

If you are working with pupils with challenging or complex behaviours, make sure you have seen the risk assessment.

If you are harmed, make sure this is reported and the risk assessment should be updated.

If you suffer an injury at work, please contact Unionline to discuss any potential personal injury claim on 0300-3330303.

Being a part of GMB should give you the confidence to ensure you are treated fairly and with dignity at work.

You are not alone. You and your colleagues can come together to use your collective strength and be the change you want to see.

- Speak to colleagues who are not in GMB and ask them to join. Our strength is in our numbers and the more members, the stronger our voice.
- Meet with your workplace rep and colleagues to discuss how working together can bring about change and ensure violence and abuse against support staff is not tolerated.

Contact Us

For further information, contact your local branch or email schoolsteam@london.gmb.org.uk



PROTECTING SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

#notpartofthejob



School support staff are currently treated very differently to other workers who often benefit from zero tolerance to violence & abuse policies in the workplace. The perpetrators of violence in schools are most often children and this seemingly results in the violence and abuse being treated differently to adult workplaces.

GMB Londons' Schools Team is campaigning to ensure zero tolerance to violence & abuse against school support staff and is working to raise awareness of the experiences of members.

The physical injuries and stresses experienced in schools are no different to other workplaces and in fact school support staff are more likely to experience violence at work than almost any other group of workers in the UK. Many support staff feel unvalued when violent incidents are tolerated, or if those performing the violence are not dealt with appropriately and this needs to change.

School support staff have the same health and safety rights as any other worker

What does the law say?

Health & Safety laws that protect employees at work are not different for schools and therefore support staff have the legal right to be protected in the same way as any other employee. Health and safety law states that all employers should have a clearly defined statement of any potential risks, including those that their employees might face from violence. The statement should spell out what action the employer proposes to take to reduce this risk.

Support staff should see risk assessments that apply to the work they are expected to undertake, to ensure they know what risk they may be at and how their employer is reducing, removing and managing those risks.

Laws that relate to violence at work

- **The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974** – which places a legal duty on employers to ensure, as far as they possibly can, that their employees work in a healthy and safe environment and that their welfare is considered in any work activity. Under the act an employer has an obligation to ensure any potential risk of violence is eliminated or controlled.

- **The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999** – These Regulations state that employers must carry out a risk assessment to protect employees from exposure to reasonably foreseeable violence. A risk assessment is an examination to determine what hazards exist in your workplace. A hazard is anything that could cause harm to people, including verbal or physical abuse. Employers must then decide whether there are enough measures to protect people or whether they need to take action to eliminate or reduce the risk of the hazards that they have identified.

Being harmed at work is not part of the job – even if the harm is being done by children – and should not be tolerated.

Risk assessments should be completed and shared. You should have the opportunity to contribute to the risk assessment. If risk assessments are not being completed, please let us know and we can help you and your colleagues address this.

Violence, or fear of violence, at work often results in workplaces with poor morale, which can become toxic working environments. These environments will experience higher staff turnover, increased absenteeism and sickness absence which all obviously have further negative impact on support staff.