



Dignity and Respect at Work Charter – Our Lady of Fatima Special School

*The staff, pupils, and parents of Our Lady Fatima Special School commit to upholding, promoting, and modelling the **Values and Vision** for our school that are outlined below.*

All individuals directly employed or contracted by us, and all visitors to our school, have a responsibility to uphold, and are subject to our Dignity and Respect at Work Charter. Our charter encompasses our shared values and vision for our school and outlines our rights and responsibilities in this regard.

1. School Values.

Respect
Empathy
Honesty
Equality
Communication

2. School Vision.

To build and maintain a workplace that supports every individual's right to dignity and respect, and ensure every person is treated equally and fairly and respected for their individuality and diversity.

3. Rights.

- a. To work in a happy and safe environment.
- b. To be treated with courtesy, kindness, and respect.
- c. To be treated with equality and fairness.
- d. To have access to a support mechanism that deals with conflict.
- e. To have one's privacy and confidentiality respected and safeguarded.

4. Responsibilities.

- a. Act and behave in a way that promotes a happy and safe environment for all.
- b. Treat others with courtesy, kindness, equality, and respect.
- c. Resolve conflicts respectfully using the agreed mechanism should they arise.
- d. Respect and safeguard the right to privacy for others.

Therefore, I commit to uphold the values of our school and act in a way that is respectful, kind, courteous, polite, and patient to pupils, parents, and staff.



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I will use the agreed Conflict Resolution mechanism (Appendix 1) to address any incidents of inappropriate behaviour towards me or others that may occur.

Signed:

Date:



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Appendix 1: Dignity and Respect at Work – An Informal Mechanism for Conflict Resolution

A: Identify and broach the issue.

Step 1: Identify the issue.

- Having identified the issue, be aware of the context and be sensitive to the demands being placed on the other person/s.
- Assess the possible impact against your actual intent.
- Leave your JCB (Judgment, Criticism and Blame) at the door and use CCC (Compassion, Concern, Care).

Step 2: Choose a good time and place.

- That is mutually acceptable, appropriate and allows for uninterrupted discussion.

Step 3: Bring the issue directly to the person.

- Don't gossip about doing this, before or after the conversation.
- We need to be careful about what is/isn't our/others' business. However it is okay to seek advice from a trusted colleague, who respects confidentiality.

Step 4: Broaching the issue.

Possible examples of how to start.....

- I am worried/a bit concerned about something. Can we discuss it privately?
- I'd like to talk about X When would suit you?
- Can we have a chat about something that is bothering me? I think it falls under our DRAW policy.
- Remember what happened on.... It's been on my mind since then ...Can we have a chat about it?



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B. Responsibilities of Speaker

Speaker:

- **Start with a positive comment e.g.,** “Thanks for taking the time to meet with me. / I like working with you / this team / this class etc....”
- **Use the ‘I’ statement e.g.,** “When this happens... I feel uncomfortable...”
Or “it upset me a bit when you said.../ when you ignored me....”
- **Be reasonable e.g.,** “I know you have a lot to do but I’ve also noticed that.”
- **Be specific about what the issue is,** especially if this has happened before.
- **Stay curious.** I need to understand why this happens or “Help me understand.”
- **Use Restorative Practice Questions.** “What happened?” as opposed to “Why?”

C. Responsibilities of Responder

Listener/Responder:

Be prepared to

- **Listen actively.** Do not interrupt.
- Avoid becoming **defensive.**
- Ask **clarifying questions** – “Do you mean?”
- **Reflect...** “You are saying/” Am I right when I hear...?”
- **Stay open** to the fact that the other person has a concern, and it has taken courage to come to you to address it.

D. Joint Responsibilities of Speaker/ Responder

- **Accept** the other person has a **legitimate concern** / point of view.
- Try and separate **the issue from the personality**, Keep it professional.
- Be **willing to compromise** – an incomplete resolution may be the only possibility. Can you agree to disagree?



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- Try to settle on a way forward that allows for a win /**resolution for both sides**. If one person leaves feeling dissatisfied the issue will continue to be an issue. Leave the door open for further dialogue if that's required.
- Remember this might be the first time the responder was made aware of this issue, and it may take some **time to process** what has actually been said. Sometimes it is best to say, "maybe we should think about this and chat again in a few days?"
- Watch your body language and tone of voice and **stay respectful**.
- End with a **positive comment** or gesture. (Thank you for meeting with me).
- Depending on the issue, make a note of the resolution and date it and **agree to review** it at a future agreed date/ time.
- If no resolution can be found the issue should be brought to the **next in line** – Assistant Principal II, Deputy Principal, Principal, who will attempt to **mediate/ resolve the issue informally** in consultation with both parties. **The use of Restorative Practice Questions may be used here as they offer a very powerful way to manage conflict.**

E. Remember

If you decide not to raise an issue, it is your responsibility to act professionally, and not to gossip about it or let it simmer/ fester.

DEAL WITH IT OR LET IT GO!

Links to other policies/documents:

1. DRaW Policy
2. School Policy on Parent/School Partnership & Parental Complaints
3. Procedures for staff relations including bullying, harassment and grievance procedures (INTO/FORSA/Staff Manual/Staff Working
4. Health and Safety Statement
5. Code of Behaviour
6. Equality Act
7. Education /Epsen Acts