



Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy

Scope of policy: All learners and staff

Approved by: SLT/ Trustees February 2026

Review Date: February 2027

1. Introduction

It is in the best interest of the Charity and its employees to have a cooperative and respectful working environment. We recognise that personal harassment can exist in the workplace, as well as outside, and that this can seriously affect employees' working lives by interfering with their job performance or by creating a stressful, intimidating and unpleasant working environment. We do not tolerate any form of harassment or bullying under any circumstances. Any behaviour that undermines this is unacceptable and we expect that everyone within our Charity and within our premises should abide by these rules.

This policy and procedure applies to all employees, contractors and visitors of inspire+. The policy has been developed to ensure that all members of inspire+ understand what types of behaviour are acceptable within the organisation. The rights and responsibilities of all parties are clearly outlined.

2. Commitment

This Charity is committed to fostering an environment where its staff, visitors and contractors can work free from intimidation, aggression, coercion and victimisation. The Charity is particularly concerned to eliminate all forms of harassment and bullying as it recognises that such behaviour is unacceptable, discriminatory and, in certain circumstances, also unlawful.

All incidents will be taken seriously and could provide grounds for disciplinary action that may lead to dismissal from the Charity. Furthermore, individuals who harass or bully may be subject to criminal and/or civil prosecution.

All Charity staff, visitors, learners and contractors are responsible for helping to ensure that individuals do not suffer harassment or bullying in any form. If, however, bullying or harassment does occur there are a number of actions individuals can take.

Bullying may not always be linked to a protected characteristic and may not be unlawful; however, it is unacceptable and will be treated as a disciplinary matter under this policy.

All line managers, as part of their managerial responsibilities, have a legal obligation to eliminate harassment of which they are, or should be, aware. All individuals will be personally accountable for their behaviour, actions and/or lack of actions in cases of complaint of harassment or bullying.

- This applies to comments and / or interaction directly to an individual as well as comments and / or interaction to others about an individual. This may be either verbal, written or implied actions or behaviour.
- The 'workplace' includes work locations that are both within and outside of inspire+ premises such as schools and event locations.
- This also applies to all work related functions which are held outside of normal working hours, either in or outside of the Charity's offices (such as Christmas parties, leaving celebrations, working lunches etc.)
- Any inappropriate behaviour in the workplace will be dealt with in a serious, sensitive and confidential manner and will be addressed immediately to ensure it is resolved as quickly as possible for all concerned.

- Any questions over whether behaviour constitutes harassment will rest with the person on the receiving end of the behaviour; therefore all harassment allegations will be investigated.
- All employees have a responsibility to ensure at all times that their own behaviour does not offend others.
- A single incident or a series of minor incidents can constitute harassment, especially if this behaviour persists after expressing an objection or asked for it to stop.

To clarify, the definition of harassment is unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment for them. Bullying is a gradual wearing down process comprising a sustained form of psychological abuse that makes victims feel demeaned and inadequate. Examples include:

- Verbal - crude language, open hostility, offensive jokes, suggestive remarks, innuendoes, rude or vulgar comments, malicious gossip and offensive songs.
- Non-verbal - wolf-whistles, obscene gestures, sexually suggestive posters/calendars, pornographic material (both paper-based and generated on a computer, including offensive screen-savers), graffiti, offensive letters,
- Cyber-bullying – including social media, offensive e-mails, text messages on mobile phones and offensive objects.
- Physical - unnecessary touching, patting, pinching or brushing against another employee's body, intimidating behaviour, assault and physical coercion.
- Coercion - pressure for sexual favours (e.g. to get a job or be promoted) and pressure to participate in political, religious or trade union groups, etc.
- Isolation or non-co-operation and exclusion from social activities.
- Intrusion - following, pestering, spying, etc.

Harassment relates to a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Harassment related to any of these characteristics is unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Bullying is defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power, which has the purpose, or effect of intimidating, belittling and humiliating the recipient, leading to loss of self-esteem for the victim and ultimately self-questioning their worth in the workplace.

3. Responsibility

We expect you to take responsibility to discourage harassment and bullying from happening. This can be done by:

- Keeping in mind the problems that harassment can cause and monitoring our own behaviour to ensure that others do not feel harassed by our words or actions.
- Informing colleagues to make them aware if certain conduct or behaviour is causing concern or offence to yourself or others.

Managers and team leaders have a particular responsibility to prevent harassment taking place by:

- Being alert to the possibility that harassment may be happening within their team
- Using their judgement to correct behaviour that could be considered offensive and reminding employees of organisational policy on this matter
- Taking prompt action to stop harassment as soon as it is identified

It is important to note that the question of whether certain behaviour constitutes harassment, rests with the person on the receiving end of the behaviour, therefore all harassment allegations will be taken seriously and fully investigated. We operate an open-door policy to discuss workplace problems and you can discuss the matter with your Line Manager or C.E.O. on an informal or formal basis. If you would like to raise any concerns formally, the Charity's Grievance Policy will be followed. We will deal with all complaints of harassment and bullying promptly, fairly, sensitively and in confidence.

Any employee found, after investigation, to have engaged in bullying or harassment will be subject to the Charity's disciplinary procedure, up to and including dismissal.

Complaints of Bullying and Harassment or Discrimination are serious matters. Employees who are found to have made frivolous, vexatious, or malicious complaints of Bullying and Harassment or Discrimination may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

4. Cyber and Off-site Conduct

This policy applies to conduct that occurs outside the physical workplace, including online or via social media, where such conduct is connected to work, impacts working relationships, or affects an individual's dignity at work.