



Bullying & Harassment Policy

1. Purpose

This policy reaffirms Hastings & Rother YMCA's commitment to a harassment - and bullying-free environment. It sets out clear procedures to prevent, identify, and resolve any instances of bullying or harassment within our organisation.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers, and anyone interacting with the YMCA, regardless of their role.

3. Definitions

- **Bullying:** Repeated, inappropriate behaviour - whether verbal, physical, or psychological - that undermines, humiliates, or intimidates an individual.
- **Harassment:** Any unwelcome conduct based on a protected characteristic (such as age, gender, race, disability, or sexual orientation) that offends or humiliates a person.

4. Policy Statement

- Hastings & Rother YMCA adopts a zero-tolerance approach to any form of bullying or harassment.
- Every individual has the right to work, learn, and participate in activities free from intimidation, abuse, or detrimental behaviours.

5. Responsibilities

- **Management:** Create a positive culture, promptly address any reported incidents, and ensure that all policies are adhered to.
- **Staff, Volunteers, and Service Users:** Must treat all colleagues and participants with respect and report any behavior that contradicts this policy.

6. Reporting and Investigation

- **Reporting:** Individuals who experience or witness bullying or harassment are encouraged to report the incident directly to their line manager, HR representative, or Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- **Investigation:** All reports will be investigated promptly and confidentially, with appropriate measures taken to protect those involved.
- **Support:** Victims will be provided with support and, if necessary, referred to professional services.

7. Consequences of Policy Breaches

- Confirmed cases of bullying or harassment may result in disciplinary actions, ranging from warnings to dismissal or termination of volunteer contracts.
- The organisation is committed to taking graduated steps to ensure a safe environment for all.

8. Training and Awareness

- Regular training sessions will be conducted to educate staff, trustees, and volunteers on recognising, preventing, and addressing bullying and harassment.
- Information about this policy will be widely disseminated and readily available to the entire YMCA community.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect legislation changes or new best practices.

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