

THE MANOR – A FOUNDATION SCHOOL POLICY DOCUMENT

<DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY>
RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE: <PERSONNEL>



Policy Statement

The school is committed to providing a working environment for its entire staff which respects employees' dignity and which is free from all forms of bullying and harassment, including that by third parties, including students.

The school's approach to bullying and harassment is one of zero tolerance. Any instance of bullying or harassment or other inappropriate behaviour at work that is likely to cause offence or breach the dignity and respect of colleagues will be regarded as serious misconduct. Employees responsible for such behaviour will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal, depending on the nature and seriousness the behaviour.

Students who subject staff to abuse by cyberbullying will be severely dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure for Students; this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter as part of the school's anti-bullying strategy.

Procedure

Employees

1. All workers and employees have a responsibility at all times to behave in a way that is courteous, respectful and reasonable towards their colleagues.
2. Swearing and using other offensive terms during the course of employment will be viewed as a disciplinary offence. Similarly, the telling of jokes, engagement in banter or making remarks that could reasonably cause offence to any person, including anything that is sexual in nature, sexist, racial, racist, homophobic, ageist, connected to religion or belief, or related to an individual's disability will also be viewed as a disciplinary offence, potentially leading to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.
3. This policy also applies to organised work-related events regardless of the fact that these may be held outside the school's premises and in employees' own time.
4. All complaints from employees under this policy will be treated seriously and investigated and dealt with promptly, fairly and objectively and, insofar as is possible, in confidence.
5. No employee will be penalised, victimised or subjected to any detriment for complaining that his or her dignity has been breached through a colleague's words or actions.
6. If at any time there are grounds to believe that an employee has bullied, harassed or otherwise caused offence to another employee, the school will instigate an investigation into the alleged behaviour. This will be the case whether or not there has been a formal complaint.
7. In these circumstances, the school reserves the right to suspend temporarily or re-deploy either the employee suspected of acting in breach of this policy, or the employee who has made a complaint of bullying or harassment, if it is considered in the interests of the

individual(s) or the school to do so. Suspension in these circumstances will be on full pay. Suspension does not mean that the employee has been found guilty of misconduct and does not constitute disciplinary action.

8. Any employee who believes that his or her dignity has been violated or that another employee's conduct amounts to bullying or harassment or that such conduct has otherwise created an uncomfortable environment for him or herself or others, has the right to complain to their line manager in the first instance or, if a complaint is about a line manager to the line manager of that person or the Principal. If the matter is about the Principal the complaint should be addressed to The Chair of Governors. Such a complaint may be informal or formal, as the employee thinks appropriate (see below).
9. Furthermore, any employee who witnesses an incident that may reasonably be viewed as offensive is obliged to report in factual terms what he or she saw or heard to a member of SLT so that the school can investigate and resolve the matter.
10. If an employee wishes to make an informal complaint, he or she may choose either to speak:
 - a. directly to the person whose behaviour has caused, or is likely to cause, offence, pointing out to that person in a reasonable and factual way why his or her conduct may be inappropriate, why it may be perceived as objectionable or unacceptable, and asking for it to stop
 - b. to their SLT link/line manager in order to seek support or guidance on an appropriate course of informal action to resolve the matter.
11. If an employee's behaviour is such that it represents a serious breach of the school's dignity policy (for example severe bullying or harassment), or if the employee has tried to resolve the matter informally but without success, the employee may choose to raise a formal complaint.
12. A formal complaint must be put in writing, although the employee may consult their trade union representative or their line manager first to ask for guidance on how to present the written complaint.
13. All third parties (i.e. those other than the employer and workers) have been informed of the organisation's policy of zero tolerance towards any sexual harassment of its workers. Action will be taken against third parties where workers are subjected to such harassment.

Leaders & Managers

As soon as a member of the SLT becomes aware that an employee's conduct or behaviour may be in breach of this policy, or as soon as a complaint (whether formal or informal) is received, the member of the SLT will take the following action.

14. Consider whether it would be appropriate to suspend or temporarily re-deploy the employee suspected of acting in breach of this policy (and/or the employee who made the complaint) to allow the investigation to proceed without impediment.
15. Talk informally and in confidence with the employee who made the complaint to establish all his or her evidence, including specific examples of the words and actions of the other employee. During the course of such a meeting, the employee will be asked to disclose:
 - a. the name of the person alleged to have committed a breach of this policy
 - b. what specifically the employee personally observed, including the words said, tone of voice, manner and surrounding circumstances, as far as the employee can remember

- c. the times and dates of any alleged incidents
 - d. the names of anyone else that was present.
16. Seek if possible to obtain written statements from any such employees.
17. Write to the employee who is alleged to have acted in breach of this policy, setting out the details of the complaint against him or her and inviting him or her to attend an investigative meeting.
18. Allow the employee the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a work colleague or trade union official.
19. At the interview, allow the employee a full and fair opportunity to answer the allegations and to put forward his or her version of events.
20. Assess objectively and fairly whether the employee's conduct appears to have amounted to bullying or harassment or otherwise to an infringement of this policy.
21. Decide, in conjunction with the Head, what action to take. This may include informal counselling, discussions with both parties with a view to conciliation, or disciplinary action.
22. Communicate the decision both to the employee who made the complaint and to the employee accused of breaching the policy as soon as possible following the conclusion of this procedure.
23. If disciplinary action is taken, allow the employee the right to appeal against the disciplinary decision.
24. Keep records of the investigation and all meetings held and ensure these are treated as confidential and in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Mediation (Optional Clauses)

25. Independent and impartial mediation conducted by a qualified mediator will be made available to assist in the resolution of the dispute between the person who is being bullied or harassed and the perpetrator.
26. If either party wishes to request third party mediation, he or she may do so by speaking to the Deputy Principal. However mediation will only be considered where both parties agree to enter in to the process.