



## West Sussex County Council

# Behaviour at Work for all school based staff

### 1. Aim of Policy

The aims of this policy are to provide employees with a clear statement about the behaviour we expect our employees to demonstrate and to provide a process to enable employees to:

- raise concerns about working relationships with colleagues and Headteacher/line managers, and
- have a clear process to resolve those concerns promptly.

### 2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all employees regardless of how long they have been employed, their contractual hours and contract type.

The Policy Statement on Behaviour at Work sets out how we expect employees to behave toward one another. This Policy is linked with the Grievance Policy which provides the mechanism for dealing with complaints employees may have about the behaviour they experience, observe or perceive to be inappropriate. This includes bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Further information is given in the Grievance Policy and the Guidance, which accompanies the Grievance Policy.

### 3. Links to other Policies

Where there is evidence of behaviour that breaches the expected standards of behaviour or conduct (as set out by the School) – including making false or vexatious complaints about another employee's behaviour – these will be handled in accordance with the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

The Capability Policy will be used where there is evidence that an employee is not meeting the required standards of behaviour.

Serious breaches of the standards of behaviour, for example bullying and/or harassment, will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary and/or Capability Policies, as appropriate, and may lead to dismissal.

Where a Headteacher/Line Manager is aware that a parent or a pupil is harassing an employee (third party harassment), he/she is obliged to take reasonable steps to prevent this from happening again.

If an employee has concerns relating to Health and safety, possible fraud and corruption, unethical conduct or miscarriages of justice, this should be dealt with via the Confidential

Reporting Policy, sometimes known as the “Whistle Blowing” policy.

#### **4. Guiding Principles**

Grievances about inappropriate behaviour are best resolved promptly and as near to the point of origin as possible. This is particularly important where the grievance relates to behaviour and there is a need to rebuild relationships. This policy actively encourages employees to raise issues and try to resolve them with their Headteacher/Line Manager and/or Grievance Officer (at Sackville this is Neil Feist, Deputy Headteacher responsible for teaching and learning, monitoring and development, staff welfare), in the belief that the sooner these workplace concerns can be resolved, the quicker all parties will be able to resume normal working.

Employees will be given the opportunity to explain their concern, and be listened to, by a person with sufficient authority to resolve the issue.

Headteacher and managers are responsible for applying this policy in a fair and equitable way. In addition, they are responsible for working with all parties to find a resolution that enables everyone to return to normal working as soon as possible.

Where the Headteacher is concerned about an employee’s behaviour in relation to other employees or third parties, they should use the Disciplinary or Capability Policy, as appropriate, to address the issue.

Employees will not be victimised for raising a behaviour related grievance or for supporting a colleague to raise a concern.

All parties involved in a Grievance have a responsibility to attend meetings, provide honest and factual information, act with integrity, treat each other with respect and maintain confidentiality.

#### **5. Statement on expected behaviours**

The School is committed to resolving issues relating to behaviour promptly, effectively and as near the point of conflict as possible. We recognise that the existence of complaints about behaviour can signify wider frictions within teams, result in increased stress levels for individuals and organisational inefficiencies.

The aim is to address perceived unacceptable behaviour, whether intended or not, and to help rebuild relationships to enable employees to continue working together. It is the expectation that, in the majority of cases, issues will be resolved informally.

We expect our employees to respect one another within the workplace and other work settings. Bullying, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated in any circumstances. Any report of bullying, harassment or discrimination will be treated seriously and dealt with promptly.

Evidence of behaviour that breaches the expected standards of behaviour or conduct (as set out in WSCC Standards of Conduct) - including making false complaints about another employee’s behaviour - will be handled in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy. Evidence that an employee is not meeting the required standards of behaviour will be addressed within the Capability Policy.

‘The workplace’ is any location where the employee is at work including a travel to and attendance at work related events and social functions that have a strong connection with the workplace such as training sessions or celebratory events.

The School will set the standards of behaviour that they expect all employees to demonstrate. In particular, we expect all employees to demonstrate integrity, consideration and respect for others. Examples would include:

- Showing consideration for each other's differing needs at team meetings
- Encouraging and valuing contributions from all employees
- Being respectful of other people's time and using it effectively
- Being conscious of the impact our behaviour has on others

## **6. Inappropriate behaviour**

Inappropriate behaviour (such as bullying and harassment) can take a range of forms. It can be anything that is said, as well as body movements such as gestures and facial expressions. It can be face to face or via written communication in all formats including e-mail, the Internet and the telephone and can include elements of non-communication such as silence or exclusion.

Inappropriate behaviour may include elements of sexist, racist, homophobic behaviour or unfair treatment (discrimination) on the basis of age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, race, gender, disability or gender reassignment.

Victimisation of an employee, colleague or Trade Union member is inappropriate behaviour.

For Definitions of bullying, harassment and victimisation and examples please see the Diversity & Equality page of the Schools HR Guide.

For full definitions and examples of types of discrimination please see the Diversity & Equality page of the Schools HR Guide.

## **7. Raising a complaint**

In all but the most serious of incidents, it is strongly encouraged that employees raise their complaint informally. Raising the complaint informally does not mean that it is not important. It may be that the individual is unaware that their behaviour has caused offence or upset and an open, honest dialogue as soon as possible after the event provides the opportunity for the issue to be resolved before working relationships deteriorate.

Concerns about behaviour can often be resolved by talking through the impact an individual's behaviour has had on another. Employees should feel encouraged to bring their complaints to the individual whose behaviour has caused offence or upset or, alternatively, their own Headteacher/Line Manager/Grievance Officer, without fear of reprisal or censure. When raising a behaviour related grievance employees should think about the outcome they want to achieve, e.g. an apology, a change of behaviour, raising awareness of the impact of the behaviour on your particular circumstances, and so on.

Employees who observe or experience behaviour that causes offence or upset should use the West Sussex Model Grievance Policy for all School Staff to raise their complaint. See "How to Raise a Behaviour Related Grievance" for advice on how to do this.