PREVENTION OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

# General

## We respect the right of all individuals to work with dignity and free from harassment and bullying.

# Why Harassment and Bullying Concerns Us All

## It is the duty of all staff to ensure that no bullying or harassment takes place. Bullying or harassment will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure and can lead to dismissal of the harasser or the bully.

# What is Harassment?

## Harassment can include unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct which arises as a result of an element of race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin, sex, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity and which affects the victim's dignity. It may also be behaviour that leads to the victim suffering harm or which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment for him or her.

## What is not harassing conduct in the view of some people may still be harassing conduct to the recipient.

# What Should Anyone Suffering Harassment or Bullying do?

## If you believe you are being bullied or harassed, you should explain to the alleged harasser/bully (wherever possible) that the conduct is unwanted and that it is affecting you or your working environment. If you would prefer, you can ask a colleague to speak informally on your behalf.

## If harassment/bullying persists or where you do not feel able to use the informal approach you should immediately report the harassment/bullying formally to your immediate line manager or, if that is not possible because of the line manager’s involvement or for any other reason, to [ ].

## Where you do not wish to pursue formal internal proceedings but we are not satisfied that the problem is resolved or we are concerned about possible harm to health and safety, we may in any event commence an investigation although the value of this may be limited if you are not willing to be involved.

# Investigations

## An alleged harasser or bully and a complainant may be suspended on full pay, or may be moved to different workstations, pending any Investigation (and any subsequent disciplinary process).

# appeal

## If either the complainant or the alleged harasser or bully is dissatisfied with the decision, they can appeal in writing to a higher level of management. There will be an appeal hearing and the decision of that hearing will be final.

# Disciplinary Process

## Disciplinary action may follow from the investigation. This will follow our normal procedures. We may also move or demote a person against whom harassment or bullying has been proved.

## Investigation and disciplinary action may also be taken where we think it is appropriate to do so even in circumstances where a complainant has not wished to start the formal or even informal process.

## Any breach of confidentiality in relation to any part of this process will be a disciplinary matter.

# Retaliation/Victimisation

## Retaliation or victimisation of somebody who has made or intends to make a complaint of harassment or bullying or who has provided or intends to provide evidence as a witness may lead to disciplinary action.