



Dignity in the Workplace Policy and Charter

Our Lady of Hope School

Armagh Road Crumlin Dublin 12 D12 V6RK

Rolla: 20555K
RCN: 20206506

Introduction

Our Lady of Hope School is committed to creating and maintaining a work environment free from all forms of bullying, inappropriate behaviour, harassment and sexual harassment. The policy has been developed in accordance with the Mission Statement. In accordance with the Mission Statement, all staff members have a role in delivering this commitment and a responsibility to engage with and treat all persons with dignity and respect. This applies to both individual and group interactions with other employees, contractors, students, parents, Department of Education inspectorate and/or officials, visitors, guest speakers, coaches, others, etc.

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 obliges an employer to provide a safe working environment as far as is reasonably practicable which is free from bullying and harassment. The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 prohibit sexual harassment and harassment on the nine discriminatory grounds.

Any allegation of bullying, inappropriate behaviour, harassment or sexual harassment will be taken seriously and Our Lady of Hope School will do the utmost to ensure that all employees and contractors are protected against victimisation for either making, or being involved in, a complaint.

Complaints by staff members and contractors will be treated with fairness and sensitivity and in as confidential a manner as possible.

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to state our commitment, as an organisation, to the principles espoused in the Dignity at Work Charter and the requirements outlined Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and the Code of Practice SI 674/2020 on the Prevention and Resolution of Workplace Bullying.

The policy also ensures all employees and contractors are aware of the procedures for bringing complaints under this policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, (teaching and non-teaching staff) and contractors both in the physical workplace, when working from home or at work-associated events e.g. off-site meetings, conferences, work-related social occasions, etc.

The policy applies to bullying, inappropriate behaviour, harassment or sexual harassment not only by employees or contractors, but also by any student, parent, supplier or other business contact with whom employees might come into contact with in the course of employment with Our Lady of Hope School.

For the purpose of this policy, a staff member or contractor making a complaint is referred to as **“the complainant(s)”** and the alleged offender is referred to as **“the respondent(s)”**.

Aim

The policy aims to protect employees from bullying, harassment and sexual harassment by other employees and non-employees. Non-employees include: student, parent/guardian, supplier, contractor, business contact, visitor.

Objectives

The objectives of the policy are:

- to ensure that Our Lady of Hope School is compliant with their duties under section 8 (2) (b) of the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act 2005 Act as regards ‘managing and conducting work activities in such a way as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health and welfare at work of his or her employees at risk’.
- To create and maintain a positive working environment in Our Lady of Hope School where the right of each individual to dignity at work is recognised and protected.
- To ensure that all employees, contractors, students, parents, suppliers and other business contacts are aware of and committed to the principles set out in this policy.
- To ensure all complaints will be taken seriously and investigated promptly, and that all parties involved will be treated with respect.

Definitions

Bullying in the workplace is defined as follows:

“Workplace bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual’s right to dignity at work.

An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work, but, as a once off incident, is not considered to be bullying”

Cyberbullying

Any references to bullying throughout this policy shall also include cyberbullying. Cyberbullying or cyber-harassment is a form of bullying or harassment using electronic means, such as computers, tablets, mobile phones etc.

It includes sending, posting, or sharing harmful, false, or otherwise negative content about someone and can include sharing personal or private information about someone causing embarrassment or humiliation. Cyberbullying will be treated with the same seriousness as any other form of bullying and will be dealt with in accordance with this policy.

Behaviour which makes for a bullying pattern will likely include, not just one but, a range of the following behaviours. The list is not exhaustive.

- Exclusion with negative consequences
- Verbal abuse/insults
- Being treated less favourably than staff members in similar roles
- Belittling a person's opinion
- Disseminating malicious rumours, gossip or innuendo
- Socially excluding or isolating a person within the work sphere
- Intrusion – pestering, spying or stalking
- Intimidation/aggressive interactions
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Withholding information necessary for proper performance of a person's job
- Repeatedly manipulating a person's job content and targets
- Blaming a person for things beyond their control
- Use of aggressive and obscene language
- Other menacing behaviour

Bullying does not include:

- expressing differences of opinion strongly
- offering constructive feedback
- guidance
- advice about work-related behaviour which is not of itself welcome
- ordinary performance management
- reasonable corrective action taken by Principal relating to the management and direction of teachers and non-teaching staff (for example managing a worker's performance, taking reasonable disciplinary actions, or assigning work)
- workplace conflict where people disagree with or disregard the others' point of view

The list is not exhaustive

Harassment

Harassment on the grounds of gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race, or membership of the traveller community is defined as any unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's

dignity at work and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.

The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

Harassment may consist of a single incident or repeated inappropriate behaviour. The following are examples of inappropriate behaviour which may constitute harassment. The list is not exhaustive.

- Verbal harassment such as jokes, derogatory comments, ridicule or song
- Written harassment such as text messages, emails or through social media
- Physical harassment such as jostling or shoving
- Intimidatory harassment such as gestures or threatening poses
- Visual displays such as posters, emblems or badges
- Persistent negative body language
- Ostracising a person

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. A single incident may constitute sexual harassment.

The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

The following are examples of inappropriate behaviour which may constitute sexual harassment. The list is not exhaustive.

- Physical conduct of a sexual nature, for example unwanted physical contact such as unnecessary touching, patting or pinching or brushing against another employee's body
- Verbal conduct of a sexual nature, for example unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or pressure for sexual activity, continued suggestions for social activity outside the school after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome, unwanted and offensive flirtations, suggestive remarks, innuendos or lewd comments
- Non-verbal conduct of the sexual nature, for example the display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, objects, written materials, emails or text-messages

- Unwanted or derogatory comments about dress or appearance
- Leering and suggestive gestures

Other form(s) of Inappropriate behaviour

While other forms of inappropriate behaviour may not be bullying or harassment, under the above definitions, they are also not condoned or tolerated by Our Lady of Hope School. For example, an isolated incident that is an affront to dignity may not be bullying, but it may be inappropriate behaviour.

Similarly, harassment on a ground that is not one of the nine grounds referenced above may not be covered by that definition, but it is unacceptable.

How does bullying/inappropriate behaviour manifest itself within the workplace?

Bullying behaviour is offensive, on-going, targeted and outside any reasonable 'norm'.

Bullying activities involve actions and behavioural patterns, directly or indirectly, spoken and/or written and may include the use of cyber or digital means for the goal of bullying.

Supports

The Dignity at Work Policy recognises that being subjected to bullying, harassment and sexual harassment can have a devastating effect on an employee's physical and mental health. Equally, being accused of such behaviours, wrongfully or otherwise, can have a very negative effect on an individual. There are various supports available to the parties to a complaint.

Support Contact Person

The Support Contact Person is the first point of contact for any staff member requiring assistance and information in resolving an issue in the workplace relating to alleged breaches of this policy. A Support Contact Person is a fellow employee who has been trained to support other employees and is available to provide a supportive, confidential, non-judgmental and non-directional off the record listening service.

The Support Contact Person will:

- actively listen and provide support allowing the staff member to speak about their experience
- provide the staff member with a copy of the Dignity at Work Policy, explain the procedures, the various options available and help the person identify whether the complaint fits the definitions within the policy
- help the staff member in circumstances where they need information, support, and clarification about the Dignity at Work Policy

- provide the appropriate 'next step' information to the staff member seeking support
- help the staff member to clarify what they are experiencing and to support them in deciding on the course of action, if any, they may wish to take
- treat discussions with the staff member as completely confidential and not disclose information to a third party

In circumstances where the Support Contact Person believes that there is a potential risk to a staff member health and/or safety they are obliged to contact the Principal for advice.

The role of the Support Contact Person will not:

- investigate any complaint
- deal with workplace grievances or personal problems
- approach the alleged complainant(s)/respondent(s) on behalf of the person they are supporting
- act as an advocate or representative on behalf of the person they are supporting
- direct the person as to the best course of action to take

Union Officials

The INTO and Fórsa Union representatives play an important role in providing information, advice and support to staff members who feel that they are being bullied or harassed and also those staff members against whom complaints have been made.

The INTO and Fórsa Union representatives are expected to co-operate with and support management's efforts to resolve complaints, at a local level, where feasible.

The INTO and Fórsa Union representatives may also provide representation to staff members if the complaint is referred onward for formal investigation and are expected to co-operate fully with attempts to conduct any investigation fairly and without undue delay.

Employee Assistance Services (EAS)

The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) '*Wellbeing Together: Folláine le Chéile*' is available to all staff (teaching and non-teaching) and other employees of the Board of Management.

The EAS provides advice to employees on a range of issues including wellbeing, legal, financial, bereavement, conflict, mediation etc. Where appropriate, short-term counselling is available to employees and their family members.

The EAS also provides advice and support to managers and delivers interventions to help them deal with health and wellbeing issues in the workplace.

The EAS is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The contact details for the Employee Assistance Service is:

- **Freephone:** 180041157
- **SMS and WhatsApp:** text 'Hi' to 087 369 0010

Principal

Staff members and contractors may also engage with the Principal, on a confidential basis, to understand the supports available to them and address any concerns at a local level where feasible.

Nominated Person

The Nominated Person is responsible for managing the complaint at the *Secondary Informal Process*. A Nominated Person is a person who has had appropriate training and experience and who is familiar with the procedures involved to deal with the complaint on behalf of Our Lady of Hope School. The Nominated Person shall not be the Contact Person.

The nominated person will:

- establish the facts, the context and the next course of action in dealing with the matter under the informal procedure
- encourage the complainant and the respondent to engage in meaningful dialogue in an effort to resolve the matter or gain a level of agreement
- facilitate resolution by getting the parties together or, alternatively, speak to the alleged perpetrator(s)
- ensure that all parties have a copy of the Dignity at Work Policy and any other relevant information
- where complaints are verbal, compile a written note of what is complained of, and give a copy to the complainant
- provide information to all parties on mediation
- maintain records of all stages; the complaint, the first meeting, action agreed and signed records of the final meeting. *The records will not include details of the discussions.*
- keep the Principal and/or Chairperson of Board of Management informed of the **process**

The Nominated Person is not empowered to act as an adjudicator, mediator, counsellor, investigator or Support Contact Person.

Mediation

Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process that allows two or more disputing parties to resolve their issues (conflict) in a mutually agreeable way with the help of a trained mediator. The objective of mediation, which is accessible without making a formal complaint, is to resolve matters speedily and confidentially without recourse to a formal investigation. It is intended that it will therefore involve the minimum of conflict and stress for the individuals involved. Mediation may be attempted at all stages of the complaint procedures detailed in the policy. However, it is most likely to be successful when it occurs at an early stage. The mediation process is strictly confidential.

Vexatious or Malicious Complaints

A malicious complaint can be described as an allegation being made without foundation, and with malicious intent, where a person knowingly or without regard to whether it is true or not, accuses another person of allegedly bullying or harassing them. This could also apply to where one person maliciously complains of someone allegedly bullying a third party, without fully exploring the veracity of the claim. A malicious complaint has the power to disrupt another person's life to a significant extent and cause damage. Those making complaints, and those involved in early assessment of the circumstances of a complaint, should always be mindful of the potential of the complaint being malicious or vexatious. Complaints which are found to have been maliciously or vexatious made at any stage of the informal or formal procedures will lead to appropriate disciplinary action.

Complaints Procedure

Informal

1. Initial Informal Procedure
2. Secondary Informal Procedure

Formal

1. Written Complaint
2. Rights of the Respondent
3. Terms of Reference
4. Investigation Process

Timeframe

Any (informal or formal) complaint of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment should be made as soon as possible after a person has experienced bullying, harassment or sexual harassment, to support a timely and effective outcome, and must be made within six months of the latest incident of the alleged behaviour.

Initial Informal Procedure

As a first step, a staff member should, where appropriate, attempt to address an allegation of bullying, inappropriate behaviour, harassment or sexual harassment as informally as possible. This response is designed to be flexible and suited to non-serious, minor complaints to be dealt with quickly.

It can suit situations where it is possible that the respondent(s) is/are unaware that their behaviour is negatively impacting others. Ideally, this initial informal response would effectively address the unwanted behaviour without any further action being required.

It is recommended that the staff member contact the Support Contact Person or their Union Representative in advance of taking any action.

The following are the steps in the *Initial Informal Procedure*:

- 1) The complainant(s) who believes that he or she is being bullied, sexually harassed or harassed should explain clearly to the perpetrator(s) that the behaviour in question is unacceptable.
- 2) If it is more suitable, the complainant(s) should put their concerns in writing.
- 3) In circumstances where the complainant(s) finds it difficult to approach the perpetrator(s) directly they should seek help and advice, on a strictly confidential basis from the Support Contact Person.
- 4) Having consulted with the Support Contact Person, the complainant(s) may request the assistance of Support Contact Person in raising the issue with the alleged perpetrator(s) with a view to resolving the issue in an informal low key manner.

Secondary Informal Procedure

This process may be invoked if the 'Initial Informal' process is unsuccessful or unsuitable given the seriousness of the issue. This process is more protracted than the initial informal procedure, but still **informal**.

Our Lady of Hope School will appoint a Nominated Person who has had appropriate training and experience, and who is familiar with the procedures involved to deal with the complaint on behalf of school.

The following are the steps in the *Secondary Informal Procedure*:

- a) Staff member(s) will submit their complaint in writing; where this does not occur the Nominated Person handling the complaint will write up the complaint(s) and provide the complainant(s) with a copy;
- b) The Nominated Person will establish the facts and context of the complaint before deciding on a relevant course of action to be taken. It should be noted that if no concrete examples of inappropriate behaviour are provided by the complainant(s), it may not be possible to progress the matter;
- c) If the Nominated Person believes the respondent(s) has a case to answer, after they have established the facts, they will advise the respondent(s) and provide them with an opportunity to respond. The Nominated Person should arrange a meeting with the respondent(s) to record their response;

- d) If it is found that there has been inappropriate behaviour from the respondent(s), steps should be put in place to stop the behaviour, monitor the situation going forward and prevent any recurrence. This will be documented with agreed actions and signed by both parties at the final meeting with the intention of enabling both parties to return to a harmonious working environment; and
- e) The Nominated Person handling the case will keep a nominal record of all stages and ensure these are retained in accordance with GDPR and Data Protection legislation.

In certain circumstances, where issues remain unresolved at the informal process, the Nominated Person(s) will consult with the Principal and consider whether the matter should be referred to external mediation.

If the Principal and Nominated Person(s) agree that mediation is appropriate, subject to the agreement of the Parties, an appropriately professionally qualified mediator will be organised.

Preliminary Screening

Preliminary screening will be undertaken to ascertain whether the alleged behaviour which is the subject of the complaint, falls within the definition of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment as outlined in this policy. The rationale for this provision is that some complaints of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment referred under the Policy do not fall within the definition of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment, and should be addressed through another procedure (*e.g. grievance*).

In order to carry out the preliminary screening, the Principal will ask the complainant to set out details of the alleged behaviour in writing including approximate dates of incidents and witnesses (if any) and the context in which the alleged behaviour occurred. If the employee prefers to give a verbal account, the Principal will take a note of the behaviour complained of and give a copy to the complainant, for sign off by the complainant.

The preliminary screening will be carried out by the Principal who will decide whether or not it is appropriate to progress the complaint under the Dignity at Work Policy. This assessment will be based exclusively on a review of the written details of the complaint. It is not intended to establish whether the behaviour actually occurred and therefore, there are no meetings with the parties to the complaint or other witnesses during the preliminary screening process.

The complainant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the preliminary screening including the rationale for the decision within **seven** working days of receipt of the complaint.

The parties to the complaint should be actively encouraged to avail of mediation, as appropriate, regardless of the outcome of the Preliminary Screening.

A record of the all the stages will kept in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

Formal Procedure

If an informal approach is inappropriate, or if after the informal procedures, the conduct complained of persists, after already informing the respondent, the following formal procedures will be invoked:

1. Written Complaint

Formal complaints should be made in writing to the Principal. If the Principal is the subject of the complaint, the formal complaint will be made to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

The formal complaint should outline the precise details of the alleged incident (i.e. the specific allegation(s), details of the inappropriate behaviour, specific time, date and names of any witnesses. The Support Contact Person may also provide detailed information in relation to the specific requirements for a written complaint.

The Principal will conduct an initial examination of the complaint with a view to determining an appropriate course of action. An appropriate course of action at this stage, for example, could be exploring a mediated solution or seeking to resolve the issue informally. The escalation of a complaint to a formal process will only follow a review of all aspects of the circumstances surrounding matters complained about.

Should either of these approaches be deemed inappropriate or inconclusive, a formal investigation of the complaint will take place with a view to determining the facts and the credibility or otherwise of the allegation(s) and, in appropriate cases, the referral of the matter for further consideration in the context of a disciplinary hearing.

In circumstances where the Principal decides to seek to address the complaint in any way other than full investigation they will consult with all parties to the complaint.

2. Rights of the Respondent

In all cases of a formal complaint, the respondent will be notified in writing that an allegation of bullying, inappropriate behaviour, harassment or sexual harassment has been made against them.

If the matter proceeds to formal investigation a copy of the complainant's statement, along with any other relevant information, will be issued to the respondent(s).

The respondent will be advised that they will be afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the allegation(s), that Our Lady of Hope School has not formed any conclusion about the allegation(s) and that they have the benefit of the presumption of innocence pending the outcome of the investigation.

3. Terms of Reference

Any formal investigation will be governed by terms of reference, agreed in advance, based on the written complaint and any other relevant matters following consultation with the complainant and the respondent(s).

4. Investigation Process

- The investigation will be conducted by either Principal or a member of the Board of Management or, if deemed appropriate, an agreed third party. The investigation will be conducted thoroughly, objectively, with sensitivity, utmost confidentiality, and with due respect for the rights of both the complainant and the respondent(s).
- The investigator(s) will meet with the complainant and respondent(s) and any witness or relevant person(s) on an individual confidential basis with a view to establishing the facts surrounding the allegation(s).
- Both the complainant and the respondent(s) may be accompanied by a work colleague or an employee and/or a union representative, if so desired.
- Relevant documents will be provided to those involved, as appropriate, throughout the process.
- Every effort will be made to carry out and complete the investigation as quickly as possible and within an agreed timeframe.
- On completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) will submit a written report to the Board of Management containing the findings of the investigation.
- The complainant and the respondent(s) will be informed in writing of the findings of the investigation.
- Both parties will be given the opportunity to comment on the findings of the investigation within a set timeframe before any action is decided upon by the Board of Management. The method of communicating the findings may be in writing and/or by the individual(s) presenting at a Board of Management meeting.

Notwithstanding the difficult circumstances, both the complainant and the respondent will be expected to continue with their normal duties and maintain a professional working relationship whilst an investigation is ongoing.

Outcome following the Complaint Process

Where the investigator(s) confirm that the case of bullying, inappropriate behaviour, harassment or sexual harassment is substantiated; a statement of the outcome shall be placed on the personnel file/record of the person against whom the investigation upheld the complaint.

The Board of Management will determine appropriate action through the disciplinary and grievance procedures. A records of any warning(s) for such misconduct will remain on employee's' personal files for the period defined.

The investigator(s) may find that the case of bullying, inappropriate behaviour, harassment or sexual harassment is not substantiated and, in these circumstance, will

communicate this outcome to the parties. Where a complaint has been rejected or has not been upheld, a statement to that effect shall conclude the record in the personnel file of the complainant.

All records in relation to the rejected/not upheld complaint shall be removed from the personnel file of respondent. A statement of the outcome of the investigation with conclude all other files.

Other Outcome(s)

The investigator(s) may find that other actions such as counselling, mediation or training would be appropriate.

If the complaint is upheld against a respondent who is not an employee of Our Lady of Hope School, the report may recommend appropriate next steps such as:

- a) exclusion from the premises
- b) suspension or termination of service
- c) suspension or termination of a supply service or other contract
- d) other appropriate sanction(s)

Appeal Process

If either party is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation they may appeal the decision in writing to the Chairperson of Board of Management stating the full grounds of appeal within **seven working days** of the date on which the decision was issued.

The Board of Management will appoint a person or a panel (who had no prior involvement in the matter) to review the findings of the investigation and hold an appeal hearing with the staff member(s) or the contractor.

The appeal will focus on the conduct of the investigation in terms of fair process and adherence to procedure. The appeal will not be a re-hearing of the original issues.

The outcome of the appeal shall be final insofar as the employer duties under health and safety legislation is required and there will be no further right of appeal within Our Lady of Hope School.

Any further appeal will be by reference to appropriate third parties.

Post-investigation follow up

Our Lady of Hope School reserves the right, following any formal investigation, to conduct a post investigation follow-up with the relevant parties to monitor the situation and ensure any recommended changes and/or required training is implemented.

Protection against Victimisation

Staff shall be protected from intimidation, victimisation or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation. Retaliation against a complainant(s) for complaining about bullying/harassment is considered a serious disciplinary offence. A malicious complaint made by a staff member will be treated as misconduct under the disciplinary procedure.

Assistance in the event of Bullying or Harassment

Every effort will be made to assist if they so wish, staff member(s) who are victims of bullying/harassment to deal with the problem and where it is requested, the services of a counsellor will be made available by the Board of Management.

Any staff member who bully or harass others may be requested to attend counselling to prevent further incidences of harassment occurring. Access to such counselling may be made available by the Board of Management.

Students

Where a complaint of bullying or harassment is made against a student, it shall be reported to any of the following: Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor or Class Teacher. Such complaints will be investigated in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Visitors

Where a complaint of bullying/harassment is made by or about a visitor - including a parent/guardian, to the school, it will be reported to the Principal for investigation and subsequent referral to the Board of Management.

Roles and Responsibilities

Employees Responsibilities:

Comply with their duties under the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 including to not engage in improper conduct, endangering their own or another's health and to cooperate with Our Lady of Hope School in its efforts to carry out its health and safety responsibilities. (*Section 13 (d)*)

Not engage in improper conduct or other behaviour that is likely to endanger their own safety, health and welfare at work or that of any other person. (*Section 13 (e)*)

Treat everyone in the course of their work with courtesy, dignity and respect and ensure that their behaviour does not cause offence.

Discourage bullying, harassment and sexual harassment by objecting to inappropriate behaviour, if witnessed.

Inform Principal/Deputy Principal, if they are concerned that a colleague is being bullied, harassed or sexually harassed.

Make themselves aware of the Dignity at Work Policy and the options which are available to them, if they are subjected to, or accused of, bullying, harassment or sexual harassment.

Cooperate with the provisions of the Dignity at Work Policy in terms of the prevention measures (e.g. attending training) and in the management of complaints, both in the informal and formal procedures.

Cooperate and engage in a proactive and meaningful way with management efforts to resolve a complaint including where directly involved, attending meetings/interviews as required at various stages of the procedures and giving appropriate consideration to participation in mediation.

Continue to work as normal where directly involved in a complaint, unless otherwise advised.

Not engage in victimisation, intimidation or hostility towards an alleged perpetrator of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment, or a complainant.

Maintain confidentiality where directly involved or aware of a complaint of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment.

Board of Management Responsibilities:

Manage and conduct work activities in such a way as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health or welfare at work of their employees at risk (Section 8 (2) (b));

Provide the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health, and welfare at work of their employees (Section 8 (g));

Identify the hazards in the place of work under their control, assess the risks presented by those hazards and be in possession of a written assessment (known as a “risk assessment”) of the risks to the safety, health and welfare at work of their employees, including the safety, health and welfare of any single employee or group or groups of employees who may be exposed to any unusual or other risks under the relevant statutory provisions (Section 19(1));

Prepare, or ask to be prepared, a written statement (to be known and referred to in this Act as a “safety statement”), based on the identification of the hazards and the risk assessment carried out under section 19, specifying the manner in which the safety, health and welfare at work of their employees shall be secured and managed (Section 20(1)).

Comply with responsibilities under the health and safety legislation in terms of preventing improper conduct; conducting risk assessments and the identification and management of controls where bullying and harassment have been identified as hazards in the workplace; and facilitating their inclusion in the safety statement.

Foster a positive, supportive work environment, where good communication, support and mutual respect are the norm.

Deal promptly and effectively with any incidents of bullying or harassment of which they are aware or ought to be aware.

Respond sensitively to any employee who makes a complaint of bullying or harassment.

Respond promptly and discreetly to requests from employees to intervene and seek to resolve the matter informally where appropriate.

Promote awareness of and communicate the Policy to all employees and non-employees.

Facilitate preliminary screening, and Support Contact Person and Nominated Person to carry out their roles.

Training and Awareness

Our Lady of Hope School is committed to ensuring all employees and contractors have the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure the prevention of workplace bullying, inappropriate behaviour, harassment or sexual harassment.

This will include the following:

- provide staff members and contractors with a copy of the Dignity at Work Policy
- provide information on the types of behaviour(s) that are dealt with under the Dignity at Work Policy
- provide training on the Dignity at Work Policy
- provide assistance, if necessary, to overcome an incident as well as adequate and informed supervision of the work environment
- provide appropriate training as required for those managing complaints

Reference to other Policies

- Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
- Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers
- Communication Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Safety Statement

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation to the greatest extent consistent with the requirements of a fair investigation. It is not possible, however, to guarantee the anonymity of the complainant or any person who participates in the investigation.

All records will be stored in a confidential manner and in a secure location in accordance with GDPR and Data Protection legislation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board of Management will monitor and follow up after a complaint is made so that the behaviour complained of does not reoccur.

Review

The policy will be reviewed every two years. The Board of Management may, however, review this policy at an earlier stage as circumstances or legislation require. Any amendments will be communicated to the community of Our Lady of Hope School.

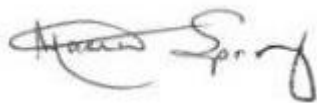
Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of Our Lady of Hope School adopted this policy at a meeting on 5th March 2024.

Copies of this policy will be circulated and communicated to the school community. A copy of the policy is available on the website and available from the school office upon request.

A copy of the Dignity at Work Charter (Appendix 1) will be displayed at the entrance to the College in order for management, staff, visitors and the general public to view.

Signed:



Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 05.03.2024

Next Review: March 2026



Appendix 1

PROMOTING DIGNITY AT WORK CHARTER

Our Lady of Hope School community commit ourselves to working together to maintain a workplace environment that encourages and supports the right to dignity at work.

All who work here are expected to respect the right of each individual to dignity in their working life.

All will be treated equally and respected for their individuality and diversity.

Bullying in any form is not accepted by Our Lady of Hope School and will not be tolerated.

All individuals whether employed by Our Lady of Hope School or contracted by Our Lady of Hope School have a duty and a responsibility to uphold this dignity at work charter.

Respecting dignity in Our Lady of Hope School also applies to our whole school community – students, parents, guardians, contractors and visitors.