

Section 2

EQUALITY AND DIGNITY
(version 6 updated January 2020)

Equal Opportunities Statement

Bullying and Harassment Policy

EQUALITY STATEMENT

It is our intention to ensure that parishes are trained so that their recruitment and selection processes are carried out in the spirit of fairness, honesty and integrity, conscious always of the reverence we should have for one another, and for the power of the Holy Spirit who informs and guides us all.

Centrally we will ensure that training and development opportunities are available to all without unfair discrimination within our resources, and that support is offered on a recruitment by recruitment basis.

We will work to ensure that there is no discrimination on grounds of race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins, disability, age, gender, sexual identity or marital status, where any of these cannot be shown to be a requirement of the job or office concerned.

It is also our intention to take positive action to ensure equality of opportunity and of treatment on the matters specified above throughout our sphere of influence, and in so far as it lies within our power. Senior Staff will monitor our progress in implementing this policy and track progress across any areas in which we fall short.

It is the responsibility of all clergy, staff, GDBF Board and committee members, both paid and voluntary, to abide by and to promote this Policy, and any grievance, or other matter relating to it, should be taken up, in the first instance with the appropriate member of Senior Staff, or the Diocesan Secretary.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

I. Introduction

- 1.1** *'The Church is required by God to foster relationship of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Abuse, harassment and bullying will not be tolerated within the Church of England. All complaints of abuse, harassment and bullying are to be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.'* House of Bishops 2001.

This policy and guidelines are based also on the advice set out in the Dignity at Work booklet published by Church House Publishing – by the Ministry Division of the Archbishop's Council.

- 1.2** Many people in our society are victimised and harassed and bullied as a result of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, political opinion or affiliation, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or disability.
- 1.2** Personal harassment and bullying takes many forms ranging from tasteless jokes and abusive remarks to pestering for sexual favours, intrusive and threatening behaviour and actual physical abuse. Whatever form it takes, personal harassment and bullying are always taken seriously and are totally unacceptable.
- 1.3** Personal harassment and bullying can exist in our churches, and local communities, and this can seriously affect relationships and working lives by interfering with their job performance or by creating a stressful, intimidating and unpleasant environments. It is offensive in itself and profoundly unacceptable in communities that profess the belief that we are all made in the image of God and all called to share the life of Christ.
- 1.4** The legal position of issues relating to bullying and harassment is covered through a number of pieces of legislation.
- 1.5** The Diocese will take seriously – and investigate - any complaint made regarding bullying and harassment. Individuals should be aware that possible outcomes include informal opportunities to seek reconciliation; the Grievance Procedure for Reader Ministry, the Grievance Procedure for clergy holding their office under Common Tenure; the professional code of conduct for clergy; and internal GDBF employee policies. Where PCCs are employers the PCC should have their own policy and practice guidance in place. (It should be noted that for Readers or Licensed Lay Workers the Bishop may revoke a license under Canon E6 or E7).
- 1.6** Where an allegation concerns a member of the public, the Diocese will do all that it can to work with them and the individual member of clergy to seek reconciliation.

1.7 This Section is appropriate for all clergy. For Readers, processes are set out in Section 13 of this handbook.

2. Policy

2.1 All forms of personal harassment and bullying are deplored and the Senior Staff and GDBF will seek to ensure that the environments within the sphere of our control are sympathetic to all our clergy, Readers, and centrally employed staff.

2.2 These procedures have been included in this Handbook to reinforce to examples of behaviour that are unacceptable, and to provide those who are the victims of personal harassment and bullying with a means of redress through appropriate process.

3 Examples of personal harassment and bullying

3.1 Personal harassment and bullying take many forms, including mail, E-mail, telephone conversations etc, and individuals may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes harassment or bullying. Personal harassment is unwanted behaviour by one individual towards another and examples of harassment include:

- ✓ insensitive jokes and pranks
- ✓ lewd or abusive comments about appearance
- ✓ deliberate exclusion from conversations
- ✓ displaying abusive or offensive writing or material
- ✓ unwelcome touching and/or attention
- ✓ abusive, threatening or insulting words or behaviour.

3.2 Bullying is a form of psychological harassment. It is intimidation which serves to undermine self-esteem, confidence, competence, effectiveness and integrity. Examples of bullying include:

- ✓ continual, undeserved criticism
- ✓ arbitrary and inconsistent demands
- ✓ imposition of unreasonable deadlines
- ✓ shouting, swearing and offensive language
- ✓ displaying overbearing or intrusive behaviour.

These examples are not exhaustive, and disciplinary action at the appropriate level will be taken.

4. Complaining about personal harassment and bullying

4.1 An Informal Complaint

4.1.1 Complaints of personal harassment, and particularly of sexual harassment, and bullying can sometimes be of a sensitive or intimate nature and clergy may find it difficult to challenge.

- 4.1.2 In these circumstances an individual is encouraged to raise such issues with a colleague of their choice as a confidential helper. (This person may be for example the DDO, an Area Dean, a senior or other local colleague, or where appropriate an Archdeacon. If a formal complaint is made this may also be investigated by another Archdeacon or an independent member of Senior Staff or appropriate other).
- 4.1.3 If an individual is the victim of harassment or bullying they can (on their own or with the assistance of a confidential helper) make it clear to the harasser on an informal verbal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and they are being asked to stop.
- 4.1.4 Through due and fair processes, the Diocese will always seek to work with individuals informally in the first instance to try and achieve an informal resolve (sometimes using trained mediators), and encourage people to meet, share feelings, and give opportunities for apologies to be given and reconciliation achieved.
- 4.1.2 If this is not possible - a written request to the harasser may be appropriate and their confidential helper can assist with this also.
- 4.1.3 Where an informal approach is not possible or appropriate, a formal approach may be required.

4.2 A Formal Complaint

- 4.2.1 Where the informal approach fails or if the harassment or bullying continues, the individual should bring the matter to the attention of their Archdeacon or appropriate other member of the Bishop's Senior Staff Team, as soon as possible either verbally, or followed up by formal written complaint (again the confidential helper can assist with this).
- 4.2.2 If possible, it's a good idea to keep notes or a diary of the harassment or bullying so that the written complaint can include:-
- ✓ the name of the alleged harasser or bully
 - ✓ the nature of the alleged harassment or bullying
 - ✓ the dates and times when the alleged harassment or bullying occurred
 - ✓ the names of any witnesses
 - ✓ any action already taken by you to stop the alleged harassment or bullying.
- 4.2.3 On receipt of a formal complaint the Archdeacon will arrange to meet with the individual to discern the most appropriate series of next steps. At this stage anyone dealing with a grievance raised by any person holding office must have regard to the Code of Practice as set out under Section 8 of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009 and Regulation 32(1) of the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009.

Full details of the procedures can be found in Section 8 at –
<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/ministry/workofmindiv/dracsc/rctshomepage/grievanceprocedures.pdf>