

## **Bullying & Harassment Policy:**

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated and disciplinary action will be taken against anyone found to be bullying or harassing any individual or group of people.

Bullying and harassment will be regarded as serious misconduct.

Any disciplinary action will take into account special educational needs or disabilities that the clients or student/s involved may have. Nevertheless, action will be taken which may result in warning/s suspension or permanent exclusion from Midstream.

**All** Midstream staff must act firmly and swiftly against bullying wherever and whenever it appears.

Bullying is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups e.g. discriminatory because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

Bullying takes many forms and can include:

- physical assault
- teasing
- making threats
- name calling
- cyber bullying – bullying via mobile phone or online e.g. e-mail, social networks and instant messenger.

Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police depending upon how serious the bullying is and these include:

- violence or assault
- theft
- repeated harassment or intimidation, e.g. name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, e mails or text messages
- hate crimes

Clients should be actively encouraged and at every opportunity reminded that they should tell a member of staff whenever they feel that they are being victimised for whatever reason.

All teaching, learning, instructional and care staff must:

- encourage clients to share concerns and worries across a range of personal issues including aspects of bullying. In addition they should encourage clients / students to share interests, to interact appropriately with each other and work together amicably. During breaks and lunch times staff must involve and encourage clients / students to interact constructively.
- share information with each other in order that patterns of behaviour can be identified.
- report incidents to Senior Management by using an incident report form. Senior Management will then investigate claims thoroughly and take appropriate action.

Senior Managers must:

- investigate claims of bullying thoroughly
- take appropriate action i.e. involve parents – explain what is happening – where parents report, report back to parents as soon as possible. Involve social workers and other agencies
- take disciplinary action i.e. written warning/s, suspension or permanent exclusion
- seek advice from the Local Authority Safeguarding Teams if it is felt that there is or maybe is a safeguarding issue/s
- follow the advice given by the appropriate Local Authority Safeguarding Team