

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

REVIEWED: September 2024

NEXT REVIEW DATE: September 2025

REVIEWED BY: Olivia Bakewell

Smile Education Directors are committed to providing a safe and equal working environment where all staff can flourish and enjoy work. Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated and are unlawful and may result in disciplinary action, as per our disciplinary policy.

ACAS characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. The Equality Act 2010 uses a single definition of harassment to cover the relevant protected characteristics. Employees can complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them. Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The following is examples of acts that might constitute bullying/ harassment, this list is not exhaustive:

- spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone by word or behaviour
- 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, display of offensive materials, asking for sexual favours, making decisions on the basis of sexual advances being accepted or rejected
- 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.

Smile Education takes steps to prevent bullying and harassment by ensuring all staff have access to our policies and these are reviewed on an annual basis and updated where necessary. We also work hard to create a culture which encourages 2 way feedback including regular consultation with employees and a key value of remaining respectful at all times. Complaints of bullying and harassment can usually be dealt with using our clear grievance and disciplinary procedures, which each have their own policy.

Any complaint should be directed to a manager or director and will be dealt with confidentiality.
(Please see also our grievance procedure including timescales for action)