

Equality & Diversity Harassment and Bullying Policy - CHAMPS Guidance

INTRODUCTION

1. The Harassment and Bullying Review Group has produced this guidance in order to establish the role of the Chambers Personnel Supports ("CHAMPS"), with the aim of promoting a culture within Three Raymond Buildings ("Chambers") in which bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated and in which those who raise concerns are provided with appropriate support.
2. This guidance should be provided to all new staff, tenants and pupils, as well as being published on the Chambers website for the benefit of external users.
3. This guidance should be reviewed by the Harassment and Bullying Review Group every two years.
4. This guidance should be read in conjunction with:
 - i. The Harassment and Bullying Policy;
 - ii. The Staff Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure, the Pupils Complaints Procedure or the Tenants' Complaints Procedure
 - iii. The Welfare Resources Reference List.

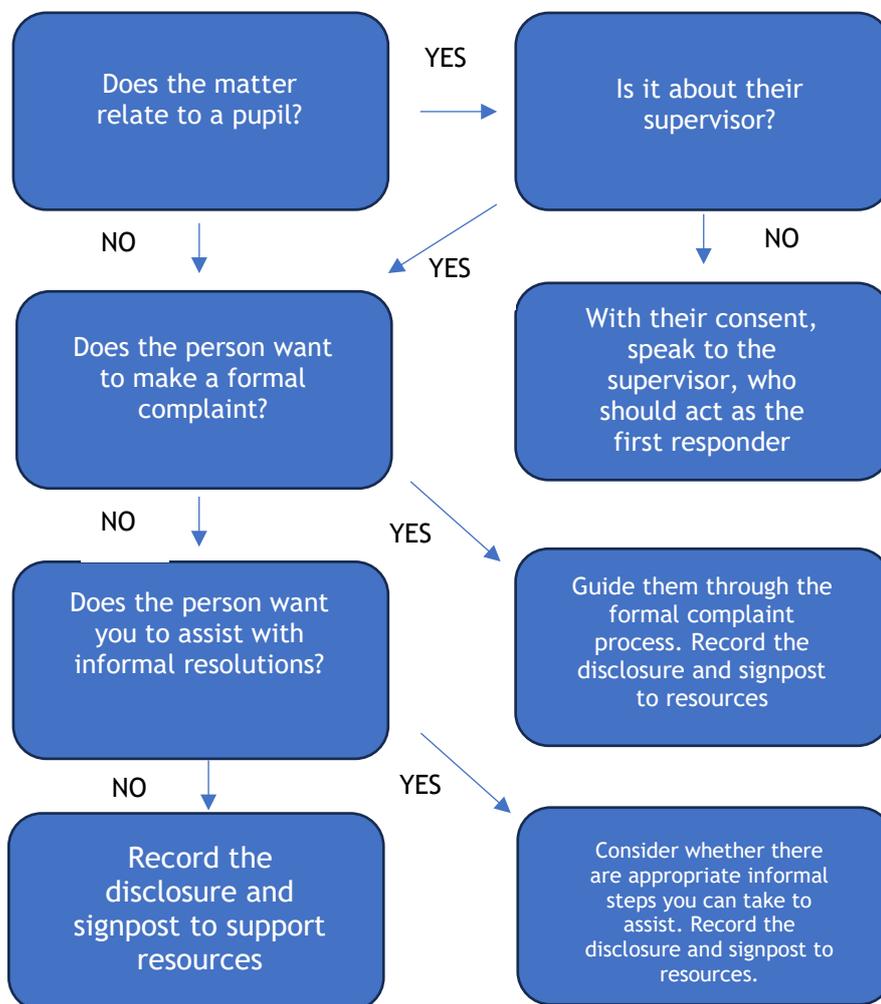
The role of the CHAMPS

5. CHAMPS are the members of Chambers nominated under §27 of the Bullying and Harassment Policy as the first point of contact for raising welfare concerns.
6. Anyone in Chambers is able to approach the CHAMPS for support, including pupils, barristers and staff. The purpose of the CHAMPS is to ensure that everyone has a clear point of contact for seeking support and raising concerns in Chambers.
7. At all times there should be at least two (2) members of Chambers fulfilling the role of CHAMPS. At least one must be a junior member of Chambers.
8. The CHAMPS will be nominated and approved by the Harassment and Bullying Review Group, with relevant amendments made to the Bullying and Harassment Policy.
9. The role of the CHAMPS will be promoted in Chambers by the Harassment and Bullying Review Group in order to raise awareness of the supports available, including upon the appointment of a new CHAMPS.

Responsibilities of the CHAMPS

10. The CHAMPS should respond to requests for support promptly, with the target time for response being within 24 hours. If the CHAMPS contacted is unavailable to assist, the person raising a concern should be referred to the other CHAMPS as soon as possible.
11. The CHAMPS should meet with or speak to the person raising a concern and listen to the information they wish to share, in accordance with the guidance on responding to a disclosure set out below. The CHAMPS can offer to assist in navigating an informal complaint, provide information about the formal complaints process under the Grievance Policy and act as the identified point of contact in the event that a formal complaint is raised.
12. When a concern is raised with the CHAMPS, they **must** offer to signpost the person(s) affected to relevant support resources.
13. CHAMPS **must** keep the information which is shared with them confidential, subject to the following exceptions:
 - i. Information may be disclosed to others where consent has been obtained;
 - ii. CHAMPS are obligated to make referrals to the Bar Standards Board when the threshold for serious misconduct is met, in accordance with their professional regulatory obligations;
 - iii. CHAMPS **must** contact 999 in circumstances where they become aware that someone is at immediate risk of serious harm;
 - iv. CHAMPS should consider making a non-emergency referral to the police if they become aware of circumstances within police jurisdiction which indicate that there is a non-urgent but ongoing risk of harm to others;
 - v. CHAMPS should consider whether it is necessary to make a safeguarding referral to manage risk. For example, a referral should be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer if the CHAMPS are given information about a person in a position of trust which indicates that they pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults.

14. If a concern is raised with the CHAMPS and an external referral is not required, the following steps should be taken:



Limitations of the Role

15. The CHAMPS is a voluntary role within chambers, intended to provide informal support for those raising welfare concerns.
16. CHAMPS are not qualified mental health professionals and are not able to provide mental health advice or services. Any concerns regarding a person's mental health or wellbeing should be addressed by way of referrals to appropriate support services.
17. In the role of CHAMPS, the relevant members of Chambers are not providing legal advice or services. Any support or advocacy for other members of chambers shall be undertaken in a lay capacity and not as part of their professional activities.

Overarching principles

18. The foremost priority for the CHAMPS is to keep people safe in Chambers, including staff, members, pupils and visitors.
19. Concerns raised by or about a pupil (including a third six pupil) or should be directed to their supervisor in the first instance. If the complaint relates to the supervisor themselves, the CHAMPS should retain initial responsibility for responding to the concern. Regard should be had to Chambers' policies on the provision of support for pupils.
20. If a CHAMPS is unsure about the right response in any case, they may seek assistance from the other CHAMPS, from an appropriate senior member of Chambers or from one of the organisations listed in the welfare resource reference list. This can be done on a 'no-names' basis if necessary to preserve confidentiality.
21. A CHAMPS shall not be penalised or disadvantaged by any person as a result of their role in supporting persons raising concerns. Any discrimination or adverse treatment experienced by a CHAMPS as a result of actions taken within this policy should be considered for referral under the Grievance Policy or to the Bar Standards Board.

Training for CHAMPS

22. CHAMPS are required to have completed bullying and harassment training within Chambers prior to commencing their role.
23. This training should be refreshed every two years. CHAMPS should maintain their own records demonstrating completion of the required training.

Record keeping and monitoring

24. CHAMPS must keep written notes (digital or hard-copy) of each concern which is raised with them. The notes should include the date when the concern was raised, the identity of the people involved and the contents of the concern.
25. Records related to concerns raised should be stored securely in a locked location and maintained in accordance with the CHAMPS' privacy statements and data protection policies.

26. CHAMPS should be vigilant to identify patterns of reports or trends within Chambers. Where multiple reports are received in relation to the same person, the CHAMPS should consider whether this means that the matter should be escalated, including to a formal complaint. Where trends are apparent, they should be reported to the Harassment and Bullying Review Group without naming the complainants so that the Chambers risk assessment can be updated and policies reviewed accordingly.

Managing conflicts

27. In the event that a conflict arises, for example because the CHAMPS involved in the provision of support are themselves implicated in the matter or named as a witness, the other CHAMPS will step in to provide support.
28. If both CHAMPS are unable to fulfil their role, the Head of the Harassment and Bullying Review Group should be asked by the CHAMPS to nominate a different member of Chambers to act as the relevant CHAMPS.

CHAMPS welfare

29. Protecting the well-being of the CHAMPS is critical to ensuring that this Guidance can be implemented effectively.
30. In keeping with this objective:
- i. The CHAMPS are encouraged to utilise the support systems listed on the Welfare Resource Reference List;
 - ii. Every effort should be made by staff and other members of Chambers to make appropriate adjustments to working arrangements to facilitate the provision of support by the CHAMPS;
 - iii. If the CHAMPS themselves experience a welfare concern, this should be raised in the first instance with the Chair of the Harassment and Bullying Review Group.

Guidance for CHAMPS: how to respond to a concern

1. Speak with the person by phone or in person;
 - i. Listen carefully and take every report seriously;
 - ii. Do not express judgment or personal views. Do not express denial or indicate disbelief. Do not cross-examine.
2. Try to ascertain:
 - i. The nature of the concern;
 - ii. The identity of the persons involved;
 - iii. What the person making the report wants by way of outcome/resolution;
 - iv. If the person making the report is not the person affected, take steps to speak with them in order to ensure their welfare is appropriately considered.
3. Explain:
 - i. Your role;
 - ii. What the options are for further action, so that the person can make an informed decision about next steps;
 - iii. The resources available to support those affected.
4. You can provide reassurance, but do not make promises which are unrealistic or which you cannot keep, such as promises of confidentiality where onward disclosure may be required.

5. Consider whether you may need to make a referral or disclosure, for example because:
 - i. The mandatory reporting threshold for the BSB has been met;
 - ii. What you have been told indicates that someone is at immediate risk of harm, so that you need to contact 999;
 - iii. There is a non-urgent but ongoing risk of harm to others, so that you need to make a police report online or by calling 101;
 - iv. You have received concerns about a person in a position of trust, so that a safeguarding report to the LADO is required.
6. If you consider you are required to make an onward disclosure, explain this to the person raising the concern. Give them an opportunity to make the report themselves.
7. If you are not required to make an onward disclosure, consider whether it may be appropriate for a formal complaint to be made, provided that the person who raised the concern gives informed consent.
8. If a formal complaint is to be pursued, keep the person who made the complaint informed as the matter progresses. Do not become involved in the formal complaint process other than in your role as liaison/support for the person who raised the matter.
9. If the person does not wish to make a formal complaint, consider whether there may be informal steps which you can take to assist in resolving the matter, with the consent of the person who raised the concern.
10. In some cases, no further action will be required. When considering whether this is appropriate, take into account the seriousness of the concern, the risk of harm to others, the impact on the person affected and whether there is information indicating a pattern of behaviour (for example, from previous concerns raised to the CHAMPS).
11. Before sharing information with others, seek the consent of the person who shared the concern. In some cases it will be necessary to share information without consent, but try to ensure that the person who raised the concern is informed and afforded agency as much as possible.
12. Make a detailed note of the conversation(s), including the date, and store the record in a secure location. Do not make comments or editorialise in your note – ensure it is neutral, factual and accurate.