



# Westminster City School Anti-Harassment & Bullying Policy

***Approved by Governing Body on 27th November 2018***

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# Anti-Harassment & Bullying Policy

## 1. Introduction

*The Governing Body of Westminster City School (WCS) is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment. It is important to ensure there is clarity about prohibited behaviour. Accordingly, legislation these policies should act as a guide e.g. Equal Opportunities Policy, Equality Act 2010, Protection from Harassment Act 1997 and Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.*

The anti-harassment and bullying principles also apply to the way in which staff and Governors treat visitors, volunteers, contractors and former staff members.

All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status.

This policy has been circulated for consultation with staff

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

## 2. Who is covered by the policy?

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, employees, trainees, part-time and fixed-term employees, volunteers, casual workers, agency staff and governors (collectively referred to as staff in this policy).

## 3. Who is responsible for this policy?

The Governing Body has ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy and the Headteacher is responsible for the effective operation of this policy and compliance with legislation. The Personnel Committee is responsible for monitoring the operation of this policy. Day-to-day operational responsibility, including regular review of this policy, has been delegated to the Headteacher.

All staff must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, model exemplary conduct and adhere to the policy and promote its aims and objectives. All members of staff are personally responsible for ensuring that they adhere to the policy and promote WCS' and objectives with regard to anti-harassment and bullying. In certain circumstances the Governing Body could be held to be vicariously liable for actions of their staff. Staff should be aware that they may be personally liable if they are found to have harassed or bullied another person whilst in School or on School-related business.

Staff requiring further information on the operation of the policy should contact the Headteacher.

## 4. Definitions

### **Harassment**

Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within any of these categories.

An individual may feel harassed even if they were not the intended target.

### **Bullying**

Bullying behaviour may include all kinds of abuse or intimidation, not just abuse from someone in a position of authority. However, appropriate management of a worker's performance of their employment will not amount to bullying on its own.

## 5. Making a complaint

Staff who believe that they may have been subject to harassment or bullying are encouraged to raise the matter through WCS' Grievance Procedure. WCS currently adheres to the London Diocese Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure.

The steps to raising a complaint are indicated below in summary form. A complaint should start informally and escalate only if unresolved. Please refer to your contract and/or the procedure for detailed guidance.

- Informal stage- raise the matter with the line manager, unless that is whom the complaint is about. If this is the case raise with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors if it is about the Headteacher.
- Formal stage- Formal notice submitted to the Headteacher in writing. The complaint should include information such as specific instances, including dates, the name of the harasser or bully, it should also contain steps that have been taken to stop it occurring.
- Appeal

All of the foregoing must be within the timescales set out in the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure.

WCS takes its responsibility seriously and will support colleagues to mitigate against the likelihood of potential future harassment of an employee by a third party, this may include changes to working arrangements if the service permits.

## 6. Protection and support for those involved

Support for staff is available via Line Management, the school chaplain and access to Governors should the circumstances require it.

Everyone involved in the operation of the policy, whether making a complaint or involved in any investigation, is responsible for observing the high level of confidentiality that is required. 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.

A breach of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure.

### 7. Breaches of this policy

Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of harassment or bullying will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

### 8. Monitoring and review of the policy

This policy is reviewed annually by the Personnel Committee and any changes approved by the governing body. In addition, it is formally reviewed and approved by the full governing body every three years.

WCS will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives.

Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the Headteacher.