves looking at incidents, helps everyone to learn from the experience. It depends on an effective system of reporting and recording incidents of violence.

55

Monitoring is effective only if all those who are responsible for carrying it out understand what is expected of them. The details of what is to be monitored, by whom and how often, need to be made explicit.
Reporting and recording incidents

56
You will already be keeping records of serious incidents and any accidents through which staff are injured as part of your legal duties under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). The definition of ‘accident’ in the Regulations includes some acts of physical violence done to a person at work. These must be reported to HSE on an HSE report form (F2508) in the same way as other accidents, if the employee:

- dies; or
- suffers major injuries as defined in RIDDOR; or
- is prevented from doing his or her normal work for more than three days.

More detailed information on RIDDOR is provided in HSE’s guide to the Regulations.10

57
You will find it helpful to record and analyse information on incidents which are not reportable to HSE, as well as those which are. Data on all violent incidents, and information about suspicious people or unusual events, will help you to assess risks and identify any areas or activities involving greater than average risk. Simple records of minor incidents can help you detect changing patterns of behaviour that may predict and so help to prevent problems in the future.

58
Information about more serious incidents will need to contain sufficient detail about all the relevant factors if it is to help you devise appropriate preventive strategies and, subsequently, monitor whether and to what extent they are effective. Such detailed information includes:

- the context: where the incident occurred, time of day;
- the activity at the time of the incident;
- details of any witnesses;
- details of the victim and assailant, and their relationship;
- possible motive;
- the outcome, eg emotional disturbance, physical injury, fatal, other long-term emotional/disabling impacts (absence from work);
- whether reporting procedures were followed, including where necessary to outside authorities, eg the police and HSE;
- whether any preventive measures, already in place, helped;
suggestions about what else could be done to prevent a recurrence.

Appendix 1 gives guidance on incident analysis.

59

It is important that you encourage staff and students to report all incidents if a true picture of their nature and frequency is to be built. Some staff, including teachers, may be reluctant to report incidents such as verbal abuse for fear that it will reflect on their professional ability to manage classes. For this reason, it is important that your statement of intent makes it clear that reported incidents are not seen as ‘failures’.

60

Investigations of reported incidents can provide useful information with which to assess how successful particular measures have been, whether they need to be reviewed, or whether new measures need to be introduced. Where a preventive strategy has been introduced in one section/department but not in another, a comparison can be made to judge its effectiveness.

61

Staff morale and confidence will be boosted if monitoring shows that measures are working. Staff will be encouraged if you take positive action to rethink the problem and try other measures, where monitoring shows that your initial strategy has not worked well.

WHAT ABOUT THE VICTIMS?

62

Providing support for victims of violence forms a vital part of a good overall policy on preventing and controlling violence at work. Staff are reassured to know that they will receive understanding, sympathetic and sensitive treatment from their supervisors or managers should a violent incident occur. Support measures help to minimise the impact on victims, and help them to recover from the incident as soon as possible.

63

Support might include:

- talking about the incident, either individually or as a group, with a designated member of staff who understands the likely impact. Some people may require specialist counselling by an independent person; this can be arranged through a number of agencies, including trade unions and other professional bodies;
- time off from work, although this may need to be balanced with encouraging a return to ‘normality’;
- legal advice and help in taking proceedings against an assailant and obtaining compensation for injuries or damage to property;
Whatever help is given, it needs to include both emotional support and practical information and help. Victims of violence need to be assured that they can express anxiety without fear of criticism. Learning from the feedback after an incident is often helpful in avoiding a recurrence.

Follow-up action after a period of time will help to ensure that victims of violence have fully recovered and do not require any additional help. Information on the progress of any police action could also be given.

All these procedures will be more effective if they operate so that the support is offered automatically, without the individual having to request it.

Further help may be available from the victim support schemes that operate in many areas. Your local police station can direct you to the scheme nearest to you. Alternatively, you can contact them at the following addresses:

**England:**

Victim Support
National Office
Cranmer House
39 Brixton Rd
London SW9 6DZ
Tel: 020 7735 9166

**Scotland:**

Victim Support Scotland
15-23 Hardwell Close
Edinburgh EH8 9RY
Tel: 0131 668 4486

**Wales:**

Victim Support
National Office
1A Victoria Park Road West
Victoria Park
**APPENDIX 1: ANALYSIS OF REPORTS**

1 When a violent incident reporting system is set up, arrangements need to be made to analyse the data produced so that it can be used effectively in designing preventive strategies. There are a number of different ways that information on violence can be classified to give a picture of problem areas. ESAC suggests the following breakdown which may be helpful for employers.

**ESAC system for classifying data on violence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel involved</th>
<th>Number of reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal/Head/Deputy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/Lecturer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential social worker</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Researcher/Technician</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor/Manager</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative staff/Bursar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site supervisor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security staff</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth worker</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Education welfare officer</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nursery nurse</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent helper</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom/Nursery Assistant</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational psychologist</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of incident</th>
<th>Number of reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School/College premises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential hostel/Hall of residence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth club/Common room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field centre</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student's home</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pupil referral unit</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assailants</th>
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<td>Pupil/Student</td>
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<td>Intruders</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of incident</th>
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<td>Physical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assaults by pupils/students or their families:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ on teachers/lecturers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ on other employees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
on contractors’ staff on site

Assaults while disciplining pupils:
- physically restraining a pupil
- intervening in a fight
- dealing with disobedient pupil
- excluding pupil from class apparently unprovoked

Assaults ‘from a distance’, eg hit by missile
Assaults from intruders on site

Verbal
Written
Other types

2 An annual report on the data will help identify:
- changes in the number of incidents recorded over time (to indicate trends and to highlight whether or not prevention programmes in place are successful);
- changes in numbers of incidents for particular categories of staff;
- increases in the number or severity of particular incidents (to identify areas where further work is a priority).

APPENDIX 2: HOME VISITING CHECKLIST

Home visiting checklist for use by managers and others who co-ordinate outreach work

Are your staff who visit:
- fully trained in strategies for the prevention of violence?
- briefed about the area where they work?
- aware of attitudes, traits or mannerisms which can annoy clients?
- given all available information about the client from all relevant agencies?

Have they:
- understood the importance of previewing cases?
- left an itinerary?
- made plans to keep in contact with colleagues?
the means to contact you - even when the switchboard may not be in use?
- got your home telephone number (and have you got theirs)?
- a sound grasp of your organisation’s preventive strategy?
- authority to arrange an accompanied visit, security escort or use of taxis?

Do they:
- carry forms for reporting incidents?
- appreciate the need for this procedure?
- use the forms?
- know your attitude to premature termination of interviews?
- know how to control and defuse potentially violent situations?
- appreciate their responsibilities for their own safety?
- understand the provisions for their support by your organisation?

OK - so what else is needed?

**Home visiting checklist for staff who make home visits**

Have you:
- had all the relevant training about violence to staff?
- a sound grasp of your unit’s safety policy for visitors?
- a clear idea about the area into which you are going?
- carefully previewed today’s cases?
- any ‘PVs’?
- asked to ‘double up’, take an escort or use a taxi if unsure?
- made appointment(s)?
- left your itinerary and expected departure/arrival times?
- told colleagues, manager etc about possible changes of plan?
- arranged for contact if your return is overdue?

Do you carry:
- forms to record and report incidents?
- a personal alarm or radio? Does it work? Is it handy?
Reactive monitoring

- out-of-hours telephone numbers etc to summon help?

Can you:

- be certain your attitudes, body language, etc won’t cause trouble?
- defuse potential problems and manage aggression?

Remember the three Vs of visiting:

Vet         Verify         Vigilance

(Reproduced with permission from the Report of the DHSS Advisory Committee on Violence to Staff (Skelmersdale Report)\textsuperscript{9})

APPENDIX 3: CONSULTATION WITH EMPLOYEES

- The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 give recognised trade unions the right to appoint safety representatives to represent the employees in consultation with their employer about health and safety matters. Employers have a duty to consult the safety representatives, in good time, on a range of matters including the introduction of any measure that may substantially affect the health and safety of the employees represented.

- The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 place similar duties on employers to consult with employees who are not represented by trade union safety representatives. The consultation should be with either the employees directly or their elected ‘representative of employee safety’.

Further guidance is given in HSE’s free leaflet Consulting employees on health and safety: A guide to the law.\textsuperscript{11}

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

References

1 Scottish Office The public inquiry into the shootings at Dunblane Primary School on 13 March 1996 HMSO 1996 ISBN 010 133862 7


3 DfEE Improving security in schools HMSO 1996 ISBN 011 270916 8
Further reading

You may be interested in looking at some of the following publications on violence at work:

Violence and aggression to staff in the health services: Guidance on assessment and management HSE Books 1997 ISBN 07176 1466 2

Guidance for employers: Reducing the risks The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, 14 East Sheen Avenue, London SW14 8AS, Tel: 02088760305

Personal safety for schools The Suzy Lamplugh Trust 1996 ISBN 1 85742 194 9

The TUC and some individual trade unions have also produced useful advice, as have many local authorities and other employers.

The content of this publication, which was published in 1997, is currently under review. The availability of the references cannot be guaranteed.

end of selection

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