



Harvard Park Policies and Procedures:  
**Staff Personal safety including home visits**

## 40. Staff personal safety including home visits

### Policy statement

Harvard Park believes that the health and safety of all staff is of paramount importance and that all staff have the right to work in a safe environment. We support safe working both on and off the premises, acknowledging the needs and diversity of children and their family.

### Procedures

#### General

- All staff in the building early in the morning, or late in the evening, ensure doors and windows are locked.
- When arriving and leaving the premises, the first two members of staff to arrive in the building arrive together, and the last two members of staff in the building leave together.
- Visitors are generally only allowed access with prior appointments and only admitted once their identity has been verified. Any visitor is expected to sign our visitors logbook.
- Minimal petty cash is kept on the premises.
- When taking cash to the bank, members of staff are aware of personal safety. Managers and/or directors carry out a risk assessment and develop an agreed procedure appropriate to the setting, staff and location.
- Members of staff make a note in the diary of meetings they are attending, who they are meeting and when they are expected back. When attending a meeting offsite, the same applies including the location of the meeting.
- Managers and directors have good liaison with local police and ask for advice on safe practice where there are issues or concerns.

#### **Home visits** *(not something currently undertaken at Harvard Park unless deemed necessary)*

Where staff members conduct home visits, this is done at the manager's and/or director's discretion and the following health and safety considerations apply:

- Prior to a home visit the key person and manager and/or director undertake a risk assessment that is specific to the visit being undertaken.
- Members of staff normally do home visits in pairs – usually the manager/director/deputy manager with the key person.
- Each home visit is recorded in the diary with the name and address of the family being visited, prior to the visit taking place.
- Staff alert an agreed contact person in the setting when they are leaving to do the home visit and advise on their expected time of return.
- If there is any reason for staff to feel concerned about entering premises, they do not do so, for example, if a parent/carer appears drunk.
- Members of staff carry a mobile phone when going out on a home visit.

- Staff identify an emergency word/phrase, which is made known to all staff in the setting, so that if they feel extremely threatened or in danger on a home visit, they can covertly alert other members of staff via a telephone call to the situation. Use of the agreed word/phrase will initiate an immediate **999** call to be made.
- If staff do not return from the home visit at the designated time, the contact person attempts to phone them and continues to do so until they make contact.
- If no contact is made after a reasonable amount of time has passed, the contact person rings the police.

### **Dealing with agitated parents/carers or other visitors in the setting**

- If a parent/carer or visitor appears to be angry, mentally agitated or possibly hostile, two members of staff will lead the parent/carer or visitor away from the children to a less open area but will not shut the door behind them.
- If the person is standing, staff will remain standing.
- Members of staff will try to empathise and ensure that the language they use can be easily understood.
- Staff will speak in low, even tones, below the voice level of the parent/carer or visitor.
- Members of staff will make it clear that they want to listen and seek solutions.
- If the person makes threats and continues to be angry, members of staff make it clear that they will be unable to discuss the issue until the person stops shouting or being abusive, while avoiding potentially inflammatory expressions such as 'calm down' or 'be reasonable'.
- If threats or abuse continues, members of staff will explain that the police will be called and emphasise the inappropriateness of such behaviour in front of children.
- If an event involves a child's parent or carer, details are recorded in the child's personal file together with any decisions made with the parents/carers to rectify the situation and any correspondence regarding the incident.
- Procedure for threats and abuse towards staff and volunteers is implemented where staff feel threatened or intimidated.
- Any situation involving threats to members of staff are reported to the manager and directors, following procedure 'Threats and abuse towards staff and volunteers'.

Copies of correspondence regarding the incident will be kept in the relevant child's file.

### **Threats and abuse towards staff and volunteers**

The setting is responsible for protecting the health and safety of all staff and volunteers in its services and has a duty of care in relation to their physical and emotional well-being. We believe that violence, threatening behaviour and abuse against staff are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Where such behaviour occurs, we will take all reasonable and appropriate action in support of our staff and volunteers.

- Staff and volunteers have a right to expect that their workplace is a safe environment, and that prompt and appropriate action will be taken on their behalf if they are subjected to abuse, threats, violence or harassment by parents/carers, service users and other adults as they carry out their duties.
- The most common example of unreasonable behaviour is abusive or intimidating and aggressive language. If this occurs, and if informal action is not appropriate or has proved to be ineffective, the withdrawal of permission to be on the premises would be considered.
- Where a person recklessly or intentionally applies unlawful force on another or puts another in fear of an immediate attack, it is an offence in law which constitutes an assault. We would normally expect the police to be contacted immediately.

Any staff member or volunteer who feels under threat or has been threatened, assaulted, or intimidated in the course of their work must report this immediately to their setting manager who will follow the setting manager's procedures and guidance for responding.

### **Harassment and intimidation**

Staff may find themselves subject to a pattern of persistent unreasonable behaviour from individual parents/carers or service users. This behaviour may not be abusive or overtly aggressive but could be perceived as intimidating and oppressive. In these circumstances staff may face a barrage of constant demands or criticisms on an almost daily basis, in a variety of formats for instance, email or telephone. They may not be particularly taxing or serious when viewed in isolation but can have a cumulative effect over a period of undermining their confidence, well-being, and health.

All incidents must be recorded and reported to the setting manager and directors.

### **Banning parents/carers and other visitors from the premises**

- Parents/carers and some other visitors normally have implied permission to be on the premises at certain times and for certain purposes, and they will not therefore be trespassers unless the implied permission is withdrawn.
- If a parent /carer or other person continues to behave unreasonably on the premises a letter will be sent to them from the owners/directors/trustees, withdrawing the implied permission for them to be there.
- Full records are kept of each incident.

### **Dealing with an incident**

- We would normally expect all cases of assault, and all but the most minor of other incidents, to be regarded as serious matters which should be reported to the setting manager, directors and/or the police and followed up with due care and attention.
- A record of the incident must be made whether the police are involved or not.

- Whilst acknowledging that service users i.e. parents/carers and families, may themselves be under severe stress, it is never acceptable for them to behave aggressively towards staff and volunteers. Individual circumstances along with the nature of the threat are considered before further action is taken.
- All parties involved should consider the needs, views, feelings and wishes of the victim at every stage. We will ensure sympathetic and practical help, support and counselling is available to the victim both at the time of the incident and subsequently.
- A range of support can be obtained from the setting manager, directors and/or a staff colleague
- In non-urgent cases, where the incident is not thought to be an emergency, but police involvement is required, all staff and volunteers are aware of the non-emergency police contact number for the area.
- After the incident has been dealt with, a risk assessment is done to identify preventative measures that can be put in place to minimise or prevent the incident occurring again.

### **Harassment or intimidation of staff by parents/carers or visitors**

- Through open communication between staff and parents/carers a culture of respect and tolerance should always be promoted. Should this communication and relationship break down due to a parent or parents/carers behaviour towards the staff member, the setting manager should contact their director for advice and support. When the staff member feels threatened or intimidated, the aggressive and unacceptable behaviour should be addressed.
- Where the parent's/carer's/visitor's behaviour merits it, the setting manager, with another member of staff present, should inform the parent/carer/visitor clearly but sensitively that staff feel unduly harassed or intimidated and are considering escalating the issue and making a complaint to the police if the behaviour does not desist or improve. The parent/carer/visitor should be left in no doubt about the gravity of the situation and that this will be followed up with a letter drafted by the setting manager but sent to their director for approval before being issued.
- The letter to the parent/carer or visitor (where possible) should outline the zero-policy approach for any form of harassment, intimidation or abuse directed at staff.
- Staff must keep a record of incidents, including dates, times, locations and witnesses, to support future action and meet reporting procedures as outline in the Record Keeping policy.
- If the investigation concludes that the parent's/carer's/visitor's expectations and demands are unreasonable, and that they are having a detrimental effect on staff, the findings can strengthen the setting manager's position in further discussions with the parent/carer/visitor and subsequently, if necessary, with the police. See procedures above relating to banning parents/carers or other visitors from the premises.

- If the investigation concludes that the parents/carers/visitors expectations and demands are reasonable and if the parent/carer/visitor feels unhappy with the staff member of the setting itself, the setting manager and/or owners/directors/trustees might wish to consider advising the parent/carer/visitor to make a formal complaint. Information about how to make a complaint is clearly displayed for parents/carers and service users.

Complaints relating to potential breaches of the EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare requirements will be managed according to the Complaints procedure for parents/carers and service users.

This Policies and Procedures pack was adjusted by Harvard Park.

Date meeting was held on 30/04/2026

Signed on behalf of the Directors and Proprietors

**Nicki Saunders and Tracey Milstead**