

National Modern Languages SCITT

Bullying and Harassment Policy

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Version number:	1.4
Implementation date:	August 2017
Next review:	March 2023
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Target audience:	Staff / Trainees / O.I.A.
Related documents:	NML SCITT Complaints Procedure, NML SCITT Disciplinary Policy, Fitness to Practise

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Aims and Values	3
3.	What is bullying and harassment?.....	3
4.	Recognising bullying or harassment	4
5.	What should we do about bullying and harassment?.....	5
	Aims	5
	Strategy.....	5
	Procedures.....	5
6.	Publishing this policy.....	6

1. Introduction

This policy sets out how The National Modern Languages (NML) SCITT will support and manage issues that breach the dignity and respect of its trainees. Such breaches are not acceptable and may constitute misconduct or gross misconduct and may potentially lead to dismissal of the perpetrator in accordance with this policy or the individual school's disciplinary policy where a trainee is based or within the **NML SCITT Disciplinary Policy**.

As a training provider we are committed to a culture of respect and expect all employees and trainees to adopt positive behaviours that are ethical and socially responsible.

All associated with the SCITT have rights and responsibilities for creating and upholding those standards of behaviour that support the ethos of the SCITT as we lead and establish in our trainees positive attitudes and relationships that will help them learn and grow. If trainees are subjected to behaviours of bullying and harassment, these matters will be dealt with in accordance with the principles of this document or the **Dignity at Work** procedures at the school where the trainee is based. If the trainee is the perpetrator of such behaviours this will be managed through the **NML SCITT Disciplinary Policy**.

All employees and trainees have a responsibility to behave in a manner that supports the ethos, vision and aims of the SCITT and to have professional, constructive relationships with colleagues. Trainees and employees should ensure that their behaviour is consistent with what constitutes a positive role model for pupils/students and families/carers.

Each trainee and employee is accountable for their actions, challenging inappropriate behaviour and ensuring a safe and non-threatening workplace. This includes accountability for individual actions and actively seeking to put things right as well as collective responsibility for creating a culture of openness and transparency within the SCITT to ensure that all trainees and employees are valued and treated fairly.

2. Aims and Values

The National Modern Languages SCITT recognises that bullying and harassment exists and sees the issue of this as a serious matter. All incidents will be dealt with promptly as laid down in the trust/school guidelines.

Bullying and harassment of any kind are in no-one's interest and will not be tolerated. The aim of this policy is to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying and to promote an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable, so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in.

The fundamental principle underlying this policy is the absolute right of each and every trainee not to be bullied in any way and their right to seek help to combat bullying if it occurs.

3. What is bullying and harassment?

Bullying is any act of violence or aggression, either physical or psychological, where the victim feels unable to cope, and is distressed by the actions of the bully. Bullying is usually a persistent phenomenon, but a single act of aggression can also be classed as bullying. It can be:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding and tormenting (e.g., hiding personal property)

- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting or any use of violence
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual – Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic – Abusive comments focussing on sexuality
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours
- Cyber – the use of mobile devices and/or social networking sites to perpetuate any of the above
- Excluding and ignoring trainees and their contribution
- Overloading trainees with unreasonable amounts of work within unclear deadlines
- Any other action which falls under any Discrimination Act.

4. Recognising bullying or harassment

Behaviour that is considered bullying by one person may be considered firm management by another. Below are some examples of unacceptable behaviour including:

- Spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone (particularly on the ground of age, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief)
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail
- Exclusion or victimisation
- Unfair treatment
- Unwelcome sexual advances – touching, standing too close, display of offensive materials, asking for sexual favours, making decisions on the basis of sexual advances being accepted or rejected.
- Possible signs of bullying or harassment can lead someone to:
 - Become withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
 - Become Aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
 - Start bullying others
 - Be frightened to say what is wrong
 - Become distressed, stop eating
 - Refuse to say what is wrong
 - Be absent from training/school or other setting - giving bogus reasons for their absence
 - Become attention seekers
 - Give improbable excuses for any of the above.

N.B. These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and investigated.

5. What should we do about bullying and harassment?

The SCITT will ensure the complaint is investigated promptly and objectively and taken seriously. The following aims and strategy will be adhered to when dealing with an issue around bullying and harassment.

Aims

- To ensure that each trainee feels safe and secure in the learning environment
- To promote the principle that all trainees have a fundamental right to be free from bullying and intimidation in all its forms
- To ensure that all reported cases of bullying are efficiently and effectively dealt with.

Strategy

- To ensure that trainees are aware of procedures to follow if bullying occurs
- To pursue a 'no blame' approach if appropriate
- To ensure that cases of bullying are monitored and followed up as appropriate.

Our aim is to ensure that all trainees feel secure and confident that they are able to work and to take full part in their teacher training, completely free from any fears of being bullied, threatened or intimidated in any way.

Procedures

1. All trainees will be made aware of the **bullying and harassment policy**.
2. All SCITT staff are likewise aware of the policy, and are alert for any signs that a trainee may be being bullied.
3. In our efforts to encourage trainees to inform us if they, or others, are being bullied we must be as receptive as possible to all such reports, however trivial they may at first appear. All SCITT staff must be vigilant and sympathetic to any situations which may indicate that a trainee is being bullied.
4. In all instances the SCITT Director with the co-operation of the school (if allegations relate to a trainee's placement in a school) should make arrangements to investigate the complaint promptly and objectively and take the complaint seriously.
5. The strategy for dealing with any case of bullying or harassment will be at the discretion of the SCITT Director, with appropriate HR advice taken and will be within the guidelines laid down in this policy.
6. The SCITT Director will determine whether within the scope of the policy and procedure and depending upon the nature of the complaint whether dialogue should take place with both parties which are involved in the complaint, to establish what the problem is and how it should be resolved.

7. If the problem does persist or is considered to be so serious that informal resolution is not possible and is so serious as to warrant alternative strategies, it should be managed in accordance with the NML SCITT Disciplinary Policy.
8. If a trainee feels that the problem has not been sufficiently addressed they should refer to the NML SCITT Complaints Policy.

If any trainee feels that they have been the victim of bullying or harassment, they must complete the *incident report form* and email the form to the NML SCITT Director copying in the NML SCITT Course Leader or the NML SCITT Administrator. If the incident report form implicates the NML SCITT Director the form should be emailed to the Chief Executive Officer of Chorus Education Trust.

6. Publishing this policy

This policy is available through the NML SCITT website and our NML SCITT Intranet. A copy can also be requested via our NML SCITT office.

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) runs an independent scheme to review student complaints. The National Modern Languages (NML) SCITT is a member of this scheme. If a trainee is unhappy with decisions made by the NML SCITT regarding this Bullying and Harassment Policy, they may be able to ask the OIA to review this decision. More information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and can't look at and what it can do to put things right if something has gone wrong can be found here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>.