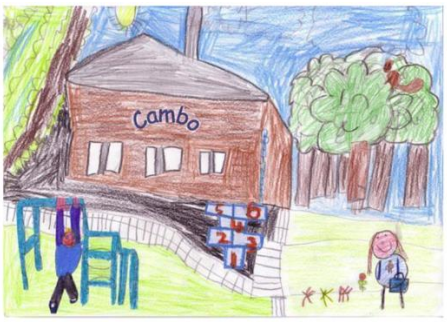


Cambo First School

Dignity at Work

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Date of Adoption by the Governing Body:	Spring 2025

Dignity at Work

1. Introduction

1.1 Policy Aim

The aim of this policy is to create a healthy work environment in which all individuals are given the dignity and respect to which they are entitled. It promotes dignity and respect at work and provides support and guidance to any employee within our school who may experience unfair treatment, harassment or bullying, inclusive of sexual harassment (or any other inappropriate behaviour) giving both employees and the School leadership team confidence in the process for dealing with such behaviours.

1.2 Policy Summary

The policy makes it clear that of any kind of harassment or bullying relating to a protected characteristic, inclusive of sexual harassment is wholly unacceptable behaviour. It defines bullying and harassment and provides details of the mechanisms available to employees who have concerns to the way they are being treated.

2. Introduction

As the Governing Body of Cambo First School we adopted this policy statement and accompanying procedure on (insert date).

Any additional school policies and procedures referenced in this document can be accessed in school via Staff handbook and the school policy folder. They can also be accessed via the school website.

2.1 The school seeks to create a healthy work environment in which all individuals are given the dignity and respect to which they are entitled. The school is aware that bullying, harassment, or unfair treatment can have an extremely damaging effect on individuals and working relationships which undermines confidence and causes stress, low morale, and other health problems, therefore both employees and managers within our school have a responsibility to set a positive example by treating others with respect and to act in a way which is in line with the school's values

2.2 The guidelines contained within the Dignity at Work policy are intended to help managers understand their role in implementing the policy and its significance to their day-to-day managerial responsibilities. All managers have a specific responsibility to operate within the boundaries of this policy, ensure that all employees understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and to take action when behaviour falls below its requirements.

2.3 The Dignity at Work policy does not just apply to the actions of employees whilst at work but also outside of work. The use of social media is now more prevalent than ever and special care should be taken by employees to behave appropriately on social networking sites, and not to participate in behaviour that may be construed as harassment or bullying relating to a protected characteristic, inclusive

of sexual harassment (or any other inappropriate behaviour) under the policy.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing body - The Governing body has an obligation and duty of care in taking proactive steps to ensure the wellbeing of employees within the school and that a suitable working environment is provided for staff. We are therefore committed to eliminating bullying, harassment or unfair treatment of any kind and preserving individual's dignity at work and ensuing managers are trained in these areas and conflict resolution so they are able to educate the workforce in the development of positive behaviours.

Headteachers/Managers - The headteacher or any employees with management or supervisory responsibilities are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented by communicating the policy and resolving any behaviour that jeopardises dignity at work as quickly as possible. Helping staff to resolve their differences wherever possible, encouraging reporting and ensuring that serious matters are appropriately dealt with using the relevant formal procedure. Managers should also create a positive working environment within their teams whilst also taking proactive steps to prevent sexual harassment including that of third parties.

Employees - Every employee is under a duty to behave appropriately at all times and to actively seek to prevent harassment, discrimination, bullying and all other forms of unwarranted or improper behaviour in the workplace.

They should work with each other and their managers to create a positive working environment, preventing conflict which includes showing common courtesy, dignity and respect for others and

avoiding behaviour that makes anyone feel uncomfortable, degraded, upset or victimised. Employees who are subject to or witness any form of harassment should report it immediately to the appropriate manager so that the issue can be dealt with as quickly as possible to preserve effective relationships within the workplace.

4. Definitions of Terms used

4.1 Dignity

Dignity is concerned with how people feel, think and behave in relation to the worth or value of themselves and others. To treat someone with dignity is to treat them as being of worth, in a way that is respectful of them as valued individuals. To not treat an individual with dignity may lead to individuals believing they are being bullied or harassed.

4.2 Respect

Respect is a positive regard shown to a person as a human being, as an individual, by others and demonstrated as courtesy, good communication, taking time and equal access.

4.3 Harassment

Harassment is defined as improper comments or actions that are considered unwelcome, objectionable or demeaning by the recipient. The courts have also indicated that harassment may constitute discrimination and may leave both the employee and the employer liable under employment legislation. Harassment can also occur outside the work premises at work functions or after-work social gatherings.

For behaviour to count as harassment in equality law, it must be one of three types:

- Unwanted behaviour related to a protective characteristic i.e. age, disability, race, sex, gender reassignment, religion/belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity or marriage and civil partnership that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment.

- Sexual harassment, which takes place when a person does something of a sexual nature (which might be verbal, nonverbal, or physical) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment; or

- An employee is treated less favourably than others because he or she either submits to or rejects sexual harassment or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment.

Forms of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Violence or threats of violence;
- Unwelcome physical contact;
- Jokes, offensive language, gossip, slander or hate mail;
- Posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, drawings or emblems;
- Isolation or non co-operation;
- Coercion for sexual favours;

- Intrusion by pestering, spying or stalking;
- Overbearing supervision or misuse of position;
- Unfair treatment.

4.4 Bullying

Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression - verbal, psychological or physical - conducted by an individual or group in relation to another individual or group. In general terms it can be described as the intimidation or undermining of someone, or the misuse of power or position which leaves the individual or group feeling upset, hurt, vulnerable or helpless.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides examples which may be construed as bullying:

- Persistent negative attacks on a colleague's personal or professional performance;
- Criticising a colleague in front of others;
- Spreading malicious rumours/making malicious allegations;
- Persistently setting tasks with impossible deadlines or which are unachievable;
- Removing and replacing areas of responsibility with menial or demeaning tasks;
- Undervaluing a colleague's contribution, placing unreasonable demands on and/or over-monitoring a colleague's performance;
- Withholding information with the intent of deliberately affecting a colleague's performance;
- Excluding colleagues by talking solely to others so as to isolate another;
- Homophobic or biphobic remarks and behaviours.

Bullying need not be face to face, it may be written communication, electronic mail and by telephone.

4.4 Discrimination

Discrimination is any unfavourable and unjustifiable treatment received by an individual because of their age, gender reassignment, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, pregnancy/maternity or marriage and civil partnership. Discrimination is illegal under the Equality Act 2010.

4.5 Victimisation

Victimisation is abuse or unfavourable treatment given in reprisal against someone who has complained or given evidence under the terms of this policy. Victimising someone who makes a complaint under the Equality Act is illegal.

4.6 Incitement

Incitement refers to encouraging someone to harass, intimidate or discriminate against others or to collude in any inappropriate behaviour.

5.0 Raising a concern about Dignity at Work

The school's aim is to resolve cases of conflict, bullying or harassment in order to preserve and maintain effective working relationships. Any kind of harassment or bullying relating to a protected characteristic, inclusive of sexual harassment is wholly unacceptable behaviour.

5.1 Informal action

It is very important to explore all informal methods of dealing with unacceptable behaviour, as they are often the quickest and most effective but it is understood that, sometimes, individuals may not feel able to use this approach. The employee should consider whether they feel able to raise the problem informally with the person responsible. They should explain clearly to them that their behaviour is not welcome or makes them feel uncomfortable. (Sometimes individuals don't realise the effect their behaviour is having on other people, so this direct approach might make them stop and think.)

Should the employee feel unable to raise the matter with the person concerned directly, they may wish to contact any of the following below to arrange a facilitated informal meeting:

- Their line manager
- Another appropriate senior manager
- The Chair of Governors (where the concern is in relation to the Head teacher)
- Trade Union

5.2 Formal action

Formal complaints are made through the school's grievance procedure which, if upheld, may result in proceedings under the disciplinary procedures. Grievances should be initially made to an employee's line manager or to the next level in the management structure where the immediate line manager is the subject of the complaint.

The school will instigate a discreet and impartial investigation under the relevant policy. Both the accused and the complainant shall receive fair and impartial treatment and all matters relating to this procedure will be treated confidentially.

5.3 Mediation

Mediation is encouraged as a way of resolving issues without the need to invoke the formal process. Mediation is a voluntary process where the mediator helps two or more people in dispute to attempt to reach an agreement. The role of the mediator is not to make decisions or judgements in relation to the grievance but to facilitate the procedure to enable those involved to reach an acceptable outcome.

5.4 Malicious complaints

Making a complaint purely out of malice will constitute a disciplinary offence. However, malicious complaints are rare. If the complaint is made in good faith, this will not be constituted as a malicious complaint regardless of the outcome of any investigation.