



Spinney Pre-School

Dignity at Work Policy

Statement of intent

It is Spinney Pre School's commitment to ensure that all staff are treated with dignity and respect at work. Bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in the Pre-School.

Aim

We aim to provide a fair, effective and consistent method of dealing with matters relating to bullying and harassment and create an environment where staff can freely contribute to the smooth running of the Pre-School and achieve job satisfaction.

At all stages of the procedure, it is essential to maintain confidentiality for both the member of staff making the complaint and the person accused of bullying or harassment.

Methods

In order to achieve this aim, the following will apply:

- Any concern reported, which infringe the right of another to attend work without fear of harassment or bullying, will be fully investigated and dealt with sensitively, and all reasonable action will be taken to prevent repetition.
- Incidents of harassment and bullying will be treated seriously and could lead to disciplinary action. In certain cases dismissal may be appropriate.
- It is the duty of any member of staff to report any instances of bullying which they have witnessed or are aware of.
- If a complaint is found to have been not made in good faith, then it will be regarded as a disciplinary offence.

Dealing with concerns

When a concern is raised it will be necessary to define what is meant by bullying or harassment. If a member of staff complains they are being bullied or harassed then they have a grievance, which must be dealt with.

Complaints should be investigated promptly and objectively. All complaints must be taken seriously. Employees do not normally make serious accusations unless they feel seriously aggrieved.

Bullying and harassment can take many forms and the following list is examples of what the Pre-School considers to be unacceptable behaviour:

- Unwanted physical contact;
- Spreading offensive or malicious rumours or Insulting someone on the grounds of gender/race/disability/age/religion or beliefs/sexual orientation/marriage or civil partnership/pregnancy or maternity/gender reassignment;
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone, setting them up to fail;
- Insulting behaviour or gestures;
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations or social activities;
- Unfair treatment;
- Misuse of power and position;
- Unwelcome sexual advances e.g. touching, display of offensive materials or jokes;
- Offensive or suggestive literature or remarks;
- Embarrassing, threatening, humiliating, patronising or intimidating remarks;
- Deliberately undermining a competent worker;
- Preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities;
- Using electronic means or social networks to bully, harass, demean or offend someone;
- Physical or verbal assault; and
- Damaging personal property.

Informal procedure

In some cases the concern can be rectified informally. Sometimes people are unaware that their actions are unwelcome and an informal discussion could help towards understanding the implications of their behaviour.

A meeting should be convened with all parties and the aspects of the behaviour which are offensive and unacceptable should be clearly identified and the effect it is having on the employee. If the member of staff making the complaint feels unable to attend then they can nominate a representative or they can put their concern in writing.

Any action from the meeting should be recorded.

Formal procedure

Where an informal resolution is not possible then a written record from the member of staff should be submitted to the Supervisor. If the allegation involves the Supervisor then the incident should be reported to the Chair of the Committee. The nature of the bullying and/or harassment should be included, details of when, how and who was involved.

Once the written allegation is received formal investigations will start and be undertaken by the appropriate people.

During the investigations, it may be necessary to make arrangements so that the people involved avoid working directly together. In serious cases it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff and this will be implemented in accordance with the Disciplinary procedure.

The alleged harasser/bully will be informed in writing of the complaint made against them. The investigation will include a separate interview with both the complainant and the person against whom the complaint has been made. Both will be entitled to be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative. Statements from each party may be required.

As part of the investigation process it may be necessary to interview witnesses and make a written statement. All witnesses must maintain confidentiality at all times.

Following the initial investigation, the Supervisor or the person in charge of the investigation may decide that the matter will need to be dealt with under the pre-school's Disciplinary procedure.

Possible action

Any action will be taken after careful consideration of all the facts. In some cases it may be that disciplinary action is unnecessary and that counselling or training is preferable as the individual may now be in a position to accept the need to change their behaviour. Where disciplinary action is considered the most appropriate course, then all circumstances would be considered, such as the member of staff's past disciplinary and general record, in order to decide what penalties to impose.

Where bullying or harassment amounts to gross misconduct, dismissal without notice may be appropriate.

When a case of bullying or harassment happens, there will be a review of the policies, procedures and working conditions to see if any changes are necessary to improve support for staff.

This Policy was adopted at a meeting of the Pre-School held on (date)_____

Signed on behalf of the Pre-School_____