



## SEVENOAKS DAY NURSERY

### **Staff Policy – Bullying and Harassment**

This policy applies in relation to bullying and harassment affecting staff, volunteers and students at the Nursery. The management of inappropriate behaviour by children is dealt with in the Behaviour Management Policy.

It is in everyone's interest for the environment in which we work to be harmonious and respectful. All those who work for the Nursery, and its children and parents, should be treated with dignity and respect. Although we would like to think that this is always the case, this policy recognises that inappropriate behaviour, which may include harassment or bullying, can and does take place. The policy aims to ensure that if inappropriate behaviour does occur in the Nursery it is dealt with in a serious, sensitive and confidential manner so that the matter can be resolved as quickly as possible for all concerned.

Sevenoaks Day Nursery considers that bullying and harassment in all forms is morally unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It may also be unlawful.

Alleged breaches of the policy will be taken seriously and, where appropriate, disciplinary action up to and including dismissal will be taken against anyone found to be in breach of this policy.

#### **Identifying Harassment**

It is important to note that the question of whether or not behaviour constitutes harassment rests with the person on the receiving end of the behaviour.

Harassment occurs where the unwanted conduct violates another person's dignity. It also occurs where the unwanted conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for another person.

A single incident can constitute harassment, if it is sufficiently serious. Alternatively, a series of relatively minor incidents or actions can be collectively viewed as harassment. No harassment of any kind should take place in the nursery and all employees have a responsibility to ensure at all times that their own behaviour does not offend others.

#### **Bullying**

Bullying is regarded as any behaviour, occasional or persistent, by anyone that intimidates or oppresses another person, possibly through misuse of authority or power. It may also be characterised as offensive, malicious or insulting behaviour which has the effect of undermining, humiliating or injuring the recipient or making them fearful. It invariably has a

negative effect on the victim's self-confidence, self-esteem and general well-being. It can be subtle in nature and is intended to hurt.

### **Dealing with harassment and bullying**

Sevenoaks Day Nursery will deal with all complaints of harassment or bullying promptly, fairly, sensitively and in confidence. It will decide on the most appropriate course of action in the circumstances. If a staff member is not satisfied with how a complaint is dealt with, that staff member can at any stage raise a formal grievance.

Disciplinary action will be considered in all cases where a claim of harassment or bullying is substantiated. Serious incidents will be considered to be gross misconduct.

Staff should be aware that any complaint that is unfounded and not made in good faith, for example a malicious complaint, could be very damaging to the reputation of the individual accused. Such behaviour, if established, may constitute gross misconduct and will be subject to the staff disciplinary procedure.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of the Trustees of Sevenoaks Day Nursery in September 2010 and amended in June 2023.



Susan Dreksler  
Chair