

01 Health and safety procedures

01.12 Threats and Abuse Towards Staff & Volunteers

At Peekaboo Childcare, we are committed to providing a safe, respectful and supportive environment for children, families, staff, and visitors.

Children learn best when the adults around them work together calmly and positively. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requires us to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff and children.

For this reason, threats, abuse, intimidation or violence towards staff or volunteers will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Our Duty Under the EYFS

The EYFS states that settings must:

- ensure children's safety and emotional well-being
- promote positive, respectful relationships
- have clear procedures for dealing with concerns about behaviour or safety protect staff and children from "risks of harm"

This means we must take action to protect staff from:

- aggressive behaviour
- threats or intimidation
- harassment (in person or online)
- any behaviour that affects their well-being or ability to carry out their role

Behaviour That Is Not Acceptable In Our Setting

Examples include:

Verbal:

- shouting, swearing or using intimidating language
- threats of any kind
- repeated criticism intended to undermine confidence

Physical or Threatening Behaviour:

- moving aggressively towards staff
- attempting to hit, grab, or block someone's exit
- threatening gestures

Harassment:

- persistent or excessive emails/messages
- repeatedly approaching staff in ways that cause anxiety
- following staff on or off the premise
- online harassment

Such behaviour affects everyone—including children—and breaches our statutory duty under the EYFS to promote a safe learning environment.

Understanding the Law on Assault and Threatening Behaviour

In UK law, the following are criminal offences:

- Common Assault: threatening someone or causing minor injury
- Actual Bodily Harm (ABH): injuries affecting comfort or health (e.g., significant bruising, broken tooth)
- Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH): serious injuries such as broken bones

No physical contact needs to occur; threatening or causing fear of violence is enough for an offence.

We will contact the police immediately where needed.

When We Will Call 999

We will call 999 if:

- anyone is in immediate danger
- violence is happening or likely
- an assault is taking place
the offender refuses to leave
- children or staff feel unsafe
early police attendance may prevent escalation

If a caller cannot speak safely, pressing 55 on a mobile triggers a silent emergency response.

Persistent Harassment or Intimidation

Some behaviours may not be openly aggressive but still create pressure or fear for staff, such as:

- daily emails/phone calls
- repeated demands beyond what is reasonable
- undermining comments
- attempts to monitor or follow staff

This may be harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

If this behaviour occurs:

- staff report it to the manager
- the manager may issue a formal warning
- further action may include police involvement or restricting access to the premise
- all incidents are recorded in line with EYFS 3.71 record-keeping requirements

Banning Visitors From the Premises

Parents and visitors normally have an “implied right” to be on-site.

This right is withdrawn when behaviour:

- puts staff or children at risk
- is aggressive or threatening
- becomes persistently intimidating

The owner/management may issue a formal banning letter. Breaching the ban may result in police action for trespass.

Full incident records are kept, as required by EYFS.

What Happens After an Incident

After any threatening or abusive incident, the manager will:

1. Make a written record.
2. Support the staff member, including emotional support.
3. Report to the line manager/owners where necessary.
4. Contact the police if a criminal offence may have occurred.

5. Review risk assessments to prevent future incidents.
6. Discuss next steps with everyone involved.

We always consider the needs, feelings, safety and wishes of the affected staff member at every stage.

Promoting Positive Relationships

As a setting we know how important it is for us to build positive relationships with parents.

We are committed to listening to concerns and working together, but this will always happen:

- calmly
- respectfully
- safely

If disagreements arise, parents may be directed to the formal complaints process.

Further Guidance & Supporting Documents

This policy is supported by:

- EYFS Statutory Framework (2024)
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Education Act 1996 – Power to Remove Trespassers
- Early Years Alliance Guidance:
 - Complaint Investigation Record
 - Reportable Incident Record

Other related Peekaboo policies include:

- 01.11 Staff Personal Safety
- 06 Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults
- 10.2 Complaints Procedure for Parents and Service Users