

DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

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DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

This policy has been determined by the Local Education Authority in consultation with the recognised trade unions, teachers' associations and the Governors' Council. This policy is recommended to schools for adoption immediately. Should schools decide to develop their own procedure, they will need to re-open trade union consultation on an individual basis.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to communicate the expectations that the Governing Body of Devoran School has about the standards of language and behaviour that all members of staff have the right to expect and are expected to show to others in their communication and behaviour at work. It aims to assist in the development and maintenance of a working environment in which bullying and harassment are known to be unacceptable and to ensure that, where it occurs, there are adequate arrangements in place for raising and dealing with it and for preventing reoccurrence.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to instances of alleged bullying or harassment in the workplace as defined in the Procedures & Notes of Guidance that accompany this Policy. Members of staff may raise any concerns arising from their employment which are not captured by this definition through the School's Grievance Procedure.

The policy applies to the Governing Body and all members of staff working under a contract of employment at Devoran School. These standards of behaviour also apply to school or university students in temporary work placements, agency workers temporarily employed by the school and casual workers, including supply teachers, in terms of the standard of behaviour such individuals are expected to demonstrate and can expect to receive during their work period with the school. The Governing Body will also make clear its expectations regarding standards of behaviour to all contractors and partners whose employees work on or in school premises or undertake work on the Governing Body's behalf.

Headteachers and other managers have specific responsibilities to direct the work of members of staff and to manage performance. It is not intended that this policy affects Headteachers or other managers exercising these responsibilities appropriately and fairly. This includes issuing instructions, providing critical feedback to allow employees to improve their performance, taking action to control absence or to deal with misconduct, even where employees feel that the action is unjustified or unfair.

4 POLICY STATEMENT

The Governing Body values the contribution made by all members of staff to the delivery of a high quality education service for the benefit of Devoran School and the community of Cornwall. We recognise that the quality of this contribution will be influenced and enhanced if all members of staff can enjoy a working environment which supports and encourages them in working to their full potential.

The Governing Body is committed to promoting and sustaining a working environment in which all members of staff feel valued and respected and in which they co-operate and communicate effectively with each other in seeking to achieve the highest standards of work performance. Any language or behaviour which has the effect of undermining, humiliating or threatening another person, including harassment and bullying, is unacceptable and will be neither permitted nor condoned. We believe that most members of staff will actively support this commitment and will use language and behaviour that is consistent with our expectations. We also recognise, however, that we need to have clear arrangements in place for raising and addressing any instance of the use of language and behaviour that is incompatible with these expectations.

The Governing Body will demonstrate its commitment to a working environment and working relationships which are based on respect for and recognition of the individual contribution made by all members of staff by:

- clearly communicating the standards that all members of staff have the right to expect and are expected to demonstrate to others in all workplace communications;
- equipping the Headteacher and Managers with the knowledge and skills required to influence a positive working environment and working relationships;
- alerting all members of staff to the type of language and behaviour that is not acceptable and, where this occurs, how this will be dealt with;
- identifying a range of sources of information and assistance for members of staff to help them decide what to do if they experience unacceptable language or behaviour (appropriate information is contained in the Procedures and Notes of Guidance accompanying this Policy);
- establishing appropriate informal and formal arrangements for members of staff to raise instances of unacceptable language or behaviour. Information concerning these arrangements is given in the Procedures and Notes of Guidance accompanying this Policy;
- ensuring that complaints are handled sensitively and are fully investigated through appropriate procedures. Information concerning these arrangements is given in the Procedures and Notes of Guidance accompanying this Policy;
- monitoring the implementation of this policy and evaluating its effectiveness.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The Governing Body, Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Line Managers:

The Governing Body, Headteacher, SLT and Line Managers have a responsibility to implement this policy by:

- setting examples and standards of behaviour in the workplace;
- recognising destructive behaviour and taking action where it occurs;
- ensuring that staff (particularly new appointments) know about this policy and how to raise bullying/harassment issues;
- being clear about their role in dealing with complaints.

5.2 Members of staff:

All members of staff are responsible for their own behaviour and must adhere to any DfE and school Codes of Conduct. Each member of staff has a role to play in creating a work environment in which the dignity of all members of staff is respected. Every member of staff is required to:

- **take ownership of and adhere to this policy;**
- **treat colleagues, pupils and parents with dignity and respect and be aware of how their behaviour can affect other people;**
- **support colleagues who are being bullied or harassed and bring incidents to the attention of line management or trade union representative;**
- **set an example for new colleagues;**
- **consider their language and attitudes to others and think before making personal comments;**
- **use this Policy and associated procedures appropriately.**

6 PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS

Appropriate informal and formal procedural arrangements have been developed to support this Policy. Full details of these can be found in the Procedures & Notes of Guidance document accompanying this Policy.

7 CONFIDENTIALITY

In all aspects of implementing the procedural arrangements of this Policy the matter of confidentiality is important. It is the Governing Body's expectation that information obtained during the course of managing or in any other way being involved with complaints of bullying or harassment will be treated as being confidential to those who have a legitimate interest in the issue. Anyone failing to maintain confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

The only occasion where confidentiality may be breached is when a member of staff discloses a serious allegation but does not wish to pursue this complaint. In this event the person to whom the member of staff discloses information should seek advice from Education Personnel to determine whether or not the member of staff or other members of staff may be at a potential risk from the alleged bully/harasser. In instances where an unacceptable level of risk is determined the allegation will have to be disclosed because of the duty of care to protect members of staff.

8 MISUSE OF THIS POLICY AND ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES

It is in the School's interest that the Headteacher, Line Managers and all employees should be able to carry out their duties without the threat of ill-intentioned, malicious or vexatious complaints. Complaints of bullying or harassment will be treated seriously by the Governing Body. Anyone found to be making mischievous or malicious complaints will therefore be subject to the appropriate disciplinary procedures.

If a complainant decides to withdraw a complaint at any stage during the procedure, the Governing Body reserves the right to continue with an investigation. Whilst it is understood that employees may not wish to pursue a complaint for legitimate

reasons, if it is found that an allegation is malicious or fabricated the complainant may be liable to disciplinary action.

9 MONITORING & REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The Governing Body and Cornwall County Council wish to ensure that this policy and associated procedures are effective and address all bullying and harassment issues. A review of the policy will be undertaken one year after its initial introduction by the County Council.

A monitoring system will be established at the outset to monitor the number, nature, origin and outcome of complaints which are made. This monitoring system will involve managers/Headteachers/Governors who deal with bullying/harassment complaints completing a monitoring form and returning it to Education Personnel.

The information gathered for monitoring purposes will not reveal the identity of the individuals involved in any case. It will be used for the purpose of analysing the effectiveness of the policy and whether any changes to the policy are required to be made.

Comments will be invited regarding the effectiveness of the policy from the trade unions and a report will be made to the School's Forum/Council's Management Board with statistical information derived from the monitoring process and any recommendations considered necessary to improve the effectiveness of the policy and associated procedures.

Thereafter, a report will be made to the Management Board on an annual basis concerning the statistical information derived from the monitoring process and any key issues concerning the effectiveness of the policy and associated procedures.

10 COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING

Specific training will be made available to Governors, Headteachers, managers and supervisors in relation to their responsibilities under this policy.

Specific training will be made available to those who may be asked to act as an Investigating Officer within the procedural arrangements accompanying this Policy, and, more generally, in the skills required to investigate a complaint under this policy.

This policy will be communicated to all existing members of staff.

All new members of staff joining Devoran School will be made aware of this policy through the school's induction programme.

All members of staff will be made aware of where a copy of this policy can be found (eg in the School Handbook in the School Office).

Reviewed 06.06.11

Due for review 06.13