



Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School
"Nurturing curiosity and inspiring imagination"

Anti-Bullying Policy

DOCUMENT STATUS

Produced By	Version	Date	Action
Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School	1	22.10.15	Adopted by school's Personnel and Finance Committee

Legislation

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Approval

Governing body free to delegate to a committee of the governing body, an individual governor or the headteacher.

Review Frequency

Governing body free to determine.

BULLYING POLICY (ANTI BULLYING POLICY)

At Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School bullying will not be acceptable in any form. The school follows Warrington Borough Council's Dignity at Work policy and procedures for harassment and bullying.

1 Definition

Bullying can take the forms of emotional, verbal or physical aggression. It is a misuse of power. It may take the form of repeated intimidation by a more powerful person resulting in causing physical or emotional harm. Emotional bullying can include victimisation, social isolation, threats, intimidation or harassment. Verbal bullying can be negative comments, abusive language, or name-calling. Physical bullying can take the form of assault, ill treatment, oppressive behaviour or harassment.

All children and adults in the school have a right to be in an environment which is free from victimisation and fear. Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others. Staff have a duty to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from bullying and any other forms of abuse.

Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies or their victims; it can have adverse effects on anyone who witnesses the aggressive behaviour of the perpetrator and the distress of the victim. In this school, bullying of any description either by children or staff will not be tolerated and will be taken seriously. It will be addressed in every instance through appropriate procedures, eg, safeguarding, complaints or disciplinary procedures, including the Whistleblowing Policy.

2 Introduction

Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School wants to promote a supportive working environment and a healthy workforce in which its employees have the right to be treated with consideration, dignity and respect. The school's aim is to foster an environment free from bullying and harassment.

The intention of this policy is to ensure that every employee understands their right not to tolerate this kind of behaviour and how to deal with it if it occurs. All complaints will be taken seriously, dealt with fairly and in confidence. Employees are responsible for their own behaviour and for ensuring that their conduct is in line with the standards set out here.

3 What are Bullying and Harassment?

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, or degrade the recipient. Workplace bullying is persistent behaviour that exerts pressure on subordinates or colleagues beyond what is reasonably necessary to achieve objectives or to use strength or power to coerce others by fear.

Harassment is unwanted conduct affecting a person's dignity. It may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religion, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual and it may be persistent or an isolated incident. It is not what may have been intended by the alleged individual's actions that are important in deciding whether harassment has occurred; it is whether the actions and comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient.

Bullying and harassment can take many forms. Behaviour of a sexual or sexist nature, unwanted physical contact, denial of job opportunities, shouting, leering, constant criticism or teasing, spreading malicious rumours, name calling, deliberate with-holding of information to make an individual look incompetent and overloading of work are all examples of bullying or harassment. Bullying and harassment incidents do not always happen face-to-face. They may also occur in writing, by email, or phone.

4 The Effects of Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment can have a harmful effect on an individual's home and work life. It can lead to depression, anxiety, stress and loss of confidence. In the workplace, this can result in poor working relationships, increased absenteeism and reduced efficiency.

Legislation relating to sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age and gender reassignment makes it unlawful for harassment that includes elements of discrimination. Employees may be able to pursue a complaint under the Equality Act 2010 to an Employment Tribunal. Employees can also complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them and they do not have to have the relevant characteristic themselves. They are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

Bullying and harassment may amount to gross misconduct under the school's Disciplinary Procedure and, if the allegations are substantiated, may lead to an employee's dismissal. In addition, it is also a disciplinary offence to victimise a person bringing such a complaint or to make a malicious complaint.

5 Responsibilities

The headteacher and line managers are required to:

- Set a positive example by treating others with respect and setting standards of acceptable behaviour;
- Bring the policy to the attention of employees in their work area;
- Challenge all inappropriate behaviour;
- Take appropriate action if bullying and harassment occurs and ensure that complaints are treated in accordance with the procedure;
- Ensure records are kept of incidents.

Employees need to:

- Be aware of their own behaviour and the effect it may have on other people;
- Treat others with respect ;

- Recognise the problems bullying and harassment can cause;
- Ensure that they know about and comply with the policy;
- Take action if they witness inappropriate behaviour.

6 The Procedure

An employee who feels that they are being bullied or harassed at work can choose to raise the matter informally or formally. If the situation cannot be dealt with informally then the formal procedure will have to be used.

6.1 Informal Stage

Sometimes people are not aware that their behaviour is unwelcome and an informal discussion can lead to an agreement that the behaviour will cease. In many instances, it is possible for the complaint to be resolved quickly this way. If employees feel unable to do this themselves, a number of options are available to them:

Human Resources

Employees within the council's Human Resources Service have a wide range of experience of dealing with bullying and harassment issues and will be able to provide support and advice.

Trade Union Representatives

Employees who are members of a trade union can get help from their trade union representative. The school will work in partnership with the trade unions to deal with unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour.

Occupational Health Service

Employees may find it helpful to talk to someone from the Occupational Health Service. A confidential counselling service is also available via Occupational Health.

The first step of the informal stage is to arrange a meeting with the person against whom the allegation has been made. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the complaint with them, to see if they acknowledge that their behaviour is unacceptable and causing distress, irrespective of their intention, and give an undertaking that the behaviour will cease. If an agreement cannot be reached, it may be necessary to move to the formal stage of the procedure.

6.2 Formal Stage

6.2.1 Acknowledgement and Investigation

In order to make a formal complaint of bullying and harassment, an employee will need to complete a Bullying and Harassment Complaints Form (see Appendix A) and refer to the school's Dignity at Work Policy and Grievance Procedure. The completed form should be sent to their line manager or the headteacher. They will acknowledge receipt and arrange for a copy to be sent to the Human Resources Service. The complaint will be investigated by two investigating officers (senior managers from within the school (or, very occasionally, an external consultant). The investigating team will be provided with administrative support.

The timescale of the investigation will depend on the complexities of the particular case. Whilst speedy resolutions are desirable, this will not always be achievable. A realistic target should be notified to the parties concerned by the investigating officers.

6.2.2 Interviews

The investigating officers will interview the person making the allegation. He or she can be accompanied by a work colleague or union representative. Interviews should be held away from the complainant's normal place of work. Notes of the interview will be sent to the complainant to allow them to confirm that they are an accurate record. A copy of the Bullying and Harassment Complaints Form will be sent to the person against whom the allegation has been made.

The alleged harasser or bully will then be interviewed, followed by other named witnesses. They may be accompanied by a work colleague or union representative. Each person interviewed will be sent notes of their interview for confirmation.

6.2.3 Decision and Recommendations

The investigating officers will produce a written report, detailing all relevant information, statements, records of interviews and recommendations of appropriate action. Appropriate action could include counselling, training, redeployment and, where appropriate, disciplinary action. The report will be considered by the headteacher who will ensure that the appropriate action is taken.

The complainant and the person against whom the complaint was made will be informed personally about the findings of the investigation and will be given a brief written summary of the decision. The outcome will then be confirmed in writing to the relevant parties.

6.2.4 Right of Appeal

If either the complainant or the person against whom the allegation was made is not satisfied with the outcome, they can submit a grievance against the decision. This must be in writing to the chair of governors within 10 working days of receiving the decision, clearly stating the grounds upon which they wish to appeal.

6.2.5 Disciplinary Procedure

Where it is clear that a conduct issue exists, then the school's Disciplinary Procedure should be followed with as little delay as possible. Whilst the information gathered during the bullying and harassment investigation will be available, there may be the need for further investigations. In cases which appear to involve serious misconduct, and there is reason to separate the parties, the person against whom the allegation was made may have to be suspended.

If, during the course of the investigation, it is established that a malicious complaint has been made, then appropriate action will be taken against the complainant, and this may include disciplinary action.

6.2.6 Equality and Diversity Statement

The school is committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity in everything it does. Please refer to the school's Public Service Equality Duty statement.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM

General

Please refer to the Anti-Bullying Policy for further details. If able, you should try to resolve the issue informally. If you feel unable to do this, or you have tried and cannot reach an agreement, please complete this form.

Name:.....

Post Title:.....

School: Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School, Sandy Lane, Orford, Warrington, WA2 9HY

Work Telephone Number: 01925 623640

Please specify who your complaint is against:

.....

What is your working relationship with this person (eg. work colleague)

.....

.....

Please outline your complaint here: (add pages if necessary)

Have you previously raised this issue with anyone? If so please specify to whom, when and what action was taken?

How would you like the situation to be resolved?

Signature:

Date:.....

Please forward this completed form to headteacher who will arrange for a copy to be sent to the Human Resources Service.