



NEWBOLD SCHOOL HARASSMENT POLICY

*Reviewed December 2021 by Mrs J Crissey (Head Teacher).
To be ratified by Newbold School Board of Governors January 2022
Next review December 2023*

Any form of harassment is considered incompatible with the ethos and ideals of Newbold School. Harassment can have a devastating effect on the health, confidence, morale, and performance of those affected by it. It may also have a damaging effect on other staff even though they are not the object of the harassment. All staff are entitled to a working environment which respects their personal dignity and which is free from objectionable conduct. Harassment is a disciplinary offence and incidents will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

A. What is harassment?

Harassment is:

- Unwanted conduct, (verbal, physical or emotional) which is of a sexual or racial nature, or other conduct based on a person's race and/or gender which affects the dignity of men or women at work;
- Bullying of colleagues by intimidating behaviour, or
- Unfavourable conduct at work, whether verbal, or nonverbal towards someone based on his/her disability which could affect his/her dignity at work.

Examples of harassment or bullying would include sexual or racial banter; the display of material with sexual or racial overtones (even if not directed at the complainant); sarcastic personal remarks about colleagues, especially those reporting to you; over-demanding requirements.

B. Prevention of harassment

1. Informal stage

- a. It is entirely in order for a recipient of unwanted conduct amounting to harassment to try and resolve the problem if he/she so prefers, by explaining to the individual concerned that the behaviour is not welcome, that it offends or makes the recipient uncomfortable and that it interferes with their work.
- b. Anyone who has been subjected to harassing or bullying behaviour may seek confidential assistance from personnel who have been given the responsibility to assist (Mrs J Crissey, Headteacher).

- c. An informal approach to an assisting staff member will be treated as completely confidential and will not result in any report to anyone within or outside the Seventh-day Adventist organisation unless the complainant agrees.
- d. If the complainant prefers or finds it difficult or embarrassing to take up the matter himself/herself, the assisting member of staff will participate in an informal meeting between the individuals concerned or will, if requested, approach the individual on the complainant's behalf.
- e. The informal stage will not result in any formal internal investigation or disciplinary action unless the unwelcome behaviour is of an overtly abusive nature, but is intended to enable you to resolve the matter yourself without it going any further within or outside of the Seventh-day Adventist organisation
- f. If the complainant considers that he/she may have been subjected to conduct amounting to a criminal offence (such as a sexual assault) he/she is entitled to seek the assistance of the appointed staff member (Mrs J Crissey) to make a formal complaint to a police officer or to provide other assistance the complainant may require. In such a serious instance the appointed staff member will inform one of the designated officers of the outline circumstances of the case and will liaise with him/her to arrange special discretionary compassionate leave for the complainant, if necessary.

2. Formal stage

- a. Where informal resolution is not appropriate, is not requested, or where the outcome has been unsatisfactory, then the complainant may bring a formal complaint to one of the designated complaints officers.
- b. If so desired the assisting member of staff will help the complainant to prepare the complaint as well as to accompany him/her to the meetings. All complaints will be thoroughly and expeditiously investigated. They will be conducted in an independent and objective manner by someone unconnected with the allegations, and at least of equal grade/status with the alleged harasser. Whenever possible investigations will be completed within two weeks of the complaint being made.
- c. Investigations will be carried out with sensitivity and with due respect for the rights of both the complainant and the alleged harasser. All those involved will be permitted to be accompanied by a friend or colleague.
- d. The importance of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action.
- e. The investigation will focus on the facts of the complaint. Notes will be kept of all stages of the investigation and those interviewed will receive notes of the interview to agree. Parties will not be required to repeat distressing or embarrassing details any more than necessary.
- f. Wherever possible, consideration will be given to ensuring that the complainant and the alleged harasser are not required to work together whilst the complaint is under investigation.
- g. The complainant will be kept informed of the general progress of the process of investigation and will be informed whether the complaint has been upheld and is to result in disciplinary action. (The rights of the alleged harasser as to the confidentiality of the details of any disciplinary sanction will be respected).
- h. Where a complaint has been upheld, the Seventh-day Adventist employing body will seek to ensure that the complainant is not in any way penalised whether

directly or indirectly for bringing a complaint and the situation will be monitored to ensure that the harassment has stopped.

- i. Any complaint that is unfounded and not made in good faith, for example a malicious complaint, will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

- j. Details of all formal complaints of harassment will be collated by the secretariat of the employing body. These will be annually reviewed by the administrative officers of the employing body with a view to ensuring that every effective step has been taken to prevent harassment at work and to monitor the effectiveness of the complaints procedure.

Personnel with responsibility to assist:

Mrs J Crissey (Headteacher), Mrs G Abbequaye (Ed Director), BUC Education Department