**WOODPECKER COURT - ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**Statement of Intent**

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our staff, so they can work in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying or harassment of any kind is unacceptable. To simplifying this policy, harassment is included in this policy document and the term ‘bullying’ has been extended to include harassment of any kind. If bullying does occur, all staff should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* company. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the management. We will deal urgently with your complaint or concern.

**What Is Bullying?**

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

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|  | Emotional | being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. repeated nasty remarks, |
|  |  | threatening gestures, shouting, unpleasant email or other communications) |
|  | Physical | pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence |
|  | Racist | racial taunts whether verbal or written, graffiti, gestures |
|  | Sexual | unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments, innuendo, lewd |
|  |  | comments directed at an individual |
|  | Homophobic | because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality |
|  | Verbal | name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing |
|  | Cyber | All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse |
|  |  | Mobile threats by text messaging & calls |
|  |  | Misuse of associated technology like inappropriate screen savers, etc. |

The above list and its definitions is by no means exhaustive.

**What is Harassment?**

Harassment can be any behavior, usually of a repetitive nature, inflicted upon a person by another designed to demean or belittle them. Generally, harassment is any unwelcome, discriminatory conduct in the workplace that no reasonable employee should have to endure.

**Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Staff who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying and we will if we see it or it is reported to us.

**Objectives of this Policy**

 All managers, team-leaders and staff members should understand what bullying is.

 All managers, team-leaders and staff members should know what the company policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.

 All managers, team-leaders and staff members should know what the company policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

 As a company we take bullying seriously. Staff should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

 Bullying will not be tolerated.

**Procedures**

Report bullying incidents to managers whether it is you that feels bullied or you believe another member of staff is being bullied:

 In all cases of bullying, the alleged incidents will be investigated by management and bullying, if proven, will be stopped quickly

 Any report will be taken seriously, be treated with sympathy and as far as is possible

given that the allegations must be investigated, the report will be treated with the maximum confidentiality allowable

 Either an attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behavior or

disciplinary action will follow, whichever is appropriate given the circumstances of any proven bullying

**Outcomes**

 The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other disciplinary consequences may take place.

 In serious cases, suspension or even dismissal will be considered

 If possible, the staff will be reconciled

 After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

**Prevention**

We wish to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, our preventative actions may include:

 adding to or amending company rules

 signing a behavior contract with anyone who has bullied but remains in employment with this company

 educating our managers, team-leaders and staff members to recognise bullying and to avoid becoming a bully

 ensuring that everyone treats everyone else at all times with respect

 making sure that there is a clear methodology which is seen as fair by staff and which they can easily and confidentially access to report bullying

 ensure that managers and team-leaders understand what bullying in the workplace is,

how harmful it is to the victim and the company and how to recognise it and how to investigate sensitively any complaints of bullying

**Procedure to report bullying**

Bullying has implications in law and protections and remedies are provided by statute. All employees have a right to be allowed to work in a safe environment. All employees should expect to be safeguarded from bullying or any other infringement of their dignity and Health & Safety at Work. The company takes a firm view regarding any infringement of the anti-bullying policy and procedures laid out for the protection of its staff in the workplace. **Consequently, if any member of staff feels that they are being bullied they should report this directly to the Managing Director, Dominic Meehan .** Matters of personal grievance are usually subject to the published Grievance Procedure; but so seriously do we take complaints of bullying in the workplace that we prefer staff to begin the grievance process for bullying or harassment allegations with senior management immediately. Staff members can expect to be given a sympathetic and private hearing followed by a thorough investigation of the matters reported. They can rest assured that their report will have no negative outcomes to their employment whatsoever and wherever possible, confidentiality will be observed. However, the circumstances of the investigation and the resultant action if bullying was found to have occurred may curtail

the actual level of confidentiality possible.

False reporting will not be tolerated and may be treated as serious misconduct and subject to disciplinary action. As unlikely as it is that such malicious behavior would occur, this policy document needs to address this possibility. Victims of actual bullying should on no account be deterred from reporting actual occurrences and should always understand that their complaint will be appropriately dealt with.