



Bullying Prevention Policy

Background

Beaconsfield Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) seeks to provide an environment that is safe and enjoyable for all. BNC will not in any instance tolerate bullying. Bullying or harassment is unwelcomed or unreasonable behaviour that demeans, intimidates or humiliates people either as individuals or as a group. Bullying behaviour is often persistent and part of a pattern, but it can also occur as a single incident. BNC is committed to the elimination of all forms of bullying.

Purpose

The aims of this policy are to:

- Provide information for the Committee of Management (COM), staff, tutors and volunteers about bullying
- Clarify BNC policy and procedures regarding bullying.

Policy Statements

BNC will ensure that procedures exist to allow complaints of bullying to be dealt with and resolved within the Centre, without limiting any person's entitlement to pursue resolution of their complaint with the relevant statutory authority.

Complaints of bullying, harassment and workplace violence will be taken seriously and will be handled in accordance with the Complaints & Grievance Policy.

Bullying can take place through a number of different methods of communication including face to face, email, text messaging and social media platforms. As such, this Policy applies to all methods of communication through which bullying can take place.

BNC recognises that workplace bullying may involve comments and behaviours that offend some people and not others. We accept that individuals may react differently to certain comments and behaviour. The Code of Conduct details a minimum expected standard of behaviour which aims to be respectful of all staff, volunteers, and tutors.

Some examples of bullying behaviour are:

Verbal communication

- Abusive and offensive language
- Insults
- Teasing
- Spreading rumour and innuendo
- Unreasonable criticism
- Trivialising of work and achievements

Manipulating the work environment

- Isolating people from normal work interaction
- Excessive demands
- Setting impossible deadlines

Psychological manipulation

- Unfairly blaming for mistakes
- Setting people up for failure
- Deliberate exclusion
- Excessive supervision
- Practical jokes
- Belittling or disregarding opinions or suggestions
- Criticising in public

Mobbing

Mobbing is a particular type of bullying behaviour carried out by a group rather than by an individual. Mobbing is the bullying or social isolation of a person through collective unjustified accusations, humiliation, general harassment, or emotional abuse. Although it is group behaviour, specific incidents such as an insult or a practical joke may be carried out by an individual as part of mobbing behaviour.

Consequences of bullying

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour because it breaches principles of equality and fairness, and it frequently represents an abuse of power and authority. It also has potential consequences for everyone involved.

1. For those being bullied:

People who have been bullied often suffer from a range of stress-related illness. They can lose confidence and withdraw from contact with people outside the workplace as well as at work. Their work performance can suffer, and they are at increased risk of workplace injury.

2. For the employer:

Besides potential legal liabilities, the employer can also suffer because bullying can lead to deterioration in the quality of work, increased absenteeism, lack of communication and teamwork and a lack of confidence in the employer leading to lack of commitment to the job.

3. For others at the workplace:

People who witness bullying behaviours can also have their attitudes and work performance affected. They can suffer from feelings of guilt that they did nothing to stop the bullying, and they can become intimidated and perform less efficiently fearing that they may be the next to be bullied.

Context is important in understanding bullying, particularly verbal communication. There is a difference between friendly insults exchanged by long-time work colleagues and comments that are meant to be, or are taken as, demeaning. While care should be exercised, particularly if a person is reporting alleged bullying as a witness, it is better to be genuinely mistaken than to let actual bullying go unreported. There will be no recriminations for anyone who in good faith alleges bullying.

If you make a complaint of workplace bullying, harassment or violence it will be taken seriously and will be dealt with sympathetically and in a confidential manner (except where management deems it is necessary to disclose information in order to properly deal with the complaint).

Roles and Responsibilities

Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that any incident of bullying is dealt with regardless of whether a complaint of bullying has been received directly from a victim of bullying.• Ensure that all staff are aware of the anti-bullying policy and procedures.
Centre Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide leadership and role-modelling in appropriate professional behaviour.• Respond promptly, sensitively, and confidentially to all situations where bullying behaviour is observed or alleged to have occurred.• Encourage completion of the Bullying Report Form when bullying has been suggested.
Staff, Tutors, Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be familiar with and behave according to this policy.• If you are a witness to bullying, report incidents to your supervisor, the Centre Coordinator, or a member of the Committee of Management.

Associated Documents

BNC Complaints & Grievance Policy

Code of Conduct

Access & Equity Policy

Bullying Report Form

Document History

Version	Title	Author	Authorised	Date	Changes to Previous
1	Bullying Policy	Centre Coordinator	COM	Aug 2012	Original
2	Bullying Policy	Centre Coordinator	COM	Jun 2013	Yes
3	Bullying Prevention Policy	Centre Coordinator	COM	May 2022	Yes