



ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, HAYDON WICK

ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

St John's PCC stands against harassment and bullying of any kind. We strive to make the church a welcoming environment for all, whether staff, volunteers, members of our congregations or other groups meeting on church premises. In particular, we work to ensure that everyone can expect to:

- be treated with respect, courtesy and dignity
- be treated in a manner free from discrimination and objectification
- not be harassed, bullied or victimised
- be dealt with in an honest, transparent and legal way

Allegations of harassment or bullying are taken seriously by the PCC and action will be taken, where required, to address these behaviours.

The following procedure informs you of the type of behaviour the PCC finds unacceptable and what to do if you find yourself in this situation. Implementation of this policy is the duty of all staff/volunteers and all staff/volunteers are expected to comply.

In practice, bullying and harassment is unwanted behaviour which someone finds offensive or which makes someone feel intimidated or humiliated. It can happen on its own or alongside other forms of discrimination.

Bullying/harassment is unwelcome, unreciprocated and offensive behaviour. The determining factor is how it is perceived – not how it was intended by the person initiating the behaviour.

Harassment is a form of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. Harassment is unlawful under the Equality Act if it's because of, or connected to, one of the following nine things, defined in the Equality Act as 'protected characteristics':

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

You may not always realise that certain behaviour constitutes bullying/harassment, but you must recognise what is acceptable to one person, may not be acceptable to

another. Therefore, the PCC has listed some examples for you, although the list is not exhaustive.

Examples of behaviour which could constitute sexual harassment include:

- Insensitive jokes and pranks;
- Comments about appearance;
- Unnecessary body contact;
- Offensive letters/memos/e-mails;
- Questions or inferences about a person's private life and sexual activities;
- Lewd remarks, glances or staring;
- Unsolicited/unwanted gifts;

Examples of behaviour which could constitute racial harassment include:

- Racial comments/abuse;
- Racist jokes/ridicule on racial grounds;
- Pranks;
- Derogatory nicknames;
- Verbal threats or other threatening behaviour;
- Offensive letters/memos/e-mails;
- Offensive publications;
- Facial expression or offensive gestures;
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations;

Understanding if something is bullying/harassment or banter/joking can be a subjective assessment. Banter is amusing and friendly teasing or joking which is perceived as such by all participants and observers. Some indicators that a joke is not just banter and has crossed the line into bullying/harassment are if:

- Only one person is in on the 'joke';
- The remark or action has the effect of embarrassing, insulting or shaming;
- The joke is about someone's gender, sexuality, disability, race or other protected characteristic;
- It is an unwanted sexual comment or advance; or
- The recipient says, or otherwise indicates, that they don't like it.

Ultimately, if it causes offence, it is not banter/joking. As stated above, the determining factor is how it is perceived, not how it was intended by the person initiating the behaviour.



All bullying/harassment grievances or complaints brought to the PCC's attention will be treated with confidentiality and impartiality. All legitimate allegations will be taken seriously and fully investigated and can be treated as a gross misconduct disciplinary offence which could lead to summary dismissal of an employee/volunteer.

Bullying/Harassment complaint procedure

If you are the victim of bullying/harassment, and you are comfortable to do so, you should initially make it clear to the harasser that their behaviour is unacceptable/unwanted.

This may be enough to resolve the issue, particularly if the individual was unaware of the impact of their actions. Where possible, the PCC encourages concerns to be handled informally. An informal discussion can often lead to greater understanding and an agreement that the behaviour will cease. The benefit of the informal approach is that issues can be resolved quickly and relationships improved.

However, if this does not resolve the issue, or if you are uncomfortable raising the matter with the individual concerned, you should adopt the following procedure:

You should keep a record of any incidents which occur, including dates, times and locations.

If the incident was witnessed, ask the witness to make a note of what they saw.

You should report the complaint to your immediate line manager (if relevant – who in turn would report to the PCC Secretary) or the PCC Secretary in writing. Where possible the written complaint should include:

- Name of the harasser;
- The nature of the harassment;
- Dates and times when the harassment occurred;
- Names of witnesses to any incidents of harassment;

Once this complaint has been received, a full investigation will be carried out which may include the temporary suspension of the alleged harasser.

Following a full investigation, any person causing personal harassment will be subject to the PCC's disciplinary procedure, which may lead to dismissal or, if the post is voluntary, being asked to step down.

If your complaint relates to the Secretary of the PCC, then it can be raised with other members of the PCC, the Incumbent, or directly with the Diocese of Bristol (via the Archdeacons, Human Resources or Safeguarding contacts at <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/staff-directory/>).



Please note

If you are unsure of how to deal with a situation, please speak to the PCC Secretary. All conversations will be carried out in strict confidence.

- An individual has a right to be accompanied by a colleague or a friend at all stages of this procedure if required;
- If you bring a complaint in good faith you will not suffer victimisation for having brought the complaint, whether it is upheld or not;
- If you are unhappy about the way your complaint has been handled or you may wish for it to be reconsidered, you should make use of the grievance procedure;
- Prevention is better than cure – if everyone knows what the expected behaviour standards are, there should not be the need to invoke formal disciplinary proceedings on most occasions;
- No person will suffer any adverse employment or Church membership consequences as a result of reporting a breach of this policy in good faith.