

SMITH BROTHERS BUILDERS LTD: DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

(Anti-Bullying & Harassment)

1. Policy Statement

Smith Brothers Builders Ltd (“the Company”) is committed to providing a work environment where every individual is treated with courtesy, dignity, and respect. We have a zero-tolerance approach toward bullying and harassment, whether it occurs on-site, in the office, or outside of the workplace in a professional capacity.

Such behaviour is considered a serious disciplinary offence and is often classified as **gross misconduct**, which may lead to summary dismissal. Every member of the **Smiths** team has a personal responsibility to uphold this policy and ensure our workplace remains inclusive and professional.

2. Understanding Bullying

Bullying is defined as persistent, offensive, or intimidating behaviour that makes a person feel vulnerable or undermined. It can be physical, verbal, or written.

Examples of prohibited behaviour include:

- Spreading malicious gossip or insulting a colleague.
- "Ganging up" on an individual or social exclusion.
- Abuse of authority, such as setting impossible deadlines or "setting someone up to fail."
- Making groundless threats regarding job security.
- Consistently undermining a competent worker through unnecessary criticism.

What is not bullying:

- Legitimate, constructive, and fair criticism of performance or conduct.
- Occasional, non-aggressive differences of opinion.

3. Understanding Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted conduct—related to a protected characteristic (such as age, disability, race, sex, or religion)—that violates a person’s dignity or creates a hostile environment.

- **Sexual Harassment:** This includes unwelcome sexual advances, suggestive remarks, or physical contact.
- **Perception:** A person can be harassed even if the conduct wasn't aimed at them directly (e.g., overhearing offensive jokes about a specific group).

A simple rule of thumb for all Smiths staff:

If you wouldn't say it in front of your family, or you wouldn't want to see your actions reported in the news—**do not say it or do it.**

4. Our Management Approach

The Directors and management team at **Smiths** are responsible for maintaining a culture of respect. Managers must take immediate action if they witness or are informed of intimidating behaviour.

5. Resolving Issues: Informal Route

In many cases, people do not realise their behaviour is causing offence. If you feel comfortable doing so, we encourage an informal discussion to explain that the conduct is unwelcome. If you prefer not to do this alone, please speak with your manager in confidence. We may suggest **mediation** to help resolve the friction quickly and discreetly.

6. Resolving Issues: Formal Route

If informal attempts fail, or if the incident is severe, the **Formal Grievance Procedure** should be used.

- **Investigation:** We will investigate all formal complaints promptly and thoroughly.
- **Action:** If bullying or harassment is proven, the perpetrator will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

7. Confidentiality and Protection

- **Privacy:** All allegations will be handled with the highest level of discretion. Breaching confidentiality during an investigation is a disciplinary offence.
 - **Protection:** No employee will be penalised for raising a genuine concern in good faith.
 - **Malice:** However, we take a firm stand against deliberately false or malicious accusations, which may result in disciplinary action against the accuser.
-

John Smith — Director

Colin Smith — Director

Address: 12 Strand, Beith, KA15 1DT

Company Tel: 01505 502144