



Hampshire
County Council

Education Personnel
Services

The Power of You:

Zero Tolerance

January 2026

Amanda Stevens, Head of Education People Services

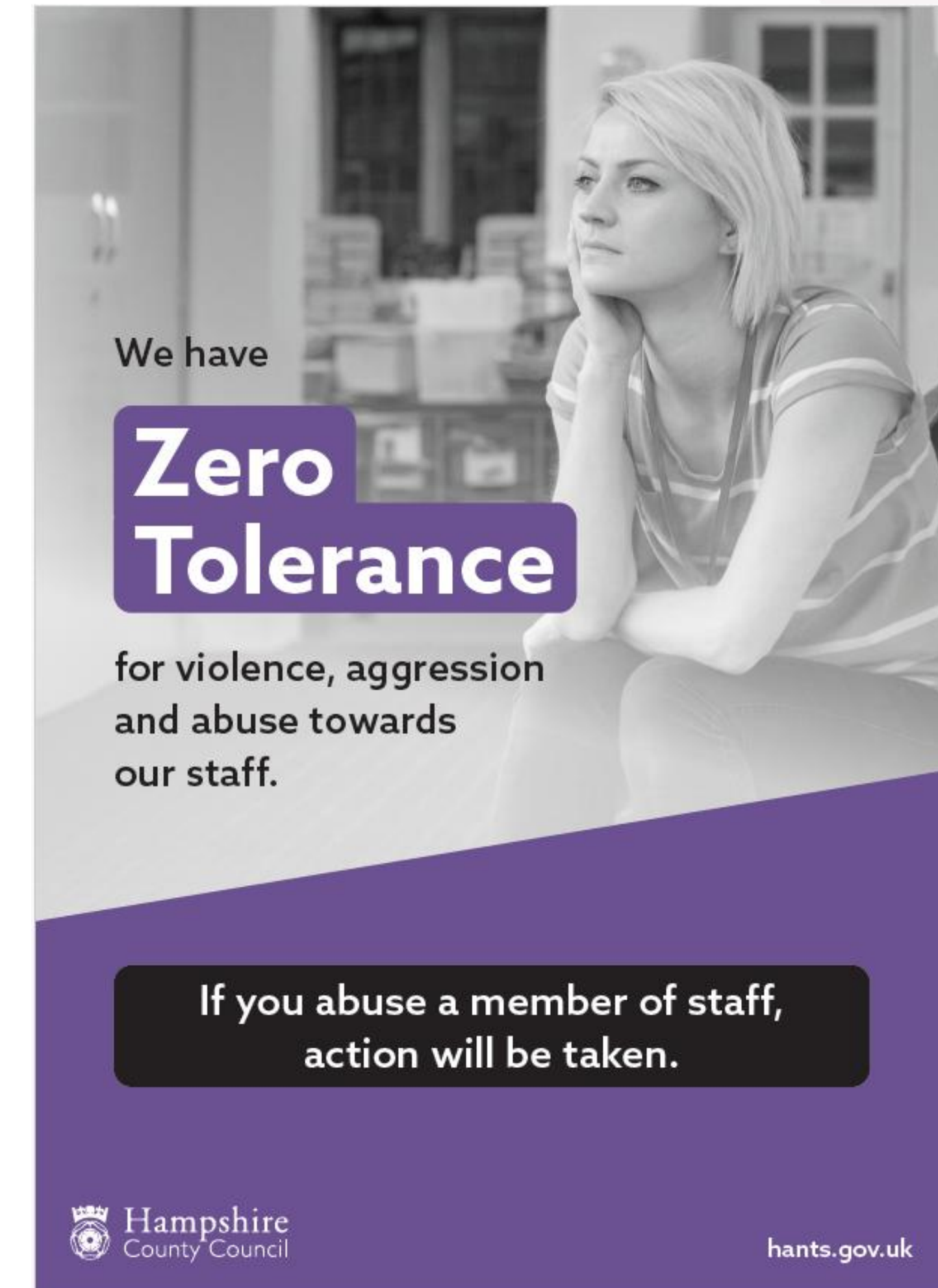
The Model Zero Tolerance Policy

Why are we introducing this Model Policy

- To support you and your governors to ensure a safe, respectful and supportive environment for you and your staff
- To be clear that you have a strict approach to violence, bullying, harassment, abuse and discrimination of your staff
- To support you to address parent and customers where they:
 - use aggressive or abusive behaviour
 - have unreasonable demands
 - have unreasonable levels of contact
 - unreasonably use the complaints process for repeated matters

Who does the policy apply to

- Parents
- Suppliers
- Contractors
- Local Authority staff
- Customers of the school's facilities (e.g. where they hire)



Purpose of the Model Zero Tolerance Policy

This model policy and the associated resources will support you to:

- Clarify expectations – be clear with all members of your school community as to the standards you expect of them
- Build staff confidence – so they feel that they can respond to incidents and feel secure that you will enforce action where required
- Aid community understanding – improve awareness of standards and the importance of maintaining a safe environment

This policy is needed to:

- Address challenges of rising concerns around how some parents and customers engage with the school
- Support staff wellbeing concerns
- Support you to fulfil health and safety and employment laws and duties
- Supports you to mitigate risk in relation to physical aggression, verbal abuse and online harassment
- Make clear the action you will take where individuals are not acting in accordance with a respectful culture in how they present a concern or complaint to the school



Part of a wider policy and guidance framework

This model policy sits alongside a number of other policy areas to help you and your governors to develop and maintain a safe and respectful culture, including:

- The Model Schools Communication Policy
- The Dignity at Work Policy
- The Violence and Aggression at Work Procedure
- Your Accident and Incident Reporting Procedure
- Your Acceptable Use of IT and Social Media Policies
- Your staff grievance or resolving workplace issues procedures
- Other HR procedures (conduct, appraisal and capability) to address staff to staff incidents of bullying, harassment issues arising from poor staff awareness, knowledge, skills or conduct

This policy framework involves contributions from various sold services including:

- Hampshire Legal Services
- Health and Safety
- Education People Services

A policy and guidance map is available within the Zero Tolerance resources



The key components of the policy and associated guidance

- Provides a set of suggested principles and expectations that the school will have of parents and customers
- Unacceptable behaviours and actions are defined and examples provided
- Provides a clear and transparent process of how you will deal with unacceptable behaviours and actions and associated resources, such as posters and guidance for staff, to reinforce the policy intent
- Proportionate responses – focus is on harmful behaviour; escalating through warnings before implementing restrictions, ensuring decisions are proportionate

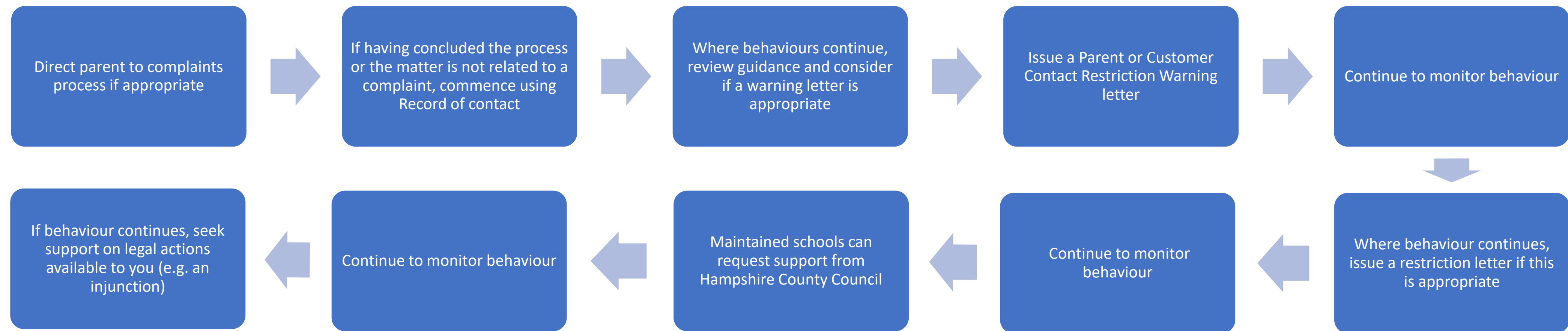


The key components of the policy and associated guidance

- Makes clear that where staff feel it necessary, they can implement an immediate safety response to ensure that immediate action is taken to protect all involved where there is a specific incident
- Provides advice on capturing issues (may be incidents, or specific communications) so that the pattern of behaviour can be evidenced
- Provides a clear pathway to escalate where behaviour continues with template warning letters and template letters to impose restrictions on a parent or customer
- Provides examples of the types of restrictions that could be put in place
- For maintained schools, provides a route to escalate to the Local Authority to seek support where restrictions have been put in place and behaviour continues. Academy Trusts may wish to consider a similar approach for their schools.



Dealing with an issue under the Zero Tolerance Policy



What resources are available to support you

For your websites (require localisation):

- Model Zero Tolerance statement
- Model Zero Tolerance Policy

Guidance for managers:

- How to Guide
- Preventative and Reactive Measures Flowchart
- Record of Parent and Customer Contact
- Template Parent or Customer Contact Restriction Warning Letters
- Template Parent or Customer Contact Restriction Imposition Letters
- Escalation Form (for maintained schools to escalate to Hampshire County Council)
- Guidance on dealing with stalking and harassment of staff by parents or customers



Zero tolerance

[Find out more](#)

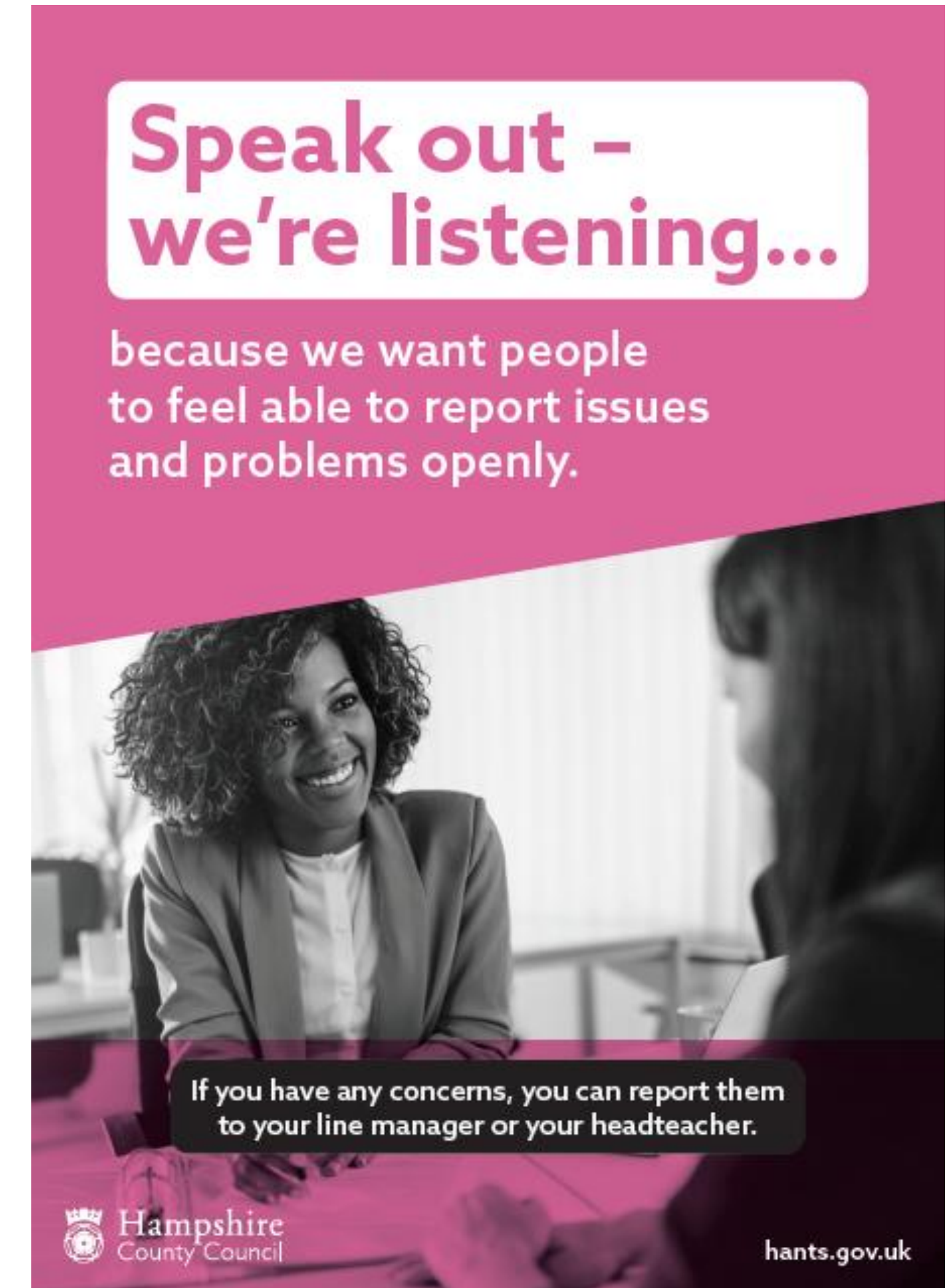
What resources are available to support you

Guidance for staff:

- A quick reference guide for staff
- Guidance for staff on simple ways to 'call it out'

Other resources:

- Posters for visitor / reception areas
- Posters for staff areas
- Suggested wording for school telephone systems



What action should you take?

- Review the model policy and associated resources
- Share them with your governing body and discuss how this might fit within your existing framework of policies
- Consider if there are other policies that need adopting or adapting as part of this approach – is your School Communication Policy fit for purpose, do you want to consider adopting the Dignity at Work Policy

Zero tolerance

[Home](#) [Courses](#) [The Power of You](#) [Zero tolerance](#)



Model documents for school websites



Guidance for school leaders



Guidance to share with staff



Other

Model documents for school websites

These documents are to be localised by the school and are for use on the school's website and sharing with the whole school community customers:

 [Zero Tolerance Statement](#)

 [Policy on Unacceptable Actions by Parents and Customers - Schools](#)

Guidance for school leaders

These resources are to support you to prevent matters arising and support governors and senior leaders in the application of the Zero Tolerance

 [Preventative measures and reactive measures flowchart](#)

Summary

This model policy has been developed to:

- support you to be clear to your whole school community about expectations
- encourage your staff to raise concerns so that these matters can be captured and logged
- empower the school community to uphold and promote a respectful environment
- provide a clear pathway for dealing with those whose unacceptable behaviours and actions continue

To close

- Thank you for prioritising yourselves
- Committed to supporting you

Hampshire's current work programme:

Zero tolerance policy and resources launching today

Stress risk assessment:
Whole staff
Ofsted
Headteacher
Individual cases

Development of a new section within the Manual of People Practice - Managing Culture and Climate

Developing guidance for schools on communications following a significant event or crisis


The Power of You - workshops

Development of the HIAS Leadership Moodle site for Headteacher Professional Resilience – sharing of quality assured resources

Reviewing governor training materials and engagement to ensure advice to governors in relation to Headteacher professional resilience is clear

Developing a specific Governor Training session on Headteacher Professional Resilience

The Power of You: professional resilience and wellbeing of school leaders




The Power of You

[Home](#) [Courses](#) [The Power of You](#)


Supporting the professional resilience and wellbeing of school leaders

Search courses [Go](#) [?](#)




Workplace culture and expectations

[Find out more](#)






Hampshire support

[Find out more](#)



Conference support and resources

[Find out more](#)





**The Power of You:
Professional resilience for leaders**

January 2026
Jean Thorpe, County Education Manager (Secondary)

**Jan 2026
Conference 3**



**The new science of resilience:
Psychological flexibility for
School Leaders**

HIAS

7 February 25

**Feb and Oct 2025
Conference 2**



**Investing in School
Leaders Conference:
The Power of You**

1 March 2024

**Mar 2024
Conference 1**



**Complaints and safeguarding
concerns**



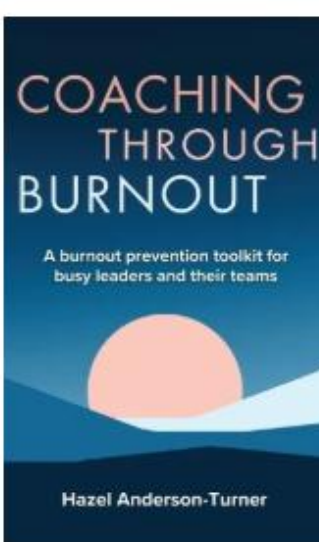
External complaint routes



**The Teacher Regulation
Agency - TRA**



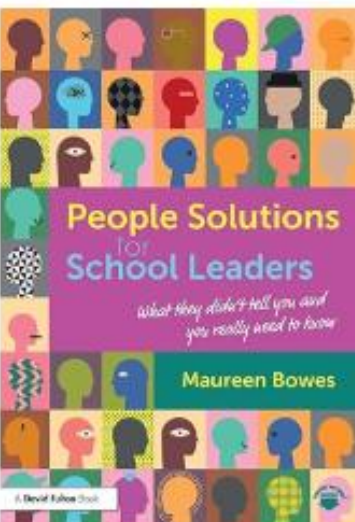
**Practical guidance for
managing and handling
complaints**



**COACHING
THROUGH
BURNOUT**

A burnout prevention toolkit for
busy leaders and their teams


Hazel Anderson-Turner



**People Solutions
for
School Leaders**

What they didn't tell you and
you really need to know

Maureen Bowes



Zero tolerance

[Find out more](#)

Practical guidance for managing and handling complaints

All leaders will have their own way of managing the volume of communication they receive but there are a number of strategies and practical steps that can support the effective management of complaints, and adverse communication.

- Be clear about your complaints' policy and your governing body's involvement in its management
- Ensure that agreed timeframes within any policy are adhered to
- Consider whether a dedicated email account would be useful for parental communication in order to manage leaders' accessibility
- Clarify with both support staff and middle and senior leaders your expectations of their management of complaints and parental communication; consider whether staff record all of their communication, are responses followed up by email, are hard copies kept of discussions and agreements, of telephone calls? We have many examples where
- Do you have a policy for managing duplicate and/or serial and consistent complaints, or those which are unreasonable?

[Best practice guidance for school complaints procedures 2020 - GOV.UK](#)

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator defines the characteristics of a 'frivolous' or 'vexatious' complaint as

- complaints which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious
- insistence upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes beyond all reason
- insistence upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner
- complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
- demands for redress that lack any serious purpose or value"

Schools should not refuse to accept further correspondence or complaints from an individual they have had repeat or excessive contact with as any application of a the notion of 'serial or persistent' should be against the subject of complaint itself rather than the complainant.

We suggest that you have a policy for managing duplicate serial complaints

[When to Consider Stopping Responses](#)

Making SARs Manageable

19th March 2025
Emma Licciardi – School Legal Support

School Legal Support

19th March 2025
Emma Licciardi



**Model documents for
school websites**



**Guidance for school
leaders**



**Guidance to share with
staff**



Other resources

Shared work – provides strength

Colleague support has infinite value-
sense of not being alone

Your contributions please:

- examples of your documentation, approaches, what has worked well...
- collation of



hias.publications@hants.gov.uk