Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 Hamwic Education Trust (HET) is committed to providing a working environment free from harassment and bullying and ensuring all staff are treated, and treat others, with dignity and respect.

1.2 This policy covers harassment or bullying which occurs at work and out of the workplace, such as on school trips or at work-related events or social functions. It covers bullying and harassment by employees (which may include consultants, contractors and agency workers) and also by third parties such as parents, suppliers or visitors to our premises.

1.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy is for all employees working within a HET school or establishment (which for ease of reference are referred to throughout this document as 'schools') or the HET Managed Service (MS) Team.

3. Definitions

3.1 Harassment - Harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to harassment.

3.2 It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past.

3.3 Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or

maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Harassment is unacceptable even if it does not fall within any of these categories.

3.4 Harassment may include, for example:

(a) Unwanted physical conduct or "horseplay", including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing.

(b) Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless).

(c) Offensive e-mails, text messages or social media content.

(d) Mocking, mimicking or belittling a person's disability.

3.5 A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended "target". For example, a person may be harassed by racist jokes about a different ethnic group if the jokes create an offensive environment.

3.6 **Bullying -** Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined, or threatened. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority but can include both personal strength and the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

3.7 Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. Bullying may include, by way of example:

(a) Physical or psychological threats.

(b) Overbearing and intimidating levels of supervision.

(c) Inappropriate derogatory remarks about someone's performance.

3.8 Legitimate, reasonable, and constructive criticism of a worker's performance or behaviour, or reasonable instructions given to workers in the course of their employment, will not amount to bullying on their own.

4. If an employee is being harassed or bullied

4.1 If an employee is being harassed or bullied, they should consider whether they feel able to raise the problem informally with the person responsible. They should explain clearly to them that their behaviour is not welcome or makes them uncomfortable. If this is too difficult or embarrassing, they should speak to their line manager **OR** HET HR who can provide confidential advice and assistance in resolving the issue formally or informally. Concerns can also be raised through the HET Whistleblowing Policy.

4.2 If informal steps are not appropriate, or have been unsuccessful, they should raise the matter formally under the HET Grievance Policy.

4.3 Concerns/issues raised will be dealt with in a timely and confidential manner. An investigation will be conducted by someone with appropriate experience and no prior involvement in the matter, where possible. Details of the investigation and the names of the person raising the

concern and the person accused must only be disclosed on a "need to know" basis. HET will consider whether any steps are necessary to manage any ongoing relationship between the employee who raised the concern and the person accused during the investigation.

4.4 Once the investigation is complete, both parties will be informed of the decision. If considered an employee has been harassed or bullied the matter will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy as a case of possible misconduct or gross misconduct. If the harasser or bully is a third party such as a customer or other visitor, HET will consider what action would be appropriate to deal with the problem. Whether or not the complaint is upheld, HET will consider how best to manage any ongoing working relationship between the parties concerned.

5. Protection and support for those involved

5.1 Employees who make complaints or who participate in good faith in any investigation must not suffer any form of retaliation or victimisation as a result. Anyone found to have retaliated against or victimised someone in this way will be subject to disciplinary action under the HET Disciplinary Policy.

6. Record-keeping

6.1 Information about a complaint by or about an employee may be placed on the employee's personnel file, along with a record of the outcome and of any notes or other documents compiled during the process. These will be processed in accordance with HET's Data Protection Policy.

7. Support

7.1 Employee Support is a confidential counselling and support service provided by trained, experienced counsellors, providing telephone and face-to-face counselling through HET's provider.

Links to other policies and documents:

- HET Data Protection Policy
- HET Disciplinary Policy
- HET Employee Handbook & Code of Conduct
- HET Equal Opportunities Policy
- HET Grievance Policy
- HET Whistleblowing Policy

Version	Updates	Approved Date