

# Pioneering Care Partnership

## Dignity at Work Policy



### Aim

This Dignity at Work Policy sets out how the Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP) ensures that its employees are treated fairly and with dignity.

### Scope

PCP will not tolerate any kind of bullying, harassment or discrimination. All staff have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect. This Policy applies to all employees, as well as all contractors engaged by PCP and those who interact with our staff throughout the course of their work.

All complaints under this Policy will be taken seriously, and dealt with confidentially and promptly. All parties will be treated with respect. Bullying, harassment and victimisation will be treated as a disciplinary offence in accordance with PCP's Disciplinary Procedure and could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

All employees are entitled:

- To a workplace free from bullying, harassment or victimisation.
- To a workplace free from sexual harassment
- To be treated with dignity, respect and courtesy.
- To experience no form of discrimination.
- To be valued for their skills and abilities.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour can be found in [appendix 1](#).

This Policy is non contractual.

### Definitions

#### Harassment

The Equality Act defines harassment as: 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the complainant or violating the complainant's dignity'.

The Act uses a single definition of harassment to cover protected characteristics and enables employees to complain about specific behaviour that they find offensive even if the behaviour is not directed at them. Protection is also extended to harassment because of perception and association. Harassment may be a persistent or an isolated incident and can be based on protected characteristics.

Negative behaviours which can work against the principles of dignity at work can be:

- Open and obvious – for example verbal exchanges, shouting at people, threat or physical intimidation, personal/offensive remarks, physical touching, circulation of literature or photographs which could be offensive, etc.

- Hidden, disguised or not immediately apparent – for example, innuendo, excluding or ostracising someone, intrusive questioning regarding personal circumstances etc.
- Due to differing perceptions – deliberate or unintentional, perceptions of attitude, culture and/or misrepresentation of social signs.

Harassment can occur at any level in the organisation between all levels of staff. It could involve individuals or groups of people.

**Protected characteristics** are legally defined as age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion and religious beliefs, race, sexual orientation. The complainant does not necessarily have to possess the characteristic themselves. **Harassment by perception** is where the conduct or behaviour is based on the perception that an individual has a protected characteristic, and **harassment by association** is where an individual is treated less favourably because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic e.g. friend, carer, relation etc.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is considered as: 'Intimidation on a regular and persistent basis or as a one off, which serves to undermine the competence, effectiveness, confidence and integrity of the person on the receiving end.'

Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour or an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying may involve individuals or groups of people.

What one person believes is harassment or bullying may not seem so to another, however the underlying factor is whether the behaviour is unwanted or unwelcome in the recipients perception.

### **Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

### **Policy**

PCP is fully committed to working towards creating a working environment in which all staff are treated fairly and with dignity and respect whilst at work, training (or work related events). Irrespective of race, colour, nationality, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, trade union membership, gender reassignment, marital status or other identifying or perceived characteristics to create a positive working environment. A work place environment which is free from hostility enables staff to contribute more effectively to PCPs success and to achieve higher levels of job satisfaction.

It is important for staff to be treated fairly and with dignity and respect as a failure to do so can result in poor morale, a lack of respect for managers, divided teams, poor performance, increased sickness absence and turnover of staff, legal costs, and also damage to the reputation of PCP.

Bullying and harassment may also be a civil offence, a criminal offence, and contravene health and safety legislation. Staff who bully or harass a colleague may find their actions could break criminal as well as civil law. Staff could be personally liable for any bullying and harassment and may have to pay compensation themselves.

Bullying and harassment can undermine an individual's confidence and self esteem, result in long term problems with work and relationships at work, and can result in mental ill health. PCP has a duty to ensure the wellbeing of its staff and to ensure that they do not suffer any stress related illness as a result of bullying and harassment at work.

### **Ensuring Dignity at Work**

As part of the induction process staff will be made aware of this Policy and what it means for them. Staff will receive information on this Policy and other training as appropriate.

All managers will receive training and support to resolve differences and conflict.

All staff have a responsibility to behave in a way which supports a hostile free working environment for themselves and their colleagues. All staff should be prepared to take appropriate action if they observe or have evidence that a colleague is being bullied or harassed. The victimisation of a member of staff for having raised any concerns in accordance with this Policy (or having assisted a colleague in raising a concern) will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure.

### **Responsibilities**

**Trustees** recognise their overall responsibility for ensuring that PCP complies with its legal obligations.

**All Employees** are responsible for;

- their own behaviour and actions in creating an environment which supports dignity at work for all;
- ensure that the rights of others are respected and upheld;
- to familiarise themselves with this policy and attend relevant training;
- to bring the attentions of the appropriate manager to any unwanted behaviour or conduct that they may experience directly or indirectly;
- to support and encourage an environment which values all people and not to cause embarrassment, conflict of interest, harassment, alarm or distress to another employee nor discriminate unfairly or unlawfully on any grounds.

**Senior Managers** are responsible for ensuring that the policy is reviewed, disseminated and implemented and addressing any concerns raised through this Policy.

**Line Managers** are responsible for;

- Using positive management behaviours in order to promote and maintain an environment supportive of dignity at work for all.
- Disseminating this Policy to their staff
- Taking any concerns raised with them seriously, and follow the appropriate procedures to address these concerns.

## Related Policies and Procedures

There are a number of key policies and procedures in place, which directly or indirectly support this policy, including:

- Disciplinary Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

## Relevant Legislation

- Equality Act 2010

## Communication

PCP will ensure that:

- All employees are aware of the policy and associated action plans at induction;
- The policy document is available on PCP's intranet;
- Generic training will include examples or reference to this policy;
- This policy is easily accessible by all members of the organisation;
- Employees are informed when a particular activity aligns with this policy;
- Employees are empowered to actively contribute and provide feedback to the policy; and
- Employees are notified of all changes to this policy in a timely manner.

## Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be reviewed by the Operations Manager on a regular basis to ensure that it remains compliant. A full formal review will also take place annually by Senior Leadership Team as part of the Policy Review Cycle, and approved by the Board of Trustees.

**November 2024**

## Policy Document Tracking

Action	Date(s)
Draft to SLT:	7 November 2024
Policy Approved	22 November 2024
Approved Policy uploaded and circulated to staff:	25 November 2024
Main Review Date:	October 2025
SLT Lead for Review	Operations Manager

## Appendix 1 - Examples of unacceptable behaviour

The lists of examples are not exhaustive but, provide an overview to assist understanding of what may be found offensive whether intentional or not.

### Harassment on the basis of age

Relates to behaviour including ridiculing or demanding behaviour focused towards people because of their age, either actual or perceived or through association with individuals of a particular age. This could include behaviour including regarding them as “too old” or “too young”; or making assumptions about lifestyle based on perceived age.

#### Non-Verbal

- Exclusion from normal work place conversation or activities
- Making assumption about lifestyle/interests
- Denying training/development/promotion opportunities due to age
- Denying training/development/promotion opportunities because of the need to act as a carer for an elderly relative
- Being pressured to retire
- Sending emails or displaying material containing ageist content
- Making assumptions regarding an individual's inability to learn

#### Verbal

- Questioning ability due to age
- Making patronising comments

#### Physical

- Setting unrealistic challenges

### Harassment on the grounds of disability

Relates to behaviour including derogatory remarks, mimicking, invasive personal questions, staring, ostracising or patronising which are directed at any disabled individual or group of disabled people whether they are perceived to be or are actually disabled or through association with disabled people. The behaviour results in the individual(s) feeling threatened or compromised.

#### Non-Verbal

- Making inappropriate gestures or mimicking behaviour
- Refusing to make reasonable adjustments
- Exclusion from normal work place conversation or activities
- Holding events at inaccessible venues
- Denying training/development/promotion opportunities because of the need to act as a carer for a disabled person i.e. having a family member, partner or child with a disability 10
- Sending emails or displaying material containing offensive content relating to disabled people
- Making assumptions about someone's abilities based purely on their disability or perceptions about their disability

## **Verbal**

- Making fun of an impairment
- Mimicking speech impairment
- Using inappropriate terms e.g. cripple, spastic, handicapped
- Inappropriate personal questioning relating to disability

## **Physical**

- Unwanted touching, groping or the invasion of personal space (getting too close)
- Inappropriate practical jokes

## **Harassment on the grounds of gender reassignment**

Relates to behaviour including derogatory remarks, ridicule, jokes or stereotypes of any individual's perceived or actual gender reassignment or through association with someone who has undertaken gender reassignment.

## **Non-Verbal**

- Refusing medical leave for a person undergoing medical treatment gender reassignment
- Refusing to treat a person as their new gender once the reassignment process is complete
- Exclusion from workplace conversations or activities
- Making assumption about lifestyle/interests
- Sending emails or displaying material containing offensive content in relation to gender reassignment
- Making assumptions based on grounds of gender identity

## **Verbal**

- Disclosing the person's gender identity to others
- Making inappropriate comments about the person's lifestyle choice
- Intrusive personal questions relating to a person's gender identity and gender reassignment
- Unwanted comments on dress and appearance
- Actual or threatened disclosure of prior gender identify
- Refusal to address individuals in their acquired gender

## **Physical**

- Unwanted touching, groping or inappropriate invasion of personal space (getting too close).

## **Discrimination on the basis of marriage and civil partnership**

This relates to direct or indirect discrimination and victimisation on the grounds of marriage and civil partnership. It relates to behaviour which inadvertently or deliberately excludes an individual on the basis of actual or perceived marital or civil partnership status.

## **Non-Verbal**

- Inadvertently or deliberately excluding same-sex partners from social events
- People in civil partnerships not being accorded the same rights as married people for work related benefits, such as flexible working, adoption leave, paternity pay and leave
- Civil partners being denied benefits that are automatically given to married people in the same job, such as employment or training opportunities

## **Discrimination on the grounds of Pregnancy and Maternity**

This relates to direct discrimination and victimisation on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity.

## **Non-Verbal**

- Being demoted or prevented from having training or promotion opportunities because of becoming pregnant or being on maternity leave.
- Being dismissed/made redundant while on maternity leave without following correct and fair procedures.
- Being disciplined for having performance issues due to illness connected with pregnancy.
- Being refused sick leave due to illness connected with pregnancy.
- Being dismissed or treated unfavourably while undergoing IVF treatment without following correct and fair procedures.
- Being refused paid time off for ante-natal care.

## **Verbal**

- Making inappropriate comments about amount of absence/toilet breaks.
- Unwanted comments on dress and appearance.

## **Physical**

- Setting unrealistic challenges.
- Unwanted touching, groping or the inappropriate invasion of personal space (getting too close).

## **Harassment on the basis of race (including ethnicity, nationality and colour)**

Relates to derogatory remarks, racist statements, graffiti, jokes, or any other action of a racist nature based on an individual's perceived or actual race, ethnicity, nationality and colour or through association with someone from a particular ethnicity, nationality and colour. This pertains to any action which results in the individual(s) feeling threatened or compromised

## **Non-Verbal**

- Exclusion from normal work place conversation or activities
- Inappropriate gestures
- Sending emails or displaying material containing racist content
- Making inappropriate assumptions based on ethnicity, nationality or colour

- Making assumption about lifestyle/interests

### **Verbal**

- Using inappropriate terms when referring to race (including ethnicity, nationality and colour)
- Using derogatory nicknames
- Making racist comments or jokes
- Stereotyping
- Mimicking someone's accent

### **Physical**

- Inappropriate physical contact

### **Harassment related to sex**

Harassment related to sex is when someone experiences unwanted behaviour that's related to them being a man or a woman.

### **Non-Verbal**

- Unnecessarily requiring individuals to work full-time or insisting on staff working long hours. This may disadvantage more women than men as it is still mainly women who take primary responsibility for childcare so cannot work full-time or long hours.
- Unnecessarily requiring variable hours such as shifts and unplanned overtime. This is likely to disadvantage women compared to men because of the difficulties of getting flexible childcare.
- Exclusion from normal work place conversation or activities.
- Refusing to offer a position based purely on a gender stereotype i.e. not offering a secretarial post to a man.

### **Verbal**

- Making rude, abusive or negative about a person based on their sex and their ability to perform in a role.
- Stereotyping.

### **Physical**

- Unwanted touching, groping or the invasion of personal space (getting too close).

### **Harassment on the grounds of sex**

Sexual harassment is any harassing conduct based on the sex of the recipient. It includes behaviour which results in the individual feeling threatened or compromised. Sexual harassment can be experienced by women and men. Transgender people may also experience sexual harassment based on perceptions or assumptions about their gender or sexual orientation .

### **Non-Verbal**

- Leering or staring at someone in a sexually suggestive manner.
- Making sexually suggestive facial expressions or body movements.



- Displaying or sharing sexually explicit images, videos, or materials in the workplace.
- Sending sexually suggestive emails, texts, or messages.
- Displaying material containing sexist content.

### **Verbal**

- Making sexually suggestive remarks about someone's appearance or body.
- Asking intrusive questions about someone's sexual history or preferences.
- Repeatedly asking someone out on dates despite their refusal.
- Using sexually degrading language or slurs.
- Implying rewards or recognition in return for sexual favours.
- Making sexually explicit jokes.
- Stereotyping.

### **Physical**

- Unwanted touching, groping or the invasion of personal space (getting too close).
- Sexual assault.

### **Harassment on the basis of sexual orientation**

Relates to behaviour which condemns or ridicules people because of their perceived or actual sexuality or through association with someone of a particular sexual orientation. This could include derogatory remarks, jokes, graffiti which results in the individual feeling uncomfortable, excluded, threatened or compromised.

### **Non-Verbal**

- Inadvertently or deliberately excluding same-sex partners from social events.
- Making assumptions based on sexuality
- Exclusion from normal work place conversation or activities
- Sending emails or displaying material containing offensive content
- Making assumptions based on ethnicity, nationality or colour

### **Verbal**

- Using inappropriate terms
- Using derogatory nicknames
- Inappropriate personal questioning relating to sexual orientation or domestic circumstances
- Stereotyping
- Actual or threatened unwanted disclosure of sexuality
- Unwanted comments on dress and appearance

### **Physical**

- Unwanted touching, groping or the invasion of personal space (getting too close)

### **Harassment on the basis of religion or belief**

This is where a person is subjected to derogatory remarks, stereotypes, making assumptions or other inappropriate behaviour on the grounds of perceived or actual religion

or belief or through association with someone of a particular religion or belief. This can include statements or assumptions about religion or belief or excluding people on the basis of their religion or belief.

### **Non-Verbal**

- Exclusion from normal work place conversation or activities.
- Arranging team lunches during periods of fasting or religious occasions which may make it difficult for colleagues to attend.
- Inappropriately enforcing a dress code which may not accommodate religious dress.
- Making assumptions based on religion or belief
- Sending emails or displaying material containing offensive content

### **Verbal**

- Making inappropriate comments or jokes about someone's religion or belief or none
- Stereotyping
- Using derogatory nicknames
- Inappropriate comments about use of prayer rooms

### **Physical**

- Inappropriate touching of religious garments or articles.
- Not respecting personal space as it relates to religion or belief.
- Physical abuse of someone who held a particular religion or belief or none.