



St. Andrews Primary School

Dignity at Work

1. Rationale

St Andrews School supports the right of every individual to be treated with respect and dignity at work. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in the workplace.

We are committed to promoting a workplace free of harassment, including bullying, victimisation or intimidation.

2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure that all school employees know the responsibilities and procedures in place to ensure they feel respected at work.

This policy sets out definitions of bullying and harassment and how complaints of this type should be dealt with.

3. Responsibilities

Employees will be:

- Treated without favouritism
- Spoken to with courtesy on all occasions
- Spoken and written about with respect
- Accorded due professional trust
- Given due credit for their achievements
- Consulted about all proposals for changes in their role
- Given adequate time and resources for the successful discharge of their duties
- Provided with appropriate training, promotion and leave opportunities
- Accorded respect for their individual personal space
- Able to enjoy a working environment free from exposure to offensive written or graphic material
- Treated with dignity and respect at work and thereby be encouraged to meet their full potential.

Employees are asked to:

Treat colleagues and those with whom they come into professional contact with dignity and respect

- Be aware of the effect that their own behaviour and appearance can have on others
- Support colleagues if they experience incidents which affront their dignity, including bullying, harassment and victimisation
- Inform their managers, school adviser, human resources officer or union representative if they are aware of any incident

- Set a positive example to colleagues
- Consider their language and refrain from making hurtful personal comments to or about others
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour on the part of others where appropriate and should report any incident to their line manager or to an appropriate senior manager, school adviser, Human Resources Manager or via their trade union.

It is the responsibility of every employee in the school to ensure that they treat colleagues with dignity and respect. They should take care not to practice, encourage, incite or condone any form of behaviour which could be viewed by others as harassment.

Head teachers/managers need to be aware that where they see unacceptable behaviour, whether or not a complaint is made, they need to treat the matter seriously and take appropriate action to eliminate the particular behaviour.

4. **Key Terms**

What is harassment?

Every individual member of staff has the right to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect. Harassment occurs when someone engages in unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating someone else's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It is not the intention of the perpetrator which defines whether a particular type of conduct is harassment but the effect it has on the recipient. Bullying is just as unacceptable as any other form of harassment.

Conduct that could constitute harassment includes:

- any physical contact which is unwanted
- coercion, isolation or 'freezing-out'
- display of offensive material, e.g., 'pin-ups'
- offensive jokes
- unwelcome remarks about a person's dress, appearance, race or marital status
- shouting at staff
- personal insults
- persistent criticism
- setting impossible deadlines.
- victimisation

The effect of harassment and bullying at work:

Harassment and bullying at work can cause fear, stress, anxiety and physical sickness amongst employees. It may also put a heavy strain on personal and family life. It can lead to increased absenteeism, an apparent lack of commitment, poor performance and even resignation. For the employer the result is not just poor morale but higher staff turnover, reduced productivity, lower efficiency and divided teams. The effects will eventually show through in the overall performance of your organisation.

5. Procedures

Any complaint from an employee about alleged harassment will be dealt with fairly, confidentiality and sensitivity. As a Restorative School, we would aim to resolve all conflict with a restorative conversation.

Informal approaches - In some cases it may be possible to sort out the matter informally. At times employees are not aware that their behaviour is unwelcome and an informal discussion can lead to greater understanding and an agreement that the behaviour will cease.

Employees who feel that they are being bullied or harassed, but are unsure of what to do, should discuss the matter confidentially with the Headteacher, manager or trade union representative before deciding what action, if any, to take. A Headteacher/ manager in this position will not take any formal steps to deal with the matter personally unless the employee specifically authorises it.

If at all possible, the employee should tell the person to stop whatever it is they are doing that is causing them distress; otherwise they may be unaware of the effect of their actions. It may be that the employee will choose to do this themselves, or they may need support from a Headteacher/manager or a trade union representative who may act on their behalf if requested.

If the matter is unresolved following an informal approach, the employee should make a formal complaint without unreasonable delay.

Formal complaints - If an informal approach to the person concerned is not effective, or not appropriate, perhaps because of the serious nature of the complaint, then the individual should make a formal complaint to a manager or the Headteacher. If the complaint is about the Headteacher, then any formal complaint should be directed to the Quality Improvement Officer.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that any such complaint is investigated promptly and confidentially, either personally or by delegation to a manager, and that any necessary formal action is initiated. The Headteacher will ensure that the result of the investigation is fed back to the complainant. The Quality Improvement Officer is similarly responsible for ensuring that any complaint against the Headteacher is investigated.

After investigating the complaint, the Headteacher or senior manager (or Quality Improvement Officer in the case of the Headteacher) may decide to do one or more of the following; offer counselling, conciliation or mediation; take disciplinary action against the bully/harasser in accordance with Aberdeenshire's disciplinary procedure; take some other action as appropriate to the outcome of the investigation.

If necessary, Aberdeenshire Grievance policy will be used to deal with serious allegations of harassment by an employee of the school. It may also be used to deal with employees making unfounded or malicious allegations of harassment.

6. Agreement and Review

This policy was agreed and shared with SASA and school staff in ***Date***.
Updates may be made and dated as required or reviewed in ***Date 3 years in advance***.

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Appendices