



Sexual Harassment Policy

Policy Name:	Sexual Harassment Policy
Adopted By:	Louise Farrow-Brookes
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1. Purpose

This policy provides clear guidance on preventing, reporting, and responding to sexual harassment within our early years setting. It supports a safe, respectful environment for all staff, children, visitors, volunteers, parents and third parties. It also reflects our legal duties under UK employment and equality law, including the Equality Act 2010 and the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, which requires employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment at work.

2. Scope

This policy applies to everyone in the setting environment, including:

- Employees (full-time, part-time, temporary and contract)
- Agency staff and volunteers
- Students on placement
- Parents, carers and family members
- Visitors to the setting
- Third parties engaged with the setting

It applies at all times during work-related activities, including off-site visits and organisation-sponsored events.

3. Definitions

Sexual harassment includes unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

This may include, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, jokes, comments, gestures, requests for sexual favours, inappropriate touching, displaying sexually explicit material, or other verbal, non-verbal or physical behaviour of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment can occur between colleagues, between staff and third parties, such as parents or visitors, and in relationships of unequal power.

4. Statement of Zero Tolerance

Fledgelings has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Any such behaviour is unacceptable and will be dealt with promptly and seriously, regardless of the role or status of those involved. This applies equally to incidents involving staff, visitors, parents and third parties.

5. Duties and Responsibilities

5.1 Employer Responsibilities

We will:

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Promote a culture of respect and dignity.
- Ensure clear reporting and investigation procedures.
- Protect complainants and witnesses from victimisation or retaliation.
- Provide training and guidance for all staff.
- Regularly assess and address risks related to sexual harassment.

5.2 Employee and Stakeholder Responsibilities

All individuals must:

- Treat others with respect and dignity.
- Avoid behaviour that could constitute sexual harassment.
- Report concerns or incidents promptly.

6. Reporting a Concern or Incident

Anyone who has experienced, witnessed, or been notified of sexual harassment is encouraged to report it as soon as possible.

6.1 Reporting Options

Reports can be made via:

- Manager / Deputy
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- HR Manager Aimee Hume

Reports may be made:

- Informally: for example, an initial discussion, mediation or early resolution.
- Formally: a written complaint invoking the formal grievance procedure.

The choice of informal or formal route is normally the complainant's, except in cases that are so serious that formal action is deemed necessary.

6.2 Confidentiality and Protection

We will treat all reports confidentially and limit disclosure to those who need to know to investigate and resolve the issue. All individuals involved will be protected against retaliation.

7. Handling a Complaint

7.1 Initial Response

- Acknowledge the report promptly.
- Clarify whether the complainant wishes to pursue the matter informally or formally.
- Offer support, such as referrals to counselling or support services.

7.2 Investigation

- Investigations will be timely, objective and fair.
- Evidence and witness statements will be documented appropriately.
- Confidentiality will be respected.

7.3 Outcomes

If the complaint is upheld, outcomes may include:

- Disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- Changes to working arrangements if necessary.
- Referrals to law enforcement or regulatory bodies if required.

If the complaint is not upheld, the nursery will consider measures to support relationships and working arrangements. Examples include mediation or counselling.

8. Support Available

We will support complainants, witnesses and individuals subject to complaints.

Support may include:

- Counselling services
- Advice on reporting to external agencies
- Adjustments to working arrangements
- Referral to professional support networks

9. Prevention and Training

9.1 Preventative Measures

To reduce risk and create a respectful culture, we will:

- Communicate this policy widely.
- Include sexual harassment awareness in induction and refresher training.
- Display anti-harassment messaging in the workplace.
- Ensure supervision and management oversight.

9.2 Training

All staff and management will receive regular training on:

- Recognizing sexual harassment
- Reporting procedures
- Handling complaints appropriately

10. Risk Assessment and Control Measures

We will conduct regular risk assessments to identify where and how sexual harassment might occur. Key elements include:

- Exit interviews and culture assessments
- Supervisions and appraisals
- Review of past incidents and complaints
- Observation of workplace dynamics
- Identification of high-risk contexts, such as social events and parent interactions

Actions to address risk may include:

- Specific controls, such as supervision and codes of conduct
- Additional training
- Adjustments to processes or physical layout
- Monitoring effectiveness and updating action plans

These assessments will be recorded and reviewed at least annually.

11. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Equality Act 2010, which prohibits unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that creates a hostile environment.
- Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, requiring employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and to proactively address risks.
- Related statutory guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and Acas on preventing and handling sexual harassment in the workplace.

12. Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement

This policy will be reviewed at least annually or sooner if legal obligations change. We will monitor:

- Reported incidents and outcomes
- Training completion
- Risk assessment results
- Feedback from staff and stakeholders

Improvements will be implemented where necessary.

13. Review History

Date Approved	Reviewed By
10/02/2026	Louise Farrow-Brookes