Huntington School
Learn and succeed

ANTI SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Policy Number:	**TBC**
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Date on which this Policy was last reviewed:	**November 2026**
Date by which this Policy is to be reviewed:	**November 2029**
Dissemination of the Policy:	**All Staff, Governors and third parties via the school Website**

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1.1 Introduction

1.2 The School is committed to taking and enforcing a zero-tolerance approach to any unwanted, inappropriate and/or harmful sexual behaviours within the workplace, and to ensure that all staff are treated, and treat others, with dignity and respect. It is recognised that sexual harassment can occur both in and outside the workplace, work related events, social functions, or on social media.

1.3 This policy, and the actions of the School, aims to; protect all School employees from experiencing sexual harassment, detail how employees will be supported in respect of this policy and in matters of sexual harassment, ensure a clear understanding of sexual harassment within the organisation, provide guidelines detailing how to report incidents, and signpost to other policies and procedures which have relevance in the context of sexual harassment.

1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Dignity at Work, Code of Conduct and and Disciplinary policy (where applicable).

1.5 Sexual harassment in the workplace in any form is unlawful and not acceptable. The School's culture is based on mutual respect and collaboration. Sexual harassment is a serious violation of those principles and the code of conduct.

2.1 Scope

2.2 This policy applies to all employees of the School. The School will not tolerate sexual harassment from inside or outside of the School. Employees, members of the school community, external agencies and providers and everyone interacting with the School are covered by the policy.

2.3 This policy will be subject to review at appropriate intervals.

3.1 Sexual Harassment Definition and Examples

3.2 Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature. It is categorised in the Equality Act 2010 as 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 sexual harassment, and it has many forms of variable seriousness. Sexual harassment can also include treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or

refused to submit to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or that is related to gender reassignment or sex, in the past.

3.3 A person sexually harasses someone, for example, when they:

- Insinuate, propose or demand sexual favours of any kind.
- Invade another person's personal space and/or make unwanted physical contact (e.g. inappropriate touching.). Unwanted 'horseplay' is sexual harassment.
- Stalk, intimidate, coerce or threaten another person to get them to engage in sexual acts.
- Send or display sexually explicit objects or messages or that some people may find offensive. This may include posting such material on social media. A person may be sexually harassed even if they were not the intended target. For example, a person may be sexually harassed if they witnessed pornographic images displayed on a colleague's phone or if they overheard a conversation of an inappropriate sexual nature.
- Comment on someone's looks, dress, sexuality or gender in a derogatory or objectifying manner or a manner that makes them uncomfortable.
- Make obscene comments, jokes or gestures that humiliate or offend someone.
- Pursue or flirt with another person persistently without the other person's willing participation. Also, flirting with someone at an inappropriate time (e.g. in a team meeting) is considered sexual harassment, even when these advances would have been welcome in a different setting. This is because such actions can harm a person's professional reputation and expose them to further harassment.

3.4 Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

3.5 The most extreme form of sexual harassment is sexual assault. This is a serious crime and should be reported to the police.

4.1 Responsibilities

4.2 Employers are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their staff.

4.3 School leaders;

4.4 School leaders are responsible for;

- Effectively assessing the risk of sexual harassment of their employees and taking all reasonable and appropriate actions to prevent or mitigate risk of sexual harassment of its employees occurring. This includes considering the risk of sexual harassment

within its workforce, and from third parties (i.e. those not within the school's employment).

- Embedding this policy within their setting, which may include:
  a. Sharing this policy, the code of conduct and the dignity at work policy with all employees with a clear message outlining the expectations that they read and familiarise themselves with the content, drawing to the attention of their manager any lack of understanding or queries
  b. Highlight this policy with members of the school community, external agencies and providers and everyone interacting with the School and ensuring reasonable steps are taken to ensure their understanding of its content, for example, by asking such individuals to raise any queries or areas of misunderstanding
  c. Putting in place regular and effective training for employees and any other relevant stakeholders (such as those frequently attending the school to undertake duties i.e. Governors, those running wraparound care, those working in school as self-employed), in relation to sexual harassment
  d. Taking effective and swift action in relation to any allegations of sexual harassment and for reviewing the school's risk assessment in the context of any concerns raised or incidents, including as part of lessons learned
  e. Keeping centralised, confidential records of all concerns raised, formal and informal, and monitoring compliance, identifying trends and evaluating the school's actions.

4.5 Employees

4.6 Employees are responsible for;

- Reading the sexual harassment policy (and all other related policies shared by the school) ensuring that they read the content and draw to their manager's attention any lack of understanding of the content
- Undertaking training as required by the school
- Ensuring that their conduct is appropriate at all times in line with the school Code of Conduct
- Reporting any incidents of sexual harassment observed or experienced to the school in line with this policy and associated policies

5.1 Inadvertent harassment

5.2 Sometimes, people who harass others do not realise that their behaviour is wrong. This does not make the individual any less responsible for their actions.

5.3 If suspected that someone does not realise their behaviour is sexual harassment under the definition of this policy, and this is observed or experienced by a school employee, depending on the seriousness of the behaviour, employees may feel able and that it is appropriate to let the individual know that their behaviour could amount to sexual harassment, and remind them of the school's sexual harassment policy. If this behaviour continues, or the situation remains unresolved, or it is felt inappropriate to address the individual directly then it is advisable that this is reported to an appropriate school leader.

6.1 Reporting Sexual Harassment

6.2 Employees reporting a complaint of sexual harassment experienced through the course of duties, carried out by either a colleague pupil, parent or carer, or member of the school community or associated party should report incidents to the HR Manager or an appropriate school leader as soon as possible. The school will report any such instances via the B-Safe online reporting system to ensure that the school and Council comply with their duties under RIDOR, and to ensure the school can protect its employees from known risk. In cases of internal sexual harassment, the reporting on B safe should not typically be the first step in addressing issues, it is important to risk assess initially to determine actions that are appropriate. In these cases reporting would typically be at the end of the case being concluded and should be reported by appropriate school leader.

7.1 Addressing complaints and allegations

7.2 Upon receipt of a complaint, the school will determine the most appropriate course of action for addressing complaints of sexual harassment and will access HR advice as appropriate. In considering the most appropriate course of action, the school will consider any wishes expressed by the complainant, the severity of what is alleged, and the potential implications if such allegation/s are proven against the individual, their right of reply in the context of allegations having a potential impact in respect of their conduct, and the school's commitment to taking reasonable steps to prevent employees from harassment in the workplace.

7.3 The complainant has the right to be protected during any process to establish the facts in such allegations, and the subject of the allegations has the right of a fair process and to reply in the context of understanding what is alleged and the potential implications for them in respect of their conduct.

7.4 In many cases, the school may decide to investigate allegations of sexual harassment as allegations of misconduct in line with the school disciplinary policy.

7.5 If representatives of our contractors sexually harass our employees, we will request that the company takes appropriate action in line with their policies and depending upon the outcome, the School may refuse to work with this person in the future.

7.6 **When school leaders receive a complaint**:

7.7 The School acts to prevent sexual harassment by building a culture of respect and trust. When sexual harassment is alleged and an employee raises an issue relating to this, leaders must act appropriately and will:

- Regard sexual harassment complaints as legitimate unless proven otherwise. Those who have reported sexual harassment will be listened to and supported.
- Undertake an initial fact-finding exercise, asking for as many initial details and information as possible from the complainant. Keep copies of the information and facts provided with dates, times and details of incidents and any possible evidence in a confidential file separate to the personal file.
- Consider the school's policies and procedures and inform the complainant of these and the school's options to act where appropriate. Seek the individual's wishes and preference, but being clear that it may be a management decision as to the most appropriate course of action where there are allegations of misconduct.
- School leaders must consider any interim actions that may need to be taken, taking into account the perspective and views of the complainant, which may include a need to make temporary changes to working arrangements to protect the complainant.
- Direct the employee to support resources and information available relating to their health and wellbeing.
- Encourage the employees involved to seek advice and support from their trade union.

7.8 Some complainants might want the matter to be resolved informally and discreetly, while others might expect more formal actions. Leaders, with support of HR, should consider the circumstances and decide on appropriate action, again taking into consideration the responsibility of the school to take reasonable actions to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

7.9 For minor issues that perhaps do not meet the definition of sexual harassment, but which highlight inappropriate behaviour that could potentially develop if unchecked, it may be deemed appropriate to take action via an informal approach, such as through stage one of the Resolving Issues at Work Policy. In this case, the complainant's (where applicable) desired action should form part of consideration of an appropriate resolution. It is suggested that in these cases, managers follow the guidance as outlined in the section of this document; 'Conclusion of sexual harassment allegation/s / investigation'.

7.10 Leaders have a duty to prevent sexual harassment and act when they have suspicions or receive reports. Ignoring or worse, encouraging this behaviour may be a matter of misconduct in itself.

8.1 Supporting those affected by sexual harassment

8.2 The school is committed to supporting employees through what is appreciated may be a difficult time. This support should be available via management in the first instance, but where this is not appropriate due to individuals' roles in any formal process, an alternative contact will be arranged for the employee within the school or its governing body. Employees should be signposted to other avenues of support available such as Health Assured, Trade Unions, charitable organisations and advice from Occupational Health where applicable.

8.3 All parties involved will be treated sensitively and objectively by the School in order for the facts to be established. The school will deal with any matters relating to sexual harassment as a priority.

9.1 Victimisation

9.2 Victimisation is where someone is subject to inappropriate behaviour or conduct because they have made or supported someone in making a complaint of discrimination, bullying or harassment. Any complaints or allegations of victimisation will be treated seriously, and careful consideration will be given as to an appropriate way of addressing or investigating such complaints. This may include the need to investigate in line with the school disciplinary policy and procedure.

10.1 Conclusion of a sexual harassment allegation/s investigation

10.2 Careful consideration must be given to the appropriate steps to take upon conclusion of any allegations of sexual harassment, whether it be a case considered as a grievance in line with the resolving issues at work process, or more likely, through the disciplinary process. The next steps outlined give a framework for management considerations, but it is important to note that each case will be different and what is appropriate will depend on a range of factors, including the individual who has experienced sexual harassment's views, the detail of any proven sexual harassment, future risks to school employees and any mitigating factors.

10.3 Where allegations have been investigated as misconduct, the school must consider carefully how to address any next steps whether allegations are proven or not. Each case will be unique and consideration must be given accordingly. It is important to recognise

that, in a grievance matter, the individual who raises a complaint has the right to a response as part of this process. They should be afforded the same right of a response or outcome to any complaint raised which is considered as an allegation of misconduct, notwithstanding the need to balance this against the need to consider the protection of the accused employee's data and personal information.

10.4 In the event that the accused employee remains in employment, careful consideration also needs to be given to how the individuals will be able to move on from the matter raised, which may include the need to consider carefully at the outcome stage what an appropriate outcome might be. Redeployment may need consideration, as part of an outcome, and further guidance in this respect is available in the disciplinary policy and associated guidance.

10.5 Finally, in some cases, where at the end of a case it is determined that the individuals in question will work together in the future, careful consideration should be given in these cases about an appropriate mechanism to support them being able to move forwards in their ongoing working relationship. It may, in some cases, be appropriate to explore a carefully facilitated meeting focussing on the future, or independently facilitated mediation.

11.1 Record Keeping

11.2 School leaders should ensure that they regularly review any sexual harassment risk assessments, updating them and taking further actions as necessary to ensure reasonable steps are taken to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. This includes reviewing the risk assessments upon conclusion of any cases of, or specific concerns regarding, sexual harassment. School leaders should retain appropriate records of any such incidents in order to be able to consider any trends and further action appropriately.