SAFEGUARDING & WELFARE REQUIREMENT: Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

Policy Statement

St John's Playtime Pre-school promotes an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We expect everyone to make sure they behave respectfully towards each other and never act in way that could be regarded as bullying, victimisation or harassment.

We recognise that harassment and victimisation is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. As such, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender, reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Policy Procedures

At St John's Playtime Pre-school, we are aware that personal harassment takes many forms ranging from tasteless jokes and abusive remarks to pestering for sexual favours, threatening behaviour and actual physical abuse. For the purpose of this policy, it also includes bullying.

Bullying is understood to be targeted and persistent offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour and can include the abuse or misuse of power to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Whatever form it takes personal harassment is always taken seriously and is completely unacceptable.

We recognise that personal harassment can exist in the workplace, as well as outside the workplace, and that this can have a serious effect on an employee's working life by interfering with their job performance or by creating a stressful, intimidating and unpleasant working environment.

St John's Playtime Pre-school, will not tolerate any form of personal harassment and seeks to ensure that the working environment is sympathetic to all employees. The aim of this policy

is to inform employees of the type of behaviour that is unacceptable and provides employees who are the victims of personal harassment with a means of redress. This policy covers all areas within all areas of the pre-school organisation.

St John's Playtime Pre-school has a duty to ensure this policy is implemented and all employees are expected to comply with it. We will endeavour to review this policy at regular intervals in order to monitor its effectiveness.

Personal Harassment

Personal harassment takes many forms and employees may not always realise that their behaviours constitute to harassment. Personal harassment is unwanted behaviour by one employee towards another.

Personal harassment may include:

- Insensitive jokes and pranks
- Lewd or abusive comments
- Deliberate exclusion from conversations
- Displaying abusive or offensive writing or material
- Abusive, threatening or insulting words or behaviour
- Name calling
- Picking on someone or setting them up to fail
- Exclusion or victimisation
- Undermining the contribution/position
- Demanding a greater work output than is reasonably feasible
- Blocking promotion or other development/advancement.

This is not an exhaustive list and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee found to be committing any form of personal harassment.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment can take place in many forms within a workplace and can go undetected for a period of time where employees do not connect a particular behaviours as sexual

harassment. Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour related to sex, or of a sexual nature, by one employee towards another.

Sexual harassment can include:

- Lewd or abusive comment of a sexual nature such as regarding an individual's appearance or body
- Unwelcoming touching of a sexual nature
- Displaying sexually suggestive or sexually offensive writing or material
- Asking questions of a sexual nature
- Conversations of a sexual nature that makes another person feel uncomfortable
- Sexual propositions or advances, whether made in writing or verbally

Sexual harassment can also take place where an employee is treated less favourably because they have rejected, or submitted to, the unwanted conduct that is related to sex or is of a sexual nature. Whether less favourable treatment occurs as a result will be examined broadly and includes areas such as blocking promotion and refusal of training opportunities or other development opportunities.

Victimisation

Victimisation takes place when an employee is treated unfavourably as a direct result of raising a genuine complaint of discrimination or harassment. Furthermore, any employee who supports or assists another employee to raise a complaint is also subjected to victimisation if they are treated unfavourably.

Third Party Harassment

St John's Playtime Pre-school, operates a zero-tolerance policy in relation to harassment perpetrated against one of its employees by a third party, this may be a parent/carer or visitor to the pre-school. All employees are encouraged to report any and all instances of harassment that involve a third party in line with the procedures of reporting an incident.

If an allegation is well-founded, the pre-school manager will take the necessary steps needed in order to act upon this complaint. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Warning the individual that the inappropriate nature of their behaviour is not acceptable.
- Banning the individual from the premises
- Reporting the individual's actions to the police

In addition to this, St John's Playtime Pre-school will endeavour to take all reasonable steps to deter and prevent any form of harassment taking place.

Responsibilities

Employee responsibilities

St John's Playtime Pre-school expects all employees to behave appropriately and professionally at all times during their working hours, this also may be extended to events outside working hours which are classed as work-related, such as, meetings, fundraisers and social events. Employees should not engage in discriminatory, harassing or aggressive behaviour towards any other person at any time.

Any form of harassment or victimisation may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal if it is committed:

- In a work situation
- During any situation related to work, such as a social event
- Against a colleague or other person connected to the employer outside of a work situation, including social media
- Against anyone outside of a work situation where the incident is relevant to their suitability to carry out the role

Employees need to speak to the pre-school manager about any concerns they have about this policy, so they can then be addressed. It is important to co-operate with the manager to make sure there is no harassment or discrimination in the workplace.

A breach of this policy by will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Employer responsibilities

St John's Playtime pre-school is responsible for ensuring all employees, volunteers and committee, understand the rules and policies relating to the prevention of harassing and

bullying behaviour at work and during work-related social events. We will promote a professional and positive workplace whereby the managers are alert and proactively identify areas of risk and incidents of harassment, sexual harassment and bullying.

We will also take into account aggravating factors, such as abuse of power over a more junior colleague, when deciding what disciplinary action to take.

Making a complaint about harassment and/or bullying

Informal method

At St John's Playtime Pre-school, we recognise that complaints of personal harassment, and particularly of sexual harassment, can sometimes be of a sensitive and intimate nature and that it may not be appropriate for you to raise the issue through the normal grievance procedures. In these circumstances you are encouraged to raise such issues with another senior employee or committee member of your choice (whether or not that person has a direct supervisory responsibility for you) as a confidential helper.

If you are a victim of minor harassment it needs to be made clear to the harasser on an informal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and if you feel confident enough to ask them to stop. If you feel unable to do this verbally then a hand written request can be handed to the harasser, your confidential helper can assist you with this.

Formal method

Where the informal approach fails or the harassment is more serious, you should bring the matter to the attention of the pre-school Manager, as a formal written grievance and again your confidential helper can assist you with this. If possible, there should be notes and records kept of the harassment, so they can be included in the written complaint. The complaint should include:

- The name of the alleged harasser
- The nature of the alleged harassment
- The dates and times when the alleged harassment occurred
- The names of any witnesses

- Any actions already taken by you to stop the alleged harassment

Where it is not possible to make the formal compliant to the pre-school manager, for example they are the alleged harasser, then complaint should be raised with the pre-school committee chairperson.

On receipt of a formal complaint the pre-school will take action to ensure you are separated from the alleged harasser to ensure an uninterrupted investigation is able to take place. This may involve changes to the alleged harassers working hours and days or suspension with contractual pay until the matter has been resolved.

On conclusion of the investigation a full report of the findings will be submitted to the manager and deputy manager who will hold the grievance meeting.

You will then be invited to attend a meeting, at an agreed time and location, to discuss the investigation once there has been time for the report to have been read. You have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by another colleague and it is important to take all reasonable steps to attend.

All those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence will be a disciplinary matter.

During the meeting there will be an opportunity to put your case forward and the manager will explain the outcome of the investigation. You have the right to appeal the outcome, this can be made in writing to the pre-school committee within 5 days of receiving the outcome.

If the decision is that the allegation is well founded, the harasser will be liable to disciplinary action. This will be in accordance with the pre-school's disciplinary procedure up to and including dismissal.

St John's Playtime Pre-school is committed to ensuring employees are not discouraged from using this procedure and no employee will be victimised for having brought a complaint. As well ensuring that all employees, volunteers and committee are aware that there is an open-door policy and concerns can be brought to management immediately and at anytime.

This policy was reviewed on: **June 2026**

This policy will be reviewed again on: **June 2027**

Signed on behalf of the Management committee and provider: 

Name of Signatory: **Polly Fyfe**

Role of Signatory: **Committee Chairperson**