

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Amendment History

Revision	Author	Description of change	Date updated
Original	Karen Walls	Original policy	May 2005
1	KW	Amendment history added	May 2006
KASC policy	Carol Hooper	Adapted from adopted Kineton Playgroup policy	August 2006
2	CH/SM	Review only, no change needed	June 2007
3	CH/SM	Merge KASC and Playgroup policies; update footer	September 2007
4	CH/ SM/ Alison Foulds	Reviewed, no change	June 2009
5	CH/AF	Reviewed, no change	May 2010
6	CH/HS	Reviewed, reference added to other forms of harassment	March 2012
7	CH/HS	No change	October 2012
8	CH/KG	Reviewed, reference to Health & Safety Executive	September 2014
9	CH	No substantive changes, corrections of spelling and slight wording changes	October 2015
10	CH	Add reference to transgender and gender fluidity	November 2016
11	CH	Clarify that reports of incidents should be made in writing	February 2018
12	CH & SF	Reviewed, no changes	January 2020
13	CH	Reviewed, no changes	July 2022
14	CH, TH & XF	Reviewed, no changes	July 2023
15	TH	Reviewed, no changes	September 2025

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All references to 'Playgroup' in this policy includes Kineton Playgroup Ltd and KASC.

Introduction

Abusive or violent behaviour, or harassment, towards members of staff is unacceptable and will not be tolerated; there is a policy of zero tolerance towards such behaviour.

Kineton Playgroup Ltd has a duty as an employer to provide staff with as safe a work environment as possible under procedures endorsed by the Health and Safety at Work Executive. All reasonable steps to protect staff from violent or abusive situations are taken in order to fulfil these responsibilities.

Statement

Playgroup has a legal obligation to provide a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors. Violent or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated and action will be taken to ensure of the safety of children, members of staff and visitors.

Behaviours that could constitute and be perceived as a threat to staff:

- verbal abuse (which may include abuse relating to characteristics set out in below)
- being kicked/punched/spat at
- being grabbed/pinched/slapped
- verbal abuse relating to age, disability, gender reassignment, gender fluidity, transgender issues, sexual and sexual orientation, race, religion or belief or other harassment
- any other form of communications, including written material, phone, email or other forms of communication eg text, social networking, social media, as well as face to face actions

Guidance for action when faced with threatening behaviour;

When faced with a threatening situation, it should be remembered that the situation can often be defused using simple techniques.

It is important to remember that if anyone who feels at risk should immediately remove themselves from the situation and contact the manager, supervisor or another member of staff.

Guidance for defusing a potentially violent situation;

- Appear calm, self-controlled and confident – consider your safety and that of the other people in your care;
- Ensure that your own body language cannot be perceived as threatening;
- Keep a safe distance between you and the other person and ensure you have an escape route;

- Talk to the person creating the threat using their name and acknowledge their concerns and feelings;
- Ask the person to explain the problem to you and encourage reasoning, and if possible explain the intention of staff and/or others;
- Move out into a safe area where there are other members of staff who can assist you; alternatively keep a piece of furniture e.g. a table, between yourself and the other person;
- If you intend to have a meeting with the person notify colleagues where you will be;
- If a weapon is brandished, ask the person to put it down; if they do not comply withdraw from the situation and contact the manager, supervisor or another member of staff;
- The person should then be warned that their conduct is unacceptable and that if they do not desist they will be asked to leave.

Guidance for defusing a verbally abusive situation

- Treat the person as a responsible adult and address them by name, explaining what is occurring and why;
- Verbal aggression or abuse will not be tolerated; any member of staff who has been verbally abused should report the incident to the manager and complete a report;
- A member of the team should remind the person that this behaviour will not be tolerated under the Zero Tolerance Policy and explain what constitutes acceptable conduct.

Guidance for handling abusive telephone calls or contact through other media

- Always identify the caller. If the caller does not state his/her name, politely ask them who is calling. If they do not provide you with their name, politely inform them that you are unable to continue with the conversation and put the telephone down.
- If you recognise the caller's voice ask them politely to clarify who they are. If they refuse to do so, again politely inform them that you are unable to continue with the conversation and put the telephone down.
- If the person is abusive to you, calmly and politely explain that you will not continue to talk to them and will end the call if they continue with what you consider to be an abusive telephone call. Alternatively, ask someone else to speak with them. If they continue to be abusive, inform them that you are terminating the telephone call.
- Documentation of telephone calls can be difficult so as soon as the telephone conversation has ended, record the conversation in writing. The entry should contain the name of the member of staff making the entry, dated and timed. If you recall what was said exactly, then document the phrases in quotation marks e.g. "I know who you are and where you live".

- For other forms of contact, make a note of the email address/mobile phone number or other relevant details and report these to the manager. Do not reply or respond in any way.

Documentation/ Reporting

Any member of staff should ensure that any instances of abuse or harassment is recorded and reported to the most senior member of staff on duty. A report in writing should be completed by the most senior member of staff involved in the incident. A copy of the incident documentation should be sent to the Chairperson of Kineton Playgroup Limited.