

# Bullying and Sexual Harassment Policy

## Statement of intent

At Wood St Nursery we create a culture of respect and challenge any form of harassment. We will not tolerate bullying or sexual harassment, and any complaints of this nature will be taken very seriously, regardless of the person's role or status. Our policy sets out how we prevent bullying and sexual harassment, and how we will deal with incidents should they occur.

## What is bullying?

Bullying is persistent behaviour that is offensive, intimidating, or humiliating, and which attempts to undermine an individual or group of employees. Bullying can occur in a variety of situations and crosses gender, race, and age. It can involve one or a number of individuals. Bullying is generally carried out face-to-face but can also occur in writing, by phone, messaging, email and on social media.

Examples of bullying include:

- commenting on people's physical appearance, gender and different abilities
- withholding information which can affect a worker's performance
- setting unreasonable or impossible tasks
- setting unmanageable workloads
- humiliating a person in front of others
- spreading rumours
- intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities
- ridiculing or demeaning someone by picking on them or setting them up to fail
- overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position
- deliberately undermining a competent worker with constant criticism

## What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment does not always have to be specifically about sexual behaviour or directed at a specific person. For example, negative comments about women as a group may be a form of sexual harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- physical acts of sexual assault
- requests for sexual favours
- verbal harassment of a sexual nature, including jokes referring to sexual acts or sexual orientation
- unwanted touching or physical contact.
- unwelcome sexual advances.
- discussing sexual relations/stories/fantasies at work, school, or in other inappropriate places
- being pressured to engage with someone sexually
- exposing oneself or performing sexual acts on oneself
- unwanted sexually explicit photos, emails, or text messages
- making conditions of employment or advancement dependent on sexual favours, either explicitly or implicitly

If you experience or witness bullying or sexual harassment at Wood St Nursery we would urge you to report this immediately to the Nursery Manager or other senior member of staff. Your report will be taken seriously. If you feel uncomfortable approaching a senior member of staff, you could ask a colleague or a friend to help you to do so, or you could write it in an email to [managers@woodstnursery.co.uk](mailto:managers@woodstnursery.co.uk). You could also choose to make a formal complaint following the Wood St Nursery Grievance Policy.

You can choose to have your complaint dealt with informally with the Nursery Manager, or formally using the Grievance Policy. However, some situations may be too serious to deal with informally.

**Steps we will take at Wood St Nursery to manage reports of bullying and sexual harassment:**

- Bullying and sexual harassment complaints will be taken seriously regardless of whether the report concerns other staff, members of children's families, or visitors to the nursery.
- We will listen with care and take a report, speak to witnesses, and challenge anyone considered guilty of bullying or sexual harassment.
- If a complaint against a colleague is upheld, this will be considered gross misconduct and the appropriate measures taken in line with our disciplinary procedure.
- If the complaint against a third party such as a visitor or parent is upheld, we will take appropriate action such as barring the person from the nursery and/or reporting to the police.

If you report that you have experienced or witnessed bullying or sexual harassment you will be supported by the Nursery Manager, and helped to seek further support from outside agencies if required. Any appointments as a result of this will be granted compassionate leave and not be deducted from your sickness allowance.

**Prevention of Bullying and Sexual Harassment at Wood St Nursery:**

- This policy will be published on our website and disseminated to staff through staff training meetings and at induction.
- All meetings with parents are held on site during normal working hours of nursery staff to ensure that meetings never take place in isolation.
- Staff concerns about parents and colleagues will always be taken seriously, and management support given in all meetings where staff express any anxiety about meeting.
- Action will be taken swiftly in line with this policy in the event that any complaint of bullying or sexual harassment is made.
- A culture of kindness and respect is at the core of the Wood St Nursery ethos and this is promoted at induction, through supervision and reviews, and by a zero tolerance attitude from senior staff when they become aware of unkindness or disrespect.