

**DPA**

13<sup>th</sup> August 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I have previously written a complaint regarding the way members of staff at Brook House have treated me. Prior to Lee Hansford leaving, I spoke with him about the contents of my letter where he asked if I wanted to pursue it as a formal grievance. I decided against it as the issues raised seemed to have calmed down. Two months later I am now in a position whereby I am forced to complain again about a specific individual and would now like for formal grievance procedures to follow.

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2016

I was detailed to work on C-Wing alongside DCOs Chris Shambrook, Natalie Thomas and Slim Bassoud. At approximately 2050hrs while preparing the roll count for lock up there was a lot of shouting and banging coming from the top floor landing. All four DCOs locked the wing office and went upstairs to see what was going on. After about 5 minutes of observing the situation, it was apparent that the detainees who were in the shower were making an unnecessary commotion. In the meantime there were a few detainees who begun making their way up to the top floor landing to see what was going on. Being that it was now almost 2100hrs and there were a number of ACDT observations due (most of which were on the middle floor landing) I went downstairs and started locking other detainees on the middle floor in their room to remove the unnecessary audience for those who were causing a scene. At this point DCO Natalie Thomas made her way down the stairs to get help from other officers and acknowledged that I had started locking the middle floor doors. After finishing this I went into the wing office to write observations in the ACDTs and Supported Living Plans. DCOs Slim Bassoud and Alex Parpworth (night shift officer) were present. Myself and Slim were going through the ACDTs to see which ones still needed observations at which point DCO Bonnie Spark came into the wing office and questioned if either of us had checked the locks because we both had our bags on our shoulders. I said "nope" and before being able to finish my sentence she responded in a very disrespectful and condescending tone: "well you lot are fucking residential staff and we've come and locked up your wing and now we have to check your fucking locks as well" and stormed off. I then said "just for that I'm not leaving the office because I'm busy doing something quite important anyway". Shortly after, DCOs Chris Shambrook, Natalie Thomas, Terryn Evans and Bonnie Spark came into the wing office. At this point, myself and Slim were separating the remaining ACDTs and Supported Living Plan observations between ourselves. Somebody asked if the ACDT observations had been done to which I responded "yeah most of them have which is why I'm confused why people came in the office shouting off their mouths at me like I'm some naughty

schoolgirl." Bonnie then said "maybe you should fucking do your fucking job then and be doing what wing staff should be fucking doing when there's other people helping locking up your wing." I interrupted and informed her that in actual fact I was the one who started locking up the wing before anybody had called for her help and should therefore speak on what she knows rather than making assumptions. I then went on to say "you're a little girl to me, I've got years on top of you so when you address me in future have some manners and respect." At this point I walked out the office towards C-Wing door and told Bonnie "don't ever speak to me like I'm a fucking child neither" to which she responded "well maybe you shouldn't fucking act like one then you fucking black cunt" I then said "please shut up and learn some manners cos if you carry on I'll slap you in the mouth." Bonnie replied, "go on then" and I said, "fuck this shit I'm going home." DCO Terryn Evans tried to stop me going through the door telling me to hold on a minute. I asked her to leave me alone to which she replied, "okay but just be very very careful with what you say." I chose to believe that I did not hear Bonnie correctly with what she said however conversations that were overheard later on leads me to believe that I was more than correct in what I heard. I spoke to ACO Lia Winston about the incident on my way home who told me to make sure I put something in writing because Bonnie would be likely to do so herself. I took the advice but did not get to finish it before my next shift as I had to go to bed for work the following morning.

#### Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2016

ACO Nicola Kaminski asked me what had happened between myself and Bonnie last night. Nicola told me that she had finished on a 2130hrs shift and on her way out she saw Bonnie outside by the bicycle rack crying to other members of staff stating that it is not fair that I always get away with everything because I always play the race card. On my way through the Satellite Gate at the end of my lunch break; ACO Nicola Kaminski informed me that when she was delivering the post to C-Wing DCO Bonnie Spark was discussing the events of the night before with DCO Broghan Kosla-Rule and DCM Dave Roffey (my line manager). She stated that Dave Roffey was encouraging Bonnie to make sure she submits a report before Senior Management had left for the day. This made me expect to be called to speak to somebody at some point that day.

At approximately 1400hrs I was radioed by control to leave D-Wing courtyard and make my way to Oscar 1s office. On arriving there I was met by Duty Director Sara Edwards, Oscar 1 DCM Dave Roffey and Oscar 2 DCM Jack Bannister. Sara explained to me that she has been made aware of an incident between myself and another member of staff and due to the reports she has received and threats of violence being made I will now be under investigation and will need to be located at Tinsley House until the investigation is finished. I was informed that Ben Saunders has been notified and that Sara will be writing to me on Monday. I asked if it was made known that I was put in an antagonising situation to which I was told yes of course. I stated that I did not feel this was correct and was told not to have a conversation about it because it is now an investigation. I informed Sara that I too will be writing to her and to please be aware that I have complained previously regarding the same thing and about the same individual and if a letter is being sent to me, she needs to have both sides of the story before sending me something that is one-sided. I was told not to

discuss it and was asked to go to Tinsley from now on, to which I responded "I would much rather go home." Sara then said that would be my decision, at which point I left the office and went to the Gatehouse to write my complaint. Half way through writing, Sara came over and asked me what I was doing. When I explained, I was told to finish it at Tinsley because I have been asked to go somewhere. Sara also told me that she had marked me as unpaid because I had been out through the tracker and clocked out. I informed Sara that I had only put my radio and keys back but had not touched the tracker. I printed what I had done so far and made my way to Tinsley House. Although I did manage to speak to Sara briefly at Tinsley, I was constantly told not to have a conversation about it because it was now an investigation. I did question how could an investigation take place if only one side of the story has been heard. The fact that what I was saying while in the office with the two DCMs present was being disregarded, it made me feel as though a decision had already been made based on what Bonnie had said and I was now in a biased situation.

This incident is not the first time DCO Bonnie Spark has dealt with me in a derogatory manner in the presence of other staff members as mentioned in my previous letter. A previous incident happened outside A-Wing servery, in the presence of ACO Lia Winston, whereby Bonnie was well aware of something that needed to go back to the kitchen. Rather than taking it herself, she stood talking to Karl (from facilities) and prompted him to tell me to take it back with a smirk on her face. When both myself and Lia questioned why nobody else could have taken it, Karl walked away and Bonnie responded "well I've asked you to do it now so what's the problem." Bonnie has belittled me many times in front of detainees and I feel that this now needs to be addressed accordingly. In addition to this, I have been made aware by other members of staff that they have previously heard negative things about me and the way I work from Bonnie but are glad that they have had the opportunity to work with me and build a relationship with me and form their own judgements away from hers. I appreciate that I should not have reacted to Bonnie the way I did however at no point was I aggressive towards her neither did I confront her and invade her personal space. I began walking away from the situation and was spoken to quite rudely again, inciting a reaction.

I would like to reiterate that I am very disappointed with my experience as a DCO so far and even more so disgusted with the way I am spoken to on a daily basis. Throughout training the 8 core values of G4S were stressed as an important blueprint to follow by every member of staff irrespective of their role at Brook House. Again, the values that stand out to me in this situation are as follows: Respect, Integrity, Collaboration & Teamwork and Best People. In this instance these values were severely lacking on both mine and Bonnie's part. Working at Brook House is an environment I am used to as I do voluntary work with young offenders so I am very much able to remain calm in volatile situations and to not take things personally. I do feel, however, that since beginning my role as a DCO I have been constantly pushed and tested to see how far it will go before a negative reaction comes about.

Bonnie stated in the presence of others that I always get away with everything

because I use the race card. As a newly appointed member of staff, I am still in the learning process and am likely to make mistakes. I would therefore like to believe that if I was seen to be doing something that was deemed incorrect or inappropriate that I would have full support of my colleagues and managers to correct me where necessary. I have never felt the need to use my ethnicity as an excuse to get away with anything and in my previous letter I did not raise race as an issue. It is therefore quite concerning to me that Bonnie has made such a statement and suggests to me that race is somewhat an issue for her. Given the environment we work in and the promotion of equality and diversity, race should not have been mentioned at all. I do not like to make assumptions and would therefore like for Bonnie to have the opportunity to elaborate on exactly what she meant to clarify that I am not getting my wires crossed in thinking that me being of an ethnic minority is what is causing her to have an issue with me.

The issues raised in my previous letter were interpreted by Lee Hansford as a misunderstanding. Although I felt otherwise, I was quite happy to accept Lee's perspective and leave the issues behind as best I could and continue learning and trying to enjoy my role as a DCO at Brook House. This has proved easier said than done as the constant disrespect from DCO Bonnie Spark has continued on a daily basis which has now made me regret not taking the grievance route from the start. Maybe if I had done that in the first place I would not be in this situation now. I feel I have settled quite well in Brook House and despite the negative experience I have had with a few staff members, I quite enjoy working there. It is now very disruptive and unsettling for me to now have to be based at Tinsley House while being investigated. I have never threatened anybody neither have I ever resorted to violence in or outside the workplace. I do not believe that violence is the answer to anything and I am a strong believer of putting issues in writing in a clear and concise way so as to avoid misinterpretation and for it to be discussed and resolved in a mature way. The length of this letter is evidence of that. I am very disappointed in myself for allowing Bonnie's persistent negative behaviour to get to me that much, especially considering I have ignored it for so long.

I stated in my previous letter that I do not appreciate coming to work and feeling victimised, bullied or ridiculed by my work colleagues and I still stand by this. I work an almost identical shift pattern to Bonnie for 13.5hrs a day, 3-4 days a week and her constant disrespect and derogatory manner towards me is not something that I should have to tolerate. I do not want to be perceived as habitual complainer for every little thing that she does as I would like to believe that up until 12<sup>th</sup> August 2016 I have behaved in a professional manner by ignoring her persistent antagonising behaviour and getting on with my job. Moreover, I do not expect to come to work and be constantly harassed. Given the fact that Bonnie has even mentioned my race to other members of staff, it is very hard for me to believe that she does not have an issue with it. I have never tried to use my ethnicity to my advantage and it now makes me very uneasy to think that Bonnie could quite possibly have an issue with me solely for that purpose because I cannot recall a time that I may have said or done something to offend her and the issue she has with me appeared from my first day as a DCO. Bonnie has clearly prejudged a situation by assuming that because I belong to an ethnic

minority group that I will use this to get away with justifying what I said to her when that definitely is not the case. Making reference to my race also leads me to think that Bonnie's constant negative attitude towards me has been to get a stereotypical negative reaction from an ethnic person.

DCO Bonnie Spark's behaviour can be labelled as harassment. The term harassment is used to cover the 'causing alarm or distress' offences under section 2 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997. Harassment is therefore a criminal offence and had Bonnie's constant negative behaviour taken place outside of the workplace, I would have been well within my rights to report her to the police and still am well within my rights to do so. I therefore expect that G4S will now deal with the situation accordingly while taking into consideration the severity of the matter at hand.

I take full responsibility for my actions and again I reiterate that I do not believe that violence or threats of violence resolves problems but instead encourages even more to arise. I am more than happy to cooperate with the investigation and hope that it will be concluded quite hastily, but thoroughly and in a non-biased way, so that I can go back to working at Brook House and continue working in an environment that I have grown to enjoy in such a short space of time.

Kind regards,

Shayne Munroe