

ANTI-HARASSMENT AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR STAFF

Introduction

The school is committed to providing a workplace free from harassment and bullying. It is committed to ensuring that all staff are treated, and treat others, with dignity and respect. The school is responsible for taking action when it is aware that harassment or bullying may be or is taking place.

This policy applies to all members of staff. Managers should ensure that staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them. All staff can prevent harassment and bullying by being sensitive to the reactions and needs of others, and ensuring that their conduct does not cause offence.

Definitions

Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

Harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature or it may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Harassment may include, for example:

- Unwanted physical conduct or 'horseplay', including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing.
- Continued suggestions for social activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome.
- Sending or displaying material that some people may find offensive (including emails, text messages, video clips and images sent by mobile phones or posted on the internet or social media).
- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist jokes, or derogatory or stereotypical remarks.
- Mocking, mimicking or belittling a person's disability.

Bullying

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct.

Legitimate, reasonable and constructive criticism of performance or behaviour, or reasonable instructions during the course of employment, will not amount to bullying on its own.

Harassment and bullying complaints procedures

Informal

- Whenever possible, a member of staff who believes that he or she has been harassed or bullied should, in the first instance, raise the matter directly with the person responsible and ask that person to stop the harassing or bullying behaviour.
- If a staff member feels unable to confront the person responsible direct, they should speak to the school's [confidential headteacher/AHT's] who will be able to provide assistance in resolving the issue informally.

Formal

- If informal action fails to cure the problem, the member of staff should raise the matter formally by submitting a formal complaint [under the school's grievance procedure]. The complaint should include full details of the conduct, including the name of the harasser or bully and the nature of the harassment or bullying.
- Formal complaints will be dealt with in a timely and confidential manner and by someone with appropriate experience and with no prior involvement.
- The investigator will meet with both the complainant and the alleged harasser/bully individually. Both will be entitled to be accompanied to any meetings by a colleague or a representative of their trade union or professional association.
- It may be necessary to suspend the harasser or bully while the investigation is undertaken. If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, disciplinary action against the accused will then be considered under the terms of our school's disciplinary procedures.
- If a complainant is not happy with the outcome of an investigation by the headteacher, he or she may appeal to an appeal body comprising at least three members of the governing board [in accordance with the school's grievance policy]. The appeal body's decision will be final.
- Intimidation, victimisation and discrimination on the basis that an individual has brought a harassment claim are also regarded as gross misconduct.
- Confidentiality is important during any investigation in order to maintain the trust and confidence of those staff concerned. Breach of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action under the terms of the school's disciplinary procedure.