

# **Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures for Reuse Littleborough**

## **1. Policy Statement**

Reuse Littleborough is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all staff, volunteers, trustees, and service users. Bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

We believe everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and we aim to ensure that the working environment is free from unwanted conduct that may violate a person's dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals involved with Reuse Littleborough, including but not limited to:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Trustees
- Contractors
- Service users
- Members of the public engaging with our services

It covers bullying and harassment occurring:

- In the workplace
- During work-related events
- Through digital platforms, emails, or social media

## **3. Definitions**

**Bullying** is unwanted behaviour that is offensive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting. It may involve misuse of power and can make someone feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined, or threatened.

**Harassment** is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of individuals. It may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other personal characteristic. Harassment is unlawful under the **Equality Act 2010**.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Spreading malicious rumours
- Insulting someone
- Unfair criticism
- Physical or verbal abuse
- Exclusion or victimisation

- Offensive jokes or name-calling
- Unwelcome physical contact or sexual advances

#### **4. Responsibilities**

##### **Management and Trustees:**

- Lead by example in promoting a respectful and inclusive environment
- Ensure all individuals are aware of and understand this policy
- Take all allegations seriously and act promptly

##### **Employees and Volunteers:**

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Challenge or report any incidents of bullying or harassment
- Cooperate with any investigation

#### **5. Procedures**

##### **Step 1: Informal Resolution**

Where appropriate, individuals should attempt to resolve issues informally by:

- Speaking directly with the person whose behaviour is causing concern
- Using respectful language to express how the behaviour is impacting them

If informal resolution is not possible or does not resolve the issue, proceed to the formal procedure.

##### **Step 2: Formal Complaint**

Complaints should be made in writing to the Manager or a Trustee and include:

- Details of the incident(s)
- Names of those involved
- Dates, times, and locations (if available)
- Any supporting evidence

##### **Step 3: Investigation**

An impartial person (usually a Trustee or appointed senior staff member) will be assigned to:

- Investigate the complaint confidentially
- Interview relevant parties
- Gather and review any documentation

##### **Step 4: Outcome and Action**

Following the investigation:

- A written report will be produced
- Both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator will be informed of the findings
- If the complaint is upheld, appropriate action will be taken (e.g., mediation, training, disciplinary action, removal from role)

#### **Step 5: Appeal**

If either party is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may submit an appeal in writing within 14 days. An alternative trustee panel will review the case and issue a final decision.

#### **6. Confidentiality**

All reports and investigations will be handled with the highest degree of confidentiality. Only individuals directly involved in the process will be informed on a need-to-know basis.

#### **7. Protection from Victimisation**

Anyone raising a genuine complaint under this policy will not be victimised. Retaliation against someone who has made or supported a complaint of bullying or harassment will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

#### **8. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or organisational circumstances. Trustees are responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of this policy.