9 tips for writing a school policy

School policies and procedures demonstrate your compliance with statutory requirements. Lisa Griffin offers tips to guide you in creating and reviewing a policy.

Correct content

1 Include a rationale or purpose statement at the beginning explaining why the policy is being written and referring to the appropriate guidance or legalities.

Be accurate and succinct

2 Clarity and brevity are your friends: policies should be clear and concise. They'll be read by a range of audiences so some terms may need to be defined to clarify meaning.

Size is not important

3 Bigger isn't always better! it's the quality of your policy that counts, not the number of pages it takes up so keep your document focused.

Get the flow right

4 This means having the right sections of your policy in the right order. Your policies should follow a standard format to ensure consistency between them all.

Regular review

5 A policy should be a working document which is open to amendments. Implement a review and evaluation cycle for your policies to ensure they remain up-to-date

Disseminate to all staff

6 Staff should know which policies are available, where to find them, who to ask if they have questions about them, when new policies are created or existing ones changed.

Train staff

7 Staff will be implementing the processes set out in a policy and so need training to ensure consistency in how they go about doing this

Critically assess

8 If you don't find a policy document an easy read, chances are your staff won't either. Make your policies digestible with clear headings and easily editable.

Respond to a safeguarding incident

9 If a safeguarding issue has occurred it's time to carry out a procedural review. Did the policies work? Could they have worked better? What changes do you need to make?

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