

Bullying and Harassment Policy



Version:	Date:	Policy Owner:	Amendments made by:	Details of amendments made:	Reviewed by:	Approved by:
V1.0	17.11.21	Marie Roe	Marie Roe	New Policy	BoT	09.12.21
V2.0	November 2023	Rachel Inchiliffe	Rachel Inchiliffe	Rewritten policy	BoT	07.12.23

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed **annually** by the Policy Owner: **R Inchiliffe**

The scheduled review date for this policy is December 2024.

Values and Ethos

Our values and ethos are inclusive, and child centred. Our Trust is founded on the principles of inclusivity, diversity, and fairness, and they are fundamental to our delivery of exceptional learning experiences.

EVAT stands for:

- **Excellence** and high standards
 - a can-do culture and no-excuses ethos
- **Values driven** with a deep sense of purpose
 - putting children and young people first
 - behaving ethically
- **Ambition** and aspiration for all
 - irrespective of background or barriers – being truly inclusive
- **Teamwork**
 - we do more, better and faster, together

We are a village. We collaborate, with our learners, their families and our communities, to provide exceptional education so that all the children and young people we serve achieve the best possible outcomes.

Our Ethos is to:

- Create a nurturing and friendly atmosphere and provide an environment where everyone feels valued for who they are
- Bring out the best in every child and young person and meet the full range of their individual needs
- Provide different and unique experiences, challenges and activities
- Show tolerance and respect for each other
- Prepare our children and young people for lifelong learning
- Improve the life chances of every child and young person we serve.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Trust is committed to providing a work environment that is free of harassment, bullying and intimidation, and ensuring that all employees are treated with dignity and respect at work.
- 1.2. As a result, the Trust has a zero-tolerance approach towards bullying and harassment, and those found to be in breach of these procedures may be subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including, summary dismissal.
- 1.3. This policy covers harassment or bullying which occurs at work and out of the workplace, such as on business trips or at work-related events or social functions. It covers bullying and harassment by staff (which may include consultants, contractors and agency workers) and also by third parties such as customers, suppliers or visitors to our premises.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. For this policy, "**bullying**" may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.
- 2.2. For this policy, "**harassment**" is defined as unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sex and sexual orientation. Unlike bullying, harassment can be an act of behaviour through which there is no clear intent to cause the person suffering.
- 2.3. Bullying and harassment may not just occur face to face, but also in written communications, via social media, emails or phone conversations. Both bullying and harassment are unacceptable forms of behaviour, which can cause stress and anxiety for employees, resulting in low morale, illness, underperformance, absenteeism and even resignation.
- 2.4. Examples of bullying and harassment include the following:
 - Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone by word or behaviour;
 - Exclusion or victimization;
 - Unfair treatment;
 - Overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position;
 - Unwelcomed sexual advances, e.g. touching, standing too close or the display of offensive materials;
 - Making threats or comments about job security without foundation;

- Deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading and constant criticism;
- Preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities.

3. Solutions

- 3.1. If an employee is being harassed or bullied, consider whether they feel able to raise the problem informally with the individual responsible. They should explain clearly to them that their behaviour is not welcome or makes them uncomfortable. If this is too difficult or embarrassing, they should speak to their manager and/or the People Team, who can provide confidential advice and assistance in resolving the issue formally or informally.
- 3.2. If informal steps are not appropriate, or have not been successful, they should raise the matter formally under the Trust's Grievance Procedure.
- 3.3. The Trust will investigate complaints in a timely and confidential manner. The investigation will be conducted by someone with appropriate experience and no prior involvement in the complaint, where possible. Details of the investigation and the names of the person making the complaint and the person accused must only be disclosed on a "need-to-know" basis. The Trust will consider whether any steps are necessary to manage any ongoing relationship between those accused during the investigation.
- 3.4. Once the investigation is complete, the Trust will inform the employee of the decision. If the Trust considers they have been harassed or bullied by an employee, the matter will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.
- 3.5. If the harasser or bully is a third party such as a customer or other visitor, the Trust will consider what action would be appropriate to deal with the problem.
- 3.6. Whether or not the complaint is upheld, the Trust will consider how best to manage any ongoing working relationships.

4. Support for those Involved

- 4.1. The Trust is committed to supporting all members of staff and will ensure that additional support is provided as requested.
- 4.2. Staff involved in an investigation will not suffer any form of retaliation or victimisation because of the investigation.
- 4.3. If a staff member feels that they have been mistreated, or that they are being subjected to any detrimental treatment because of raising a concern under this policy, they are required to report this to their manager immediately.

- 4.4. Any employee found to have retaliated to or victimised someone involved in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

5. Record Keeping

- 5.1. Information about a complaint by or about an employee may be placed on the employee's personnel file, along with a record of the outcome and of any notes or other documents compiled during the process.

6 Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)

- 6.1. In preparing or amending this policy, the author has given due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty; that is, they have considered any potential impact on people who share certain protected characteristics. These protected characteristics are defined as: race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.