



DIGNITY IN MINISTRY AND AT WORK



THE DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD

Dignity in Ministry and at Work Policy

Contents

1. Statement from Bishop of Sheffield/Bishops Council.....	1
2. Introduction	2
3. Scope.....	2
4. Understanding bullying and harassment.....	3
5. Power and relationships	6
6. Mutual Responsibilities for a Culture of Dignity	7
7. Our procedures for dealing with allegations of bullying and harassment.....	9
8. Find out more.....	15
9. Appendices.....	15

A diocesan commitment to encouraging and sustaining healthy working relationships in ministry and employment; to embed a culture of mutual respect where bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated across the Diocese of Sheffield; and to provide healing where unwelcome behaviour has affronted an individual's dignity - thereby contributing to a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's people. We must think afresh about inequalities in our communities, imbalances in power relationships, and what it means to be human in those settings.

1. Statement from Bishop of Sheffield/Bishops Council

Friends, it is fundamental to the Christian Faith that every single human being is created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 7.26-27) and therefore that every single human being has equal dignity and is equally worthy of respect.

Local congregations of the Church, organisations like a Diocesan Board of Finance, and institutions within a Diocese, should therefore aspire to be places where every person is granted the dignity and respect which is inherently theirs.

Most of the time this happens naturally, because most of us delight to treat others well: their flourishing is a joy to us. But sometimes, even in communities which seek to model themselves on the example of the Lord Jesus, we ourselves may fall short of our own aspirations in the things that we think and say and do. Sometimes we will behave in ways we are not proud of, or we find ourselves on the receiving end of behaviour which is unacceptable; or we find ourselves caught up in relationships or group dynamics which are not healthy.

In situations such as these, we need systems, policies and procedures, which remind us all of our responsibilities towards one another. That is the point of this

Dignity in Ministry and at Work document, which I commend to you. I hope you will find it helpful and self-explanatory.

I am immensely grateful to those who conceived of the need for this policy, and then invested research, time and effort in drafting and revising it - among them especially the Revd Canon Amanda Barraclough (Dean of Women's Ministry) and Mr Leo Colson (HR Manager).

With every blessing,

2. Introduction

The Church welcomes us all regardless of age, colour or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexuality, gender, disability, or nationality - or indeed Church traditions. The Bible helps us to learn how to love and serve everyone. God's word stands for honesty, equality, kindness, compassion; for treating people the way you want to be treated and for helping those in need.

"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Matthew 7:72

We strive to create a ministry environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We take a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and bullying, and will address any allegations of bullying or harassment promptly, sensitively and where possible, confidentially. The purpose of this policy is to inform our people about the type of behaviour that is unacceptable and to explain how we deal with complaints of bullying and harassment.

3. Scope

This policy and the procedure that accompanies it apply to the behaviour of clergy on common tenure or those who hold other Bishop's licences, SDBE employees, Focal Ministers and authorised Lay Ministers, PCC employees, Churchwardens and trustees of the PCCs. They also apply to behaviour by volunteers, visitors and third parties (including contractors or an individual who has been affected by another individual who holds a role within the Diocese of Sheffield). For SDBF employees, please refer to the separate SDBF Dignity at Work policy.

A complaint can be raised by anyone who believes they have experienced a lack of dignity and respect within the Diocese of Sheffield caused by one or more persons who fall within the scope of the policy (as set out above).

This policy and the procedure that accompanies it, apply to behaviour both on and beyond the Diocese of Sheffield premises and parishes during conferences, trips, events, as well as inside and outside usual working hours. It applies to any meeting(s) organised in the name of the church wherever they take place. They

can apply to behaviour that has a connection, either directly or by reasonable inference, to the Diocese of Sheffield and/or may bring the diocese into disrepute.

4. Understanding bullying and harassment

a. Protected characteristics

Protected characteristics are characteristics that are protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation (including care working experience).

For further information, please refer to the flowchart in 9 Appendices.

b. Harassment

Harassment, as defined in the Equality Act 2010, is "*unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual*". Unwanted behaviour could include physical gestures, abuse, jokes, spoken or written words or offensive emails and expressions. It may be a one-off or continuous incident. The impact of harassment needs to be recognised. People suffering harassment need to have confidence they are being listened to and taken seriously.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment for them. It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have rejected or submitted to such behaviour in the past.

People can also be subjected to harassment that is not related to a protected characteristic. Some examples include employment status, political beliefs, health (e.g. people with HIV/AIDS), physical characteristics and social class.

Harassment is often characterised by more than one incident of unacceptable behaviour, particularly if it reoccurs once it has been made clear by the victim that they consider it offensive. One incident may constitute harassment, however, if it is sufficiently serious.

Examples of harassment include (but are not limited to):

- Verbal - crude and patronising language, open or veiled hostility, offensive jokes, suggestive remarks, innuendoes, rude or judgemental comments, malicious gossip and offensive songs.
- Non-verbal - wolf-whistles, obscene gestures, sexually suggestive posters/calendars, pornographic material (both paper-based and generated on a computer, including offensive screen-savers), graffiti,

offensive letters/emails/social media messages, blind copying critical emails to others.

- Physical - unnecessary touching, patting, pinching or brushing against another employee's body, intimidating behaviour, assault and physical coercion, repeated comments on physical appearance or clothing.
- Coercion - pressure for sexual favours (e.g. to get a job or be promoted) and pressure to participate in political, religious or trade union groups, etc.
- Isolation or non-cooperation and exclusion from social activities.
- Intrusion -following, pestering, spying, etc.
- Alternating bullying behaviour with charm and kindness, thereby confusing the person/undermining their resolve to take action
- Differing from other church traditions in a judgemental manner.
- Not respecting boundaries (including working hours) with another individual e.g. expecting emails outside of normal working hours
- Unwanted attention and over familiar behaviour from a member of PCC

Harassment can be unintentional, for example, if a person speaks or behaves in way that they don't find offensive, but that another person does. A person may also be harassed even if they were not the intended 'target' of harassment. For example, a person may be harassed by jokes about a religious or minority group that they don't belong to, if those jokes create an offensive environment for them, and/or harassment may be subtle in nature and difficult to evidence.

Where it cannot be established that there was an intention to offend, conduct will only be regarded as harassment if, taking all the circumstances into account, it would be reasonable to come to that conclusion.

c. Bullying

"Any behaviour, always involving a misuse of power, which an individual or group knows, or ought reasonably to know, could have the potential effect of offending, humiliating, intimidating or isolating an individual or group should be regarded as unacceptable in the work-place, which includes the context of a parish and any volunteer working context.

'Unacceptable behaviour' changes its label to 'bullying' or 'harassing behaviour' when it causes actual harm or distress to the target/s, normally but not exclusively, after a series of incidents over a prolonged period of time.

Lack of intent does not diminish, excuse or negate the impact on the target, or the distress caused. The degree of intent is only relevant in terms of how the behaviour should be challenged and the issue subsequently resolved."

Fergus Roseburgh for The Children's Society- March 2007

Bullying is defined as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power, which has the purpose, or effect of intimidating, belittling and humiliating the recipient. Power does not always mean being in a position of authority, and can include personal strength or the power to coerce through fear or intimidation.

Bullying can take the form of physical, verbal and non-verbal conduct. Examples of bullying include (but are not limited to):

- Ostracising or excluding someone from meetings, communications, work or volunteering events or socials;
- Cyber bullying, such as sending, distributing or posting detrimental texts, clips or images about or of colleagues.
- Verbal abuse, such as shouting, swearing, threatening, insulting, being sarcastic towards, ridiculing or demeaning others, spreading malicious rumours, subtle and belittling remarks, gossip;
- Physical or psychological threats/actions towards an individual or their personal property, including pointing aggressively;
- Practical jokes, initiation ceremonies or rituals;
- Overbearing or intimidating levels of supervision, including preventing or sabotaging someone from undertaking their role or following our policies;
- Persistent criticism or inappropriate comments about someone's performance;
- Abuse of authority or power (e.g. use of unfair penal sanctions, unfairly blocking training or holiday requests)
- Refusing to give opportunities to give ministry or workplace experience.
- Requiring unreasonable working hours if acting in a position of power.
- Deliberate ignoring of an individual/dismissing their contribution and/or ideas.
- Requiring membership/non-membership of a para-church organisation, overall creating an exclusive culture.

The actions listed must be viewed in terms of the distress they cause the individual. It is the perceptions of the recipient that determine whether any action can be viewed as bullying.

d. Bullying, harassment and the law

The law protects SDBE/PCC. employee, officeholder, lay leader, volunteer, from harassment while applying for a job, in employment and in some circumstances after the working relationship has ended (for example, in relation the provision of references).

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits harassment related to protected characteristics. There is also protection for people against harassment on the basis of the membership or non-membership of a trade union.

The Diocese of Sheffield together with anyone in relevant ministry or employment who fail to take steps to prevent harassment or investigate complaints may be held liable for their unlawful actions and be required to pay damages to the victim, as will any employee who has committed the act of harassment. There is no limit to the compensation that can be awarded in employment tribunals for acts of harassment.

The Diocese of Sheffield will also be liable for harassment that comes from a third party (e.g. a customer or supplier) if that harassment occurs on at least two occasions, the organisation is aware that it has happened and does nothing to stop it happening.

Harassment on any grounds is also a criminal offence, primarily under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. This means that colleagues who suffer harassment may contact the police, in the case of harassment from fellow employees or harassment by third parties. Those found guilty face fines or periods of imprisonment of up to two years.

Additionally, an individual harassed by another individual may sue that individual personally for the damage and distress caused. The Diocese of Sheffield may be held vicariously liable under the Protection from Harassment Act for any harassment perpetrated by an individual whenever the behaviour in question is closely connected to an engagement with the Diocese.

There is no separate piece of legislation which deals with workplace bullying in isolation. However, bullying could relate to discriminatory behaviour or other aspects of legislation governing employment rights.

5. Power and relationships

Power in the context of human relationships is the capacity to influence the behaviour, thoughts, emotions and attitudes of other people. This is the power to make things happen in human society or to resist and prevent change and is derived from a variety of sources. Human power can be used for good or ill. It is life-enhancing when used well but is damaging and potentially dangerous when used to dominate or control. In most conflictual situations, there is a power imbalance that needs to be recognised and addressed where a resolution is managed.

Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse that is characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. Therefore, the focus must be on creating healthy Christian

cultures in which everyone thrives and where coercive and controlling behaviour can be challenged wherever it is exhibited. Such abuse may include "manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision-making, the requirement of secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use of sacred texts or teaching, the requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position or isolation as a means of punishment, and superiority and elitism."

6. Mutual Responsibilities for a Culture of Dignity

The Diocese of Sheffield has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent and protect unlawful bullying, harassment, discrimination and/ or victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act, on the grounds of someone's protected characteristics (Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage/Civil Partnership, Pregnancy & Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation, including care working experience). This includes fulfilling the requirements of the statutory sexual harassment and harassment at work technical guidance first published on 15 January 2020.

The Diocese of Sheffield will ensure that all reports under this policy are treated seriously and in a sensitive manner, with due regard to confidentiality and the rights of all parties involved. All parties will receive support through the internal and/ or external available sources.

Furthermore, the Diocese of Sheffield will ensure this policy is accessible to all and is widely promoted using a variety of methods to raise awareness and instil the importance of dignity and respect in ministry and at work.

Each individual can reasonably expect to:

- Be treated with dignity and respect;
- Be treated fairly and without discrimination;
- Disagree and present alternative views;
- Challenge and be assertive;
- Be consulted on decisions that affect their work or ministry;

Each individual also has the following responsibilities:

- To demonstrate dignity, respect, and integrity in all interactions with others;
- To reasonably challenge inappropriate behaviours when they occur;
- To respect the authority and decisions of others;
- To participate openly in the investigation of complaints;
- To provide support to individuals who are experiencing bullying or harassment and respect their confidence;
- To report any unfair treatment witnessed to the relevant oversight minister or manager/supervisor if it causes personal discomfort.

- Undertake relevant training as part of their induction as well as their continuous personal and professional development and apply this to their ongoing practice.

Those with oversight or management/supervisory responsibilities are required to:

(This may apply to Head of Department, Bishop, Archdeacon, Area Dean, Incumbent, Churchwarden)

In addition to the above:

- Lead by example, role modelling positive inclusive behaviour, promoting a culture of dignity and respect within their area of work and an environment where individuals feel able to raise complaints without fear of victimisation;
- Communicate, implement and promote this policy, making sure everyone within their area of responsibility is aware of it, understands their responsibility and has received the appropriate training;
- Manage/ supervise their individuals fairly and in line with all the diocesan HR policies and procedures, taking action when necessary to ensure their working environment is free from bullying and harassment;
- On receipt of any allegation/ concerns relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination, or victimisation, act as promptly and effectively as possible in accordance with the relevant procedure;
- Undertake actions to help resolve allegations/ concerns informally wherever possible and appropriate;
- Learn from any concerns raised (where these are founded e.g., following an investigation) and take the appropriate action to prevent or mitigate any reoccurrence;
- Keep a record of reported incidents and action following any allegation made;
- Checking any individual who may be suffering stress or anxiety related to bullying or harassment has appropriate levels of support.
- Have their contribution recognised.
- Recognise and pay attention to power differentials in accordance with pastoral principles.

Human Resources (HR) have the responsibility to:

- Regularly review this policy ensuring its continuous commitment to promoting dignity and respect in ministry and at work and volunteering;
- Provide support and advice to managers and supervisors in managing these types of situations;
- Implement internal SDBF processes where it is identified an alleged perpetrator is a SDBF employee;
- Work with all parties to identify an appropriate resolution;

- Safeguard confidential information on bullying, harassment and discrimination cases, escalating accordingly if a criminal offence such as physical or sexual assault and/ or an immediate threat to safety has been committed/ suspected.

Anti-Harassment Advisors (AHA) have the responsibility to:

- Be available to any member of the clergy, employee, or laity to listen and discuss the individual's situation;
- Provide clear information, help and guidance about the options available, the next steps to take and how best to take them;
- Signpost the individual to the relevant resources and offer support throughout the process.
- Remain unbiased, impartial and maintain confidentiality.

7. Our procedures for dealing with allegations of bullying and harassment

a. Ensuring your welfare

If an incident of bullying or harassment occurs in any circumstances and you feel threatened or unsafe, you should remove yourself as quickly as possible from the situation and tell your Oversight Minister, Area Dean or Line Manager straight away. They will take steps to ensure your immediate welfare and safety, and let you know about the options you have for dealing with the situation.

b. Informal conversation

We recognise the sensitive nature of harassment and bullying. If you believe you are being harassed or bullied, you may want to discuss the situation before deciding what action to take. We operate an open-door policy to discuss problems within ministry, the workplace and volunteering, and you can discuss the matter with your oversight minister/area dean/line manager/supervisor on an informal basis. If this is not appropriate in the circumstances, you could also discuss the situation with an anti-harassment advisor (AHA).

Whoever you speak to will:

- Ensure the conversation remains confidential as far as possible;
- Listen sympathetically and help you consider objectively what has happened;
- Discuss the outcome you would like, and tell you about the procedures and options available;
- Help you weigh up the alternatives, but without pressure to adopt any particular course;
- Help you in dealing with the situation, if you ask for help.
- Finding out all relevant information, including asking the individual to record examples of unacceptable behaviour

- Where appropriate, signposting the individual to others who may be able to advise them.
- Giving the individual any appropriate reading material.
- Speaking to the alleged harasser at the request of the individual, or accompanying him/her when they speak to the alleged harasser.
- Providing objective support in context of any meetings held

Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible. If you decide not to take any action to deal with the problem and the circumstances described are very serious, however, we reserve the right to investigate the situation, because we have a duty of care to ensure the safety of all who may be adversely affected by the alleged harasser's/ bully's behaviour.

It is for you to decide which route to take in solving any problem that has occurred. There are two types of solution available- informal and formal.

c. Informal action

You can choose to solve the matter yourself by approaching the harasser or bully, and telling them - in person or in writing - that their behaviour is unwelcome and that it must stop. Otherwise, a formal complaint will be made using the procedure outlined below.

If you would find it difficult to raise the issue directly with the person creating the problem, you can seek support from an Anti-Harassment Advisor (AHA) who can accompany you when speaking to the harasser or bully.

d. Formal action

Where informal solutions fail, or serious harassment or bullying occurs, you can bring a formal complaint as follows:

My complaint is against:	How to bring a formal complaint:
An employee	Use the Grievance policy and procedure, or refer to ACAS guidance on Grievances.
A member of the clergy	Complaints about a member of the clergy can be made verbally with an Anti-Harassment Advisor (AHA) in the first instance. If unresolved, they may be followed up in writing with the Archdeacon.
A third party (e.g. self-employed)	Complaints about third parties should be made in writing and referred to your Oversight Minister or Area Dean.
Volunteers	Oversight Minister/Area Dean, Anti-Harassment Advisor. Oversight
Trustees	Minister/Area Dean, Anti-Harassment Advisor.

In all cases, a written complaint should outline the alleged incidents, when they occurred, the harm caused, the names of any witnesses and the name of the alleged harasser or bully. If you would find it distressing to set out your complaint in writing, contact your manager who will provide assistance.

e. Responding to a complaint

Complaints will be investigated swiftly and confidentially while ensuring that the rights of both the alleged victim and the alleged harasser or bully are protected. Employees, volunteers and witnesses can be assured that they will not be ridiculed or victimised for making, or assisting a colleague in making, a complaint, even if it is not upheld, as long as it is made in good faith. Everyone involved in the investigation, including witnesses, will be required to maintain confidentiality - a failure to do so will be a disciplinary matter. Volunteers will be disengaged with typically in misconduct scenarios, though referral to other parties may be necessary depending on any allegations.

In all cases, the person investigating the complaint will have no previous involvement with the situation and may conduct investigatory interviews with the complainant, the individual against whom the complaint has been lodged and any relevant witnesses. The investigator will provide a copy of their investigation to the complainant.

If a complaint is upheld, we will take action under our disciplinary policy and procedure (for complaints about SDBF employees), or take appropriate action to address the issue (for complaints about third parties). Formal complaints about a trustee of a PCC or volunteer will be addressed via the relevant Archdeacon. Complaints about clergy are governed by national Church of England Policies and allegations of serious misconduct fall under the guidelines of the Clergy Conduct Measure (further details are available at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/leadership-and-governance/legal-resources/clergy-discipline>

Bullying or harassment are serious offences. For employees, if a complaint against them is upheld and is of a serious nature, their behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and result in dismissal.

f. Right to report bullying or harassment

Everyone has a right to report any behaviour towards them or others which they believe constitutes harassment or bullying. This will include behaviour that has caused offence, humiliation, embarrassment, or distress. This can be behaviour by a colleague, volunteer, lay leader, member of clergy, PCC trustee or by a third party, for example, a staff member from another diocese, a client or supplier. Those who raise a genuine complaint under this policy will under no circumstances be subjected to any unfavourable treatment or victimisation as a result of making a complaint.

Anyone who witnesses an incident that he/she believes to be the bullying or harassment of another member of staff, clergy or volunteer should report the incident in confidence to an Anti-Harassment Advisor (AHA) or your Line Manager/Oversight Minister/Supervisor. All such reports will be taken seriously and in strict confidence as far as it is possible to do so. If the incident gives rise to a concern about the practice, performance or behaviour relating to the safeguarding of children or adults who may be vulnerable, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) should also be informed, and it will be investigated according to the national Church's procedures for allegations.

The DST will take actions in line with national safeguarding guidance managing allegations against church officers. Where the alleged perpetrator is not a church officer the DST will give guidance around actions that should be taken.

g. Reluctance to complain

If other people do not appear to react to what is happening, the person being bullied may think 'this is normal in this group of people or workplace or parish or Diocese' and assume it is something they must learn to tolerate. Witnesses may be so relieved not to be the focus of such behaviour that they collude to avoid attention or don't complain due to fear of the consequences.

Both recipient and witnesses may fear that they will not be believed or that there will be retribution if they complain. They may also fear that, if they complain, they may have to face the upheaval of moving workplace or parish or Diocese, or to minister or worship in a different place.

A person making a complaint needs the assurance that their complaint will be given due attention, treated confidentially, that they will be consulted and fully informed before any action is taken and that they will not be asked to confront the person about whom they are complaining, unless or until they feel ready to do so. The complaint must be investigated especially where there is a safety risk, particularly to children or vulnerable adults.

Fear of not being believed may be reinforced if 'the final straw' is something minor but follows on from an accumulation of other incidents. Both recipients of bullying and those to whom a complaint is made may find it hard to accept that fellow Christians - lay or ordained, women or men - may bully and harass or be the complainant/ alleged victim of such behaviour. They may wrongly interpret bullying as a personality clash or mistakenly assume that it is their Christian duty to put up with bullying or abusive behaviour by others.

h. Protection and support for people bringing complaints of harassment or bullying

We will consider any appropriate measures to ensure you are able to continue to work, minister, volunteer and/or attend worship during the investigation of your complaint and any action taken as a result. For example, if you and the alleged perpetrator work/minister in proximity to each other, it may be necessary to

ensure you do not continue to do so whilst the complaint is being investigated and during any consequent disciplinary proceedings (if relevant). If circumstances require, this could include suspending the alleged perpetrator on full pay (if they are an employee), or making other temporary or longer-term changes to yours or their working arrangements, voluntary work, ministry of various sorts and attendance at worship.

Actions you can take yourself:

- Keep a factual log of all incidents as soon as possible after the event: dates, times, nature of the incident, witnesses, details of accusations or criticisms and how you felt in response, copies of emails and other correspondence. This will help you see more clearly whether there is a pattern of behaviour (even if the incident/s seem relatively trivial). It can also provide evidence, should harassment, victimisation or bullying continue/recur, or action become necessary.
- Where feasible, avoid situations where you are alone with the bully and try to get witnesses to bullying incident: if possible, talk to those who witnessed what has happened and ask if they will offer support and corroboration. Try to find out if you are the only person being bullied or whether other people are also affected now or have been in the past.
- If appropriate, speak to the line manager/oversight minister/Supervisor to clarify what your job/role description is, so that you can check whether it matches the responsibilities you are given.
- Get support: the Diocese of Sheffield has appointed Anti-Harassment Advisors (AHA) who are specially trained volunteers. An Anti-Harassment Advisor is available to listen and talk through your complaint and help you along the way clarifying options so that you can decide what you want to do about it. In doing so, they will signpost you to the relevant resources available, providing clear information. Alternatively, you may prefer to talk in confidence to a trusted colleague.
- Take Informal action as described in the procedure within this document. Often concerns can be resolved informally, especially when someone is unaware that their behaviour has caused discomfort or offence, or where there is a reasonable prospect of resolution. Where appropriate, individuals are therefore encouraged to try and resolve matters informally as this is often the quickest and most effective method of dealing with bullying and harassment.
- Request use of the formal procedure described in this document, if anything else fails.
- Please be aware that, in circumstances where you wish to remain anonymous, there is limitation in the action/s to be taken, if any. However, the concerns will be considered by the person to whom the concerns were raised, considering the seriousness of the issue/s raised, the credibility of

the concern and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from first-hand evidence.

i. Protection and support for those accused of harassment or bullying

Bullying and harassment are matters that must be taken seriously. An accusation does not signify a judgement that you are guilty, and there will need to be a discussion with you to establish the true nature of the situation. There might be a problem that has arisen because you have not realised the effect of your actions and you may not have intended the effects complained of.

You should be very careful not to behave towards the person making the allegation in any way that might cause further difficulties between you. Whilst not all complaints are justified and some may arise from misunderstanding, simply to be defensive and deny there is a problem, or to insist that the problem lies with the person complaining, is unrealistic and is more likely to aggravate the situation.

The perception of the person complaining of bullying or harassment is therefore an important factor in determining whether or not harassment has taken place and must be considered. Attempting to see the situation from the other person's point of view and to understand how they may have been affected may be sufficient to resolve the situation.

You are encouraged to contact your line manager/oversight minister/Supervisor if you are accused of harassment. The person you contact will aim to facilitate discussion to resolve the problem at the source if possible.

This diocese has appointed Anti-Harassment Advisors (AHA), who have been specially trained to be available to any member of the clergy, employee, or laity to listen and discuss the individual's situation. They support those involved in cases of bullying and harassment, and you are strongly advised to use this support. Anti-Harassment Advisors are volunteers who are fully trained, guarantee appropriate confidentiality, and will meet with you in private to talk through your position. They will provide clear information, help and guidance on procedures for dealing with claims of bullying and harassment and help you to clarify the impact your behaviour may be having so that you can decide what to do about it.

In many cases, the problem will be resolved informally through discussion using the options within the informal procedure including direct contact, a facilitated discussion or mediation to cease the unwanted behaviour before formal procedures are invoked. As part of this procedure you will be asked to reflect on your behaviour and the possibility that you might be at fault, whether consciously or not.

If after taking forward action under the informal procedure, your behaviour continues or escalates, the complainant/ alleged victim can opt to follow the relevant formal procedure. However, in circumstances where the behaviour is

perceived as too serious to be dealt with informally, the relevant formal procedure would be considered. These are fairly and properly followed. Any investigation will be conducted objectively and confidentially. Details relating to the circumstances that gave rise to the complaint, the evidence of witnesses and the nature of the professional relationship between the person complaining and yourself will all be considered.

Throughout any informal or formal procedures, the principal objective is that of identifying the underlying issues and eliminating the cause of offence as quickly as possible and with minimal recrimination. As a result of informal or formal action, you may be offered help to recognise, understand and modify your behaviour; you are strongly advised to accept this help.

Confidentiality

The Diocese of Sheffield will treat all matters made under this policy and its accompanying procedure as confidential, recognising that if safeguarding issues arise there may be occasions where confidentiality has to be breached.

Where information is required to be shared, this will only be provided to those who require it and wherever possible in communication with the individual who raised the concern. Individuals affected by bullying and harassment should be offered appropriate support and action taken only with their consent.

8. Find out more

- PCC Grievance Policy and Procedure (if relevant) - sheffdio.org/grievances (from Diocese of Sheffield)
- PCC Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (if relevant) - rebrand.ly/clergy-discipline (from CofE)
- PCC Code of Conduct - rebrand.ly/public-life-principles (from gov.uk)
- Code of Conduct for Clergy - rebrand.ly/clergy-conduct (from CofE)
- SDBF Dignity at Work Policy - sheffdio.org/dignity (from Diocese of Sheffield)
- HR Toolkit - sheffdio.org/hrtoolkit (from Diocese of Sheffield)

9. Appendices

Below are examples of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour within the diocesan community:

The behaviours we wish to model across the diocese are:	The behaviours which are not welcome across our diocese are
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Treat others with dignity and respect ✓ Actively listen to others ✓ Apologise when something goes wrong ✓ Promote inclusion ✓ Deal with conflict constructively ✓ Demonstrate a willingness to co-operate and work together ✓ Provide support and help to others ✓ Respect others authority and decisions ✓ Challenge inappropriate behaviour ✓ Speak up for one another ✓ Thank the effort and contribution of others ✓ Encourage people to express opinions and ideas and value them ✓ Be aware of your body language, the tone of voice and your demeanour and expression in all interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Be hostile to others or make them feel unwelcome ✗ Cause distress, offence or humiliation ✗ Constantly highlight errors or mistakes made by others ✗ Ignore or exclude individuals ✗ Ignore the views of others ✗ Make malicious and/or unfounded allegations ✗ Make insulting or abusive comments ✗ Point fingers, invade personal space, block or prevent the way of others ✗ Shout at or be abusive to others ✗ Spread rumours or gossip ✗ Threaten violence or physically attack others ✗ Unwelcome sexual advances ✗ Use malicious or insulting language

The following examples, whist not exhaustive, provides guidance on the differences between healthy conflict and a bullying situation:

Healthy conflicts	Bullying situation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clear roles and tasks ✓ Collaborative relations ✓ Common and shared objectives ✓ Explicit interpersonal relations ✓ Healthy organisations ✓ Ethical behaviour ✓ Occasional clashes and confrontation ✓ Open and frank strategies ✓ Open conflict and discussion ✓ Straightforward communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Role ambiguity ✗ Uncooperative behaviour or boycotting ✗ Lack of foresight ✗ Ambiguous interpersonal relations ✗ Organisational flaws ✗ Unethical activities ✗ Long-lasting and systemic disputes ✗ Ambiguous strategies ✗ Covert actions and denial of conflict ✗ Oblique and evasive communication

The table below provides examples of firm but fair management versus harassment and bullying behaviours:

Firm but fair behaviour	Harassment and bullying behaviour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistent and fair ✓ Determined to achieve the best results but reasonable and flexible ✓ Knows their own mind and is clear about their ideas but is willing to consult with colleagues before drawing up proposals ✓ Insists on high standards of service in quality and behaviour in the team ✓ Will discuss in private a perceived concern before forming views of acting and does not apportion blame when things go wrong ✓ Accepting responsibility when things go wrong ✓ Asks for people’s views, listens and assimilates feedback ✓ Treats others with dignity and respect at all times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Aggressive, inconsistent and unfair in approach ✗ Unreasonable and inflexible, not willing to compromise ✗ Believes they are always right and has fixed opinions, believes they know best and is not prepared to value other people’s opinions ✗ Insists upon high standards of service and behaviour but blames others if things go wrong ✗ Loses temper regularly and degrades other people in front of others, threatens official warnings without listening to any explanation ✗ Tells people what is happening without listening ✗ Consistently does not treat others with dignity and respect

