



## **STARLINGS PRESCHOOL**

### **Dignity at Work Policy**

#### **Policy statement**

Starlings Preschool are committed to creating a work environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone's treated with dignity and respect. Harassment and bullying can have serious consequences for individuals and Starlings.

Harassment or bullying may make people unhappy may cause them stress and affect their work performance and could cause them to leave their job. Effects on Starlings preschool can include loss of morale, poor work performance, increased turnover in staff which may also affect the children and their families in our care. Serious harassment may be a criminal offence

#### **What is bullying within the work environment?**

**Bullying** is an offensive, intimidating malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power which is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to sex, gender reassignment, an abuse or misuse of power which is mean to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end.

Has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person or is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating his or her dignity or of creating and intimidating, hostile. Degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him/her if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something intended as a "joke" may offend another person. You must respect other peoples, feelings.

All bullying and harassment is misconduct and is a disciplinary offence which will be dealt with under Starlings preschool disciplinary policy. Bullying or harassment will often be gross misconduct which can lead to dismissal without notice.

#### **Examples of bullying or harassment**

Bullying or harassment may be misconduct, which is physical, verbal or non-verbal e.g., by letter, text or email.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour covered in this policy include (but are not limited to) the following:



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- Physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault
- Unwelcome sexual advances
- The offer of rewards for going along with the sexual advances e.g., Promotion, access to training
- Demeaning comments about a person's appearance
- Unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual or racial nature or about an individual's age
- Unwanted nicknames related to a person's age race or disability
- The use of obscene gestures
- Spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone
- Picking on someone or setting them up to fail
- Ridiculing someone
- Isolation or non-cooperation at work and excluding someone from social activities

Victimisation is treating someone less favourably than others because he or she has in good faith complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing him or her someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint

Provided you act in good faith i.e., you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment, Starlings preschool will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation.

***Making a complaint which you know to be untrue or giving evidence which, you know to be untrue may lead to a disciplinary action being taken against you.***

### **What to do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed?**

You may be able to sort out matters informally, the person may not know that his or her behaviour is unwelcome or upsetting. An informal discussion may help him or her to understand the effects of his or her behaviour and agree to change it. You may feel able to approach the person yourself, or with the manager. Alternatively, an initial approach can be made on your behalf by: Manager deputy/lead practitioner or another employee. You should tell the person what behaviour of his or hers you find offensive and unwelcome and say that you would like it to stop immediately.



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Inform them if the behaviour continues you intend to make a formal complaint to your manager.

You should keep a note of the date and what was said and done, this will be useful evidence if the unacceptable behaviour continues and you wish to make a formal complaint.

If an informal approach does not resolve matters, or you think the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, you can make a formal complaint by using the Starlings preschool disciplinary and grievance procedure.

**This policy was adopted by Starlings Preschool**

**On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

**Date to be reviewed**

**Signed on behalf of the management committee**

**Name of signatory Tricia Hunt**

**Role of signatory Chairperson**