



## **Joseph Cowen Centre for Lifelong Learning Policy on Dignity and Respect.**

### **Incorporates Bullying & Harassment, and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

**See also Safeguarding policy and procedures**

## **1 Summary of Policy**

Joseph Cowen Lifelong Learning Centre (JCLLC) is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and welcoming learning environment for our members, staff and associates, free from discrimination, bullying or harassment, where diversity is valued and everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

## **2 Scope of the policy**

This policy encompasses all members, member volunteers, trustees, tutors, employees, staff and volunteers of Brunswick Methodist Church, business and professional associates of the Explore Lifelong Learning programme, also applicants and prospective applicants for such relationships. It incorporates bullying and harassment, and equality, diversity and inclusion.

### **2.1 Bullying and harassment.**

#### 2.1.1 Definitions.

Bullying is usually identified as intimidating, hostile or humiliating treatment by one or more individuals.

Harassment occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

#### 2.1.2 Examples

The following list provides a range of examples but is not exhaustive.

- Unwanted physical contact
- Derogatory remarks concerning performance, personal attributes, opinions or beliefs
- Unwelcome advances, sexual innuendo, attention, invitations or propositions

- Suggestive and unwelcome comments, insulting behaviour, obscene or offensive gestures
- Offensive or derogatory comments relating to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, socio-economic background, disability, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances or appearance
- Persistently ignoring, patronising or excluding
- Setting unrealistic or excessive workloads
- 'Cyber-bullying' i.e. by email or social media.

Differences in culture, beliefs or attitudes can influence interpretation of social

interactions. It is important to be sensitive to the feelings and reactions of others and adjust behaviour as necessary.

One minor incident does not constitute bullying or harassment, but a series of incidents might do so, particularly where someone has expressed a dislike of such behaviour or has asked for it to stop.

### **3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

3.1 JCLLC is committed to meeting the standards of current legislation regarding equality, diversity and inclusion relating to members, staff and associates.

3.2 In responding to applications for membership, employment or association, JCLLC will not discriminate based on protected characteristics according to the Equality Act 2010.

These are:

- Age
- Marital status
- Being pregnant or on maternity leave
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

3.3 Working with Brunswick Church, JCLLC will make every reasonable effort to accommodate accessibility and other needs of members, prospective members, employees and associates, including reasonable adjustments to its working and learning environment in the short or long term.

## **4 Rights and responsibilities**

4.1 All members, tutors, staff and associates of JCLLC have the right to learn and work in an environment that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.

4.2 Everyone has a responsibility to respect the feelings and sensibilities of others in the study/work environment, and to behave in a way that does not cause offence.

4.3 Anyone who sees or is notified of discrimination, bullying or harassment happening has a responsibility to take appropriate action.

4.4 Trustees of JCLLC-CIC will undertake to respond sensitively and supportively to anyone making an allegation of discrimination, bullying or harassment.

## **5. Procedures**

### **5.1 General principles**

Anyone who experiences or witnesses discrimination, bullying or harassment will have the support of JCLLC trustees in putting a stop to it.

### **5.2 Timescales**

Incidents should be reported as soon as possible.

Complaints, whether formal or informal, will be dealt with as quickly as is practicable.

### **5.3 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality of all parties will be respected.

If a complainant wishes to remain anonymous, it may nevertheless be possible to address the issue by general training and awareness-raising.

### **5.4 Records**

A record should be kept by the complainant of all incidents, including what happened, where, when and whether anyone else was there.

### **5.5 Informal complaints**

The person experiencing discrimination, bullying or harassment may

- approach the alleged perpetrator in person (consider taking a friend or representative) or in writing, tell them that their behaviour is unacceptable and ask for it to stop. In some cases, the person may be unaware that their behaviour is inappropriate or objectionable, or it may be that their words or actions have been misinterpreted. In such cases, the misunderstanding needs to be cleared up

quickly. Even where the behaviour was intentional, an immediate indication that it was objectionable may be sufficient to stop it.

- report the behaviour to a Trustee of JCLLC asking them to intervene informally.

#### 5.6 Actions of third parties

Someone who is experiencing discrimination, bullying or harassment but is unwilling or unable to take appropriate action may talk to a fellow member or colleague about it. This person should respect the confidentiality of both parties and provide support but should not take action unless asked to do so. If anyone witnesses or becomes aware of discrimination, bullying or harassment they can complain about it on their own account. This would also apply to perceived harassment of a more general nature, such as public disparagement of a group.

#### 5.7 Formal complaints

If the problem is not resolved by informal action, a formal written complaint should be made to either of the Co-Chairs of JCLLC or to another Trustee, with a description of the incident(s), including date, time, place, witnesses if any, and any action taken.

#### 5.8 Resolution

It is hoped that such situations can be resolved by mediation and internal investigation/review, but if serious allegations are upheld, sanctions may be required such as written warnings, suspension/removal of membership, removal of trustee or tutor status, severing of business associations or professional relationships.

#### 5.9 Further advice

Further advice may be obtained from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations of which JCLLC is a member <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/>

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