Mansfield Primary School
Occupational Violence Policy

BASIC BELIEF
Mansfield Primary School is committed to providing a safe and supportive work environment where diversity is valued and everyone is treated with respect, fairness and dignity. Discrimination, sexual and other forms of harassment, bullying, violence and threatening behaviour are unacceptable. All employees, students, parents and visitors to the school are expected to act accordingly.
Mansfield Primary School, will act to ensure that the safety, security, health and wellbeing of all employees, students, parents and visitors to the school are protected. The School considers occupational violence an unacceptable form of behaviour which will not be tolerated in the workplace under any circumstances.

IMPLEMENTATION

DEFINITIONS:
• Occupational Violence is defined as: “any incident where an employee is physically attacked or threatened in the workplace. “Threat” means a statement or behaviour that causes a person to believe they are in danger of being physically attacked. “Physical attack” means the direct or indirect application of force by a person to the body of, or to clothing or equipment worn by, another person, where that application creates a risk to health and safety.”
• The term ‘occupational violence’ applies to all forms of physical attacks and threatening behaviour including: striking, kicking, scratching, biting, spitting or any other type of direct physical contact; throwing objects; attacking with knives, guns, clubs or any other type of weapon; pushing, shoving, tripping or; any form of indecent (sexual) physical contact.
• Violent or threatening behaviour can include physical acts; verbal or written threats; harassing telephone calls; gestures and expressions; behaviours such as stalking or; the sending of threatening emails, website postings and SMS texting using mobile phones.
• Occupational violence is not verbal abuse unless it carries a threat of physical attack. Despite this verbal abuse is unacceptable behaviour in DEECD workplaces which principals must address.

PREVENTING OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE
• If a DEECD workplace is exposed to the risk of occupational violence, the principal has a delegated duty under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 to institute measures to either eliminate the risk to employees or reduce that risk as far as is practicable. This will involve:
  • identifying hazards
  • identifying people at risk
  • assessing levels of risk (low, medium or high)
  • taking action to control the hazards
  • developing workplace policies and procedures.
• Appropriate information, instruction or training should be given to provide employees with the awareness, knowledge and skills to identify:
  • risk factors associated with occupational violence
  • motivation for aggression/violence
  • signs of impending violence
  • appropriate prevention measures to control risk

• When handling people’s concerns- the school will refer to the Parent Complaints Information Sheet, developed by DEECD, which provides parents with clear guidelines for raising complaints, suggestions and concerns (copy in the office foyer).

RESPONDING TO OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE

• If occupational violence occurs:
  • Report the incident immediately to your Principal and Health & Safety representative.
  • The incident is to be documented as soon as possible.
  • Threats or ‘near misses’ are to be reported as well.
  • The Principal is then required to act in accordance with DEECD’s policies and procedures in relation to critical incidents as set out in the Emergency and Security Management Branch’s guidelines.
  • Serious incidents must be reported to WorkSafe.

• A victim of occupational violence should report the incident immediately to the Principal/Manager who is required to act in accordance with DEECD policies and procedures.

• Witnesses of occupational violence are to:
  • Report the matter immediately to your Principal who is required to act in accordance with DEECD policies and procedures
  ▪ Contact the relevant Emergency Services e.g. Police/Ambulance on 000
  ▪ Then contact DEECD’s Emergency and Security Management (ESM) Branch on 9589-6266
  ▪ Ensure incidents are recorded and any serious incidents reported to WorkSafe

• Following any form of occupational violence or critical incident the principal should ensure that Emergency and Security Management is contacted immediately on 9589-6266.

This policy was ratified by the Mansfield Primary School Council on – 21/6/2010

Review Date: 2013