**FRIENDS OF HASLINGDEN**

**CEMETERY**

Bullying and Harassment

# Policy

Everyone will be treated with dignity and respect at Small Charity Support. Bullying and harassment of any kind are in no-one's interest and will not be tolerated in the workplace; this includes bullying or harassment of staff by visitors to Small Charity Support.

This policy applies to all Trustees, members, volunteers and staff on and off the premises, including those working away from their main office, place of work.

Bullying and harassment will be treated as disciplinary offences.

## What are Bullying and Harassment?

**Harassment, in general terms is** unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women in the workplace, where actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient.

It may be related to age, gender, race, disability, religion, belief, sexuality, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident.

**Bullying is o**ffensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Bullying or harassment may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people. It may be obvious or it may be insidious. It may be face to face or in written communications, electronic (e)mail, phone. Whatever form it takes, it is unwarranted and unwelcome to the individual. It may take place in private or in public.

Examples of bullying/harassing behaviour include:

* spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone by word or behaviour (particularly on the grounds of race, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief);
* copying memos that are critical about someone to others who do not need to know;
* ridiculing or demeaning someone - picking on them or setting them up to fail;
* exclusion or victimisation;
* unfair treatment;
* overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position;
* unwelcome sexual advances - touching, standing too close, the display of offensive materials;
* making threats or comments about job security without foundation;
* deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading and constant criticism;
* preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities.

Legitimate, constructive and fair criticism of an employee’s performance or behaviour at work is not bullying. An occasional raised voice or argument is not bullying.

## Procedures

Complaints of bullying and/or harassment, or information from staff relating to such complaints, will be dealt with fairly and confidentially and sensitively using the general format set out in Small Charity Support's grievance procedures. However bullying or harassment will not be treated as a standard grievance; it is a serious issue and will be treated as such.

Where complaints of bullying or harassment involve your committee members approaches should be made to another appropriate member of the committee.

## Investigation

Complaints will be taken seriously and investigated promptly, objectively and independently. Decisions can then be made as to what action needs to be taken.

## Informal action

If appropriate, the matter will be dealt with informally; sometimes people 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.

## Formal action

More serious cases of bullying or harassment will be dealt with under the organisation’s disciplinary procedures.

# Procedures

The aim of these procedures is to ensure incidents of bullying and harassment can be recognised and dealt with.

## How can bullying and harassment be recognised?

Behaviour that is considered bullying by one person may be considered firm management by another. Most people will agree on extreme cases of bullying and harassment but it is sometimes the “grey” areas that cause most problems.

Bullying and harassment can often be hard to recognize – they may not be obvious to others, and may be insidious. The recipient may think “perhaps this is normal behaviour”.

They may be anxious that others will consider them weak, or not up to the job, if they find the actions of others intimidating. They may be accused of “overreacting” and worry that they won’t be believed if they do report incidents.

People being bullied or harassed may sometimes appear to overreact to something that seems relatively trivial but which may be the “last straw” following a series of incidents. There is often fear of retribution if they make a complaint. Colleagues may be reluctant to come forward as witnesses, as they too may fear the consequences to themselves. They may be so relieved not to be the target of the bully that they collude with the bully as a way of avoiding attention.

Bullying and harassment makes someone feel anxious and humiliated. Feelings of anger and frustration at being unable to cope may be triggered. Some people may try to retaliate in some way. Others may become frightened and demotivated. Stress, loss of self confidence and self-esteem caused by harassment or bullying can lead to insecurity, illness, absence from work, and even resignation. Almost always performance is affected.

## Why do we need to take action?

Bullying and harassment are not only unacceptable on moral grounds but may, if unchecked or badly handled, create serious problems:

* Poor morale and poor relations;
* Loss of respect;
* Poor performance;
* Lost productivity;
* Absence;
* Resignations;
* Damage to organisational reputation;
* Tribunal and other court cases and payment of unlimited compensation.

## The legal position

### Discrimination and harassment

It is not possible to make a direct complaint to a tribunal about bullying. However, people might be able to bring complaints under laws covering **discrimination and harassment.**

The Health and Safety Executive’s “Guidance on stress in the workplace” includes the advice that “stress should be treated like any other health hazard” and that employers have a “legal duty to take reasonable care to ensure health is not placed at risk through excessive and sustained levels of stress”.

It was duly agreed by those present on the

21 November 2019

That the above policy be adopted by Friends of Haslingden Cemetery and appended to the group constitution

Endorsed on behalf of the Friends of Haslingden Cemetery:

A Taylor L Drew A N Taylor

Chair Secretary Treasurer