



Suitable person

2.4.2 How we deal with accusations of bullying and harassment

The Manager and senior staff have a responsibility to establish and maintain a work environment free of harassment. They must:

- Set a positive example by treating others with respect and setting standards of acceptable behaviour.
- Promote a working environment where harassment is not tolerated.
- Treat complaints seriously and deal with them promptly and confidentially.
- Give the employee and the alleged perpetrator full support during the process.

Step 1: Prevention

- New staff will be made aware of the 'Bullying and harassment' policy and procedure during their induction programme.
- Existing staff are expected to read, understand and comply with our policy and procedure.

Step 2: Dealing with a complaint informally

- Employees are encouraged to discuss any concerns about harassment with a senior member of staff.
- If appropriate, the matter will be dealt with informally. Sometimes people are not aware that their behaviour is unwelcome and an informal discussion can lead to greater understanding and an agreement that the behaviour will cease.
- If you feel you are subject to bullying and/or harassment but do not feel able to talk about it yet, here are some actions you can take yourself:
 - Keep a diary of all incidents, taking note of the dates and details which will help you recall events clearly at a later date.
 - Discuss your concerns directly with the harasser. This may be the simplest way of dealing with your complaint. You should make it clear that if the behaviour continues you will make a formal complaint.



Step 3: Mediation

- Mediation can be a part of the informal procedure initiated by your discussion with a senior manager
- The Manager will meet with both parties individually before advising on the next steps.
- Possible actions could include a further meeting between the two parties, facilitated by a mediator.
- At this meeting the complainant will be given the opportunity to explain to the other party why they consider their behaviour constitutes harassment.
- Where possible the matter will be resolved through informal discussion and agreement about future behaviour.

Step 4: The formal procedure

- If informal attempts to resolve the situation are unsuccessful, or if you feel that your complaint can not be resolved informally, you should raise your concerns with the Manager, who will investigate your concerns.
- If, following investigations, it appears that harassment/misconduct has occurred, the Manager will recommend the appropriate course of action in line with the nursery's disciplinary procedure.
- A detailed written response will be given to both parties outlining the results of the investigation and what action, if any, is being taken in respect of the complaint.
- This may result in a meeting under the disciplinary policy being convened and the behaviour being viewed as serious misconduct.
- Serious misconduct may also apply in cases where the complainant's behaviour is deemed to be malicious.
- We set a target of two months for completing formal investigations. However, given the complexities of some issues, this may not always be achievable. Timescales will be discussed in more detail with the individuals concerned.

Step 5: Follow up

- A record will be kept of all harassment complaints.
- Where harassment did occur, the Manager will check that the harassment has stopped and that there has been no subsequent victimisation. Monitoring will be carried out on a regular basis.

Confidentiality

- All employees involved with an investigation and any subsequent process are required to respect the need for confidentiality.

- All complaints, associated correspondence and interviews will be treated in strict confidence.
- Breaches in confidentiality will be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy was updated and reviewed in:

Reviewed date	Name	Signature
September 2015	Stuart Watt	
May 2016	Stuart Watt	
August 2016	Stuart Watt	
September 2016	Stuart Watt	
April 2017	Stuart Watt	
April 2018	Lindy Baldwin	
August 2018	Lindy Baldwin	
April 2019	Lindy Baldwin	
May 2019	Stuart Watt	
January 2020	Stuart Watt	
January 2021	Stuart Watt	
January 2022	Stuart Watt	
March 2023	Stuart Watt	