

Anonymised written evidence from whistleblowers for the Employment at McDonald's Franchises (EMF) one-off oral evidence session

Distressing content warning: whistleblowers' testimony includes reports of racism, homophobia, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault.

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Whistleblower A

1. I was sixteen when I was hired by McDonald's. It was my first job. I applied to work there because it was a well-known company that advertised and described itself as a family environment.
2. I transferred to a new store that was opening because it was closer and easier to travel to and from work. It was also advertised that there would be free transport to and from the store for employees. I subsequently discovered after my move that this would not be the case.
3. During my employment at this new store, Manager A, who was considerably older than me, often made me feel extremely uncomfortable with comments, which were passed off as banter¹.
4. The treatment from Manager A became worse. On one occasion, I was sat outside vaping during a break. Manager A came out to ask me when I was coming back to my shift. I explained that I had 5 minutes left of my break and would be in soon. Manager A suggested that I should sit with him in his car. This made me feel very uncomfortable and intimidated.
5. On another occasion, Manager A made reference to my sexuality by saying, 'You are definitely a bottom. I can just tell.' I felt offended, degraded, and humiliated by this statement said openly in public, in front of other employees in the crew room.
6. Following this on another day during my break Manager A offered to be my 'Top' - again, a reference to gay sex positions, which made me feel offended, embarrassed, and degraded.
7. On a further occasion, I hurt my knee by banging it against equipment in the kitchen. Later in the shift, Manager A said to me that I was probably spending too much time on my knees and that I should get on my knees in front of him to make myself feel better. This was a clear reference to oral sex and, again, made me feel offended, degraded, humiliated, and intimidated.
8. The above are merely examples and are not an exhaustive list of the sexual harassment I have faced throughout my employment.
9. I did attempt to tell a different Manager - Manager B. Manager B had heard about me speaking on my phone in the crew room to another employee about the harassment I was being subjected to by Manager A. I told Manager B that a man who was at least 30 and who worked with me was making inappropriate sexual comments to me and that I didn't like the behaviour.
10. Manager B shut me down before I could explain further and told me that I was being issued with an official formal warning (despite not following the formal process for warnings as I later found out – at the time, I was unaware of the process). As a result, although I was told by Manager B that I had been issued with a formal warning, my understanding is that this did not actually happen, and I could find no evidence of this.
11. Manager B told me that if they heard any more about the situation, I would face severe consequences and would be removed from the crew trainer program and would not be eligible for promotion.
12. This took place in the Dining area of the restaurant and not in the office where meetings are supposed to be held. I believe this was a deliberate decision and no other managers

¹ The playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks.

Written evidence from Whistleblower A

were even aware that this meeting had taken place or that I had been given a warning. I also checked my employee handbook and saw that all meetings, warnings, and disciplinary actions (even informal meetings) are to be noted on my file. However, upon checking my file none of these meetings or actions had been recorded.

13. Based upon my experience working for McDonald's I do not feel that there was a culture by Managers at store and Franchise People Lead/Services of safeguarding for young members of staff. My own experience demonstrates that McDonald's has a strong culture of sexual harassment, victim blaming and bullying. I want to share my story with the Committee to make an impact and a difference in the company to change this culture. I hope that McDonald's will put into place effective safeguarding policies and practices to protect younger employees such as myself.

Written evidence from Whistleblower B

Whistleblower B

I started working at McDonald's at the age of 16. I have worked in several positions within the company, crew member, crew trainer, shift manager and lastly as a restaurant's people manager. I have resigned from McDonald's.

When I started working for McDonald's, we were a restaurant owned by the McDonald's corporation, only couple of years later we were sold to privately owned franchisee, therefore I worked for both sides of the business.

There are several things that are wrong with the organisation that nobody seems to care, or costs too much money to sort out and nobody is prepared to fix them, because to the franchisees and McDonald's corporation, the issues are not affecting the profits.

1. Nobody within the restaurants has specific HR training, for example CIPD qualifications (which is HR body in the UK), which creates several issues:
 - 1.1. When it comes to disciplinary action, management try to avoid it, because nobody can be bothered to do it, and they are just following McDonald's procedures, and not looking case by case scenario, so sometimes people could get fired over smallest things as long as they had 2 written warnings, such as smoking in the wrong area.
 - 1.2. Nobody actually knows how to deal with people related issues, such as mental health, which is basically never talked about in the restaurants as to management team it seems stupid and it's a taboo subject.
 - 1.3. All HR issues are sorted within the franchisee, the management teams would never go to McDonald's HQ for advice in any related HR issue, which shows that McDonald's HQ doesn't actually know what is happening within the restaurants when it comes to people related issues.
 - 1.4. The duty of care from McDonald's Corporate is non-existent, my restaurant got sold to franchisee couple of years after I've started working there and after the selling date we have not received a single visit from the corporate to actually check on the employees, and how they are dealing with the business transition, new management, or wellbeing.
 - 1.5. If an employee complains to the Corporate HQ of any issues, those complaints are handed over to the franchisees to deal with internally, which just shows how much McDonald's corporate actually care about their staff.
 - 1.6. Nobody wants to do a disciplinary procedure for any staff members due to it costing too much money, as restaurant would have to have 2 managers handling the disciplinary meeting and the employee. Which means that they have to pay 3 people who are not actually serving customers, which to franchisee is insane amount of money.
 - 1.7. The restaurant's people managers are not trained whatsoever, I became a people manager when I was 19 years old, and had to advise people on mental health, discipline and target changes. I was highly untrained to do the job, but to franchisee and McDonald's corporate that is not important. They only care about the profits and not employee wellbeing.
2. As you might be aware, McDonald's takes their cut of profits from the franchisees, but how that money is made is not managed by McDonald's. So, when we got sold to a limited company franchisee management have produced new targets straight away, which reduced the number

Written evidence from Whistleblower B

of staff that the restaurant could have at any given hour. For example, if on a Saturday lunch time we were allowed to have 25 staff members, the Franchisee reduced it to 20 staff members. Which eventually made staff to be exhausted, mentally, and physically. McDonald's corporate could not care about these targets, because if restaurant is making better profit, then McDonald's HQ would receive a larger cut from it.

2.1 People are scared to have their hours cut. In each restaurant there's only one manager responsible for creating schedules for all employees, and if you don't get along with that manager you will definitely see that your hours have been cut, therefore employees would do everything in their power to get on with the scheduling manager because they also have the power to approve/decline any annual leave.

3. When we got sold to a private company, the new franchisee has said that nothing will change, within the first month as previously mentioned the targets have changed, our hours got cut down, and within the next 3 months they have moved our highest restaurant manager to another restaurant and gave us a new one. Therefore, the stability and employee wellbeing has been completely shattered. And once we got sold to a franchisee we have never heard again from McDonalds HQ. So, the staff was stressed over the fact that we are moving to a new company but also lost our main point of contact for any issues, whom we all worked with for over 5 years. Therefore, there should have been a note from McDonald's HQ not to remove any managers until people get settled under new management, but I would think that was not in their interest whatsoever.

4. Brand Standard Visits, on a typical visit they would check couple of employee files at random to ensure that they are filed correctly, how fast the drive thru is serving customers, how fast front counter is serving customers and health & safety. These visits are completed by the Franchise management team; therefore, they could pass their own restaurants no matter what. If the franchisee has "Leading Edge Franchise" title, they literally can do every single visit themselves that McDonald's HQ would have done instead. Which leaves Employees to complaint only to Franchisee team.

4.1 If a franchisee is a "Leading Edge", then they would receive one in every ninth visit from HQ, but Franchisee would be allowed to choose when and which restaurant HQ would visit, which means that franchisees could easily cover any HR mistakes, or just choose their best restaurant for the visit. Although, within about 4 years that I have worked for Franchisee, we have never received a visit from HQ.

5. McDonald's loves to settle outside of Tribunals, if there is a disciplinary action and franchisees might be breaking employment laws, they would always have a settlement with employee, so the employee would leave with NDA in place and pay them off.

6. McDonald's has become a property business to the corporate, as they only have to deal with taking their cut from the franchisees, there is no duty of care to its employees whatsoever.

7. Current allegations from employees about sexual assaults, that were anonymously have been sent to HQ have been passed to Franchisees to sort out themselves, which meant that the restaurant team could figure out which employee sent the complaint due to working patterns, and who they were complaining about.

8. Franchisee Consultant is the middleman between McDonald's and Franchisee, who actually works for McDonald's and their role is to help Franchisees run their business. Each consultant has around 5 franchisees to look after, one franchisee could have 20 to 40 restaurants. Which means that one franchisee consultant is overlooking close to 200 restaurants. Duty of care in this system definitely does not happen, and employees are left to love their franchisee no matter what. If they do not get on with new management, they cannot transfer to another restaurant, as franchisee

Written evidence from Whistleblower B

would usually buy out all restaurants in the city.

9. When it comes to hiring, no management team has to go through DBS, although they are managing tens of 16-year-olds, and sometimes get into relationships with them.

10. Examples of not actually caring:

- a) If a family member passes away and employee has to take leave, they have to use their holiday entitlement. There is no paid sick leave at McDonald's for employees, they can only use statutory sick pay or annual leave.
- b) They would never discipline managers or fully trained crew members because they cost so little to franchisees and replacing them with new staff member is too much of a headache. Therefore, drugs, homophobia, racism and sexism from management and staff members who have worked there for years is so normal that nobody actually sees that as an issue anymore. Furthermore, if these "jokes" are coming from management that can affect your job such as hiring manager.
- c) Employees having breakdowns, crying and struggling to manage work due to intentional understaffing has become normality, and McDonald's HQ probably does not even know about it, because they don't visit the restaurant and secondly more staff on the restaurant floor means less profit for them.

Written evidence from Whistleblower C

Whistleblower C

I have worked at McDonald's for two years across two restaurants. I am writing to you to talk about the present culture at McDonalds restaurants and how young employees are exploited within the company both from personal experiences and my own observations.

1. As someone who has worked there from the age of 17-19, I quickly learned how easily young people were silenced within the company and how helpless we were. The company has very neatly outlined their 'open-door' policy and how there are people put in place to deal with intolerable behaviour in the workplace such as harassment. It became evident that those people are not there to help anyone at all especially the youngest of employees. There have been multiple occasions where I was obligated to report inappropriate behaviour to my managers, and these have been simply disregarded with empty promises.
2. Let me illustrate this a little better with a real-life example. At the age of 17/18 I was promoted to crew trainer which not only meant a higher pay, new responsibilities but also a new uniform to help staff distinguish positions. This uniform included a white, button up shirt. I was working one shift and I walked past the sink where all dirty utensils are washed. I was sprayed with the hose by a male colleague a few years older than myself. As you can imagine, my white top was now see-through and not only can you see my bra but my boobs too. After I was laughed at, I was then forced to walk out to the kitchen where there are about thirty other people (staff members, including managers, and partially some customers) all staring at my boobs at the age of 17/18. I was questioned about why I was in such a state and as if I haven't already felt violated, I now must explain myself. I was told that the matter would be investigated and then there was nothing done or said following said investigation. Similarly, to when my body was sexualized due to my uniform by men a decade older than me, when on a day-to-day basis I was still wearing a uniform to school. The same line was used when there was a pending investigation into one male employee with seven or eight witnesses, who still happens to work there yet all seven witnesses left.
3. You see, the point I am making is that no matter where you go the situation continues. Following the BBC article, it is evident that this has happened to a multitude of people up and down the country and I am sure there are many people who haven't come forward for whatever reason, but let's not forget about them, they still have stories to tell. I also want to point out that it also doesn't matter if you report the incident alone or have a whole group of witnesses ready to vouch for you because you are still standing all alone. For many young people, McDonalds may be their first experience of what a workplace looks like and if the senior staff are neglecting their duty of safeguarding and are failing to make this a safe environment, chances are these individuals will either have the same perception of all workplaces or they will be encouraged to engage in misconduct because they know they can get away with it. Regardless, the cycle continues. I am appalled that this multimillion corporation is failing to take responsibility and make changes that need to happen to keep young boys and girls safe. It is exploitation at its finest and someone needs to start labelling it as that, they need to be uncomfortable and held accountable. If there are any further questions or you would like for me to clarify anything, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Written evidence from Whistleblower D

Whistleblower D

1. I am 19 years old and I worked at McDonald's for three years. I left last month. I was 16 years old when I started working at a store. Another crew member, who was 21 years old, was constantly asking me and the other 16-year-olds about our sex lives. He showed us sexually explicit images of women that he found on social media. It was common knowledge in the store what he was like. Senior management (assistant managers) would have known what he was doing. But no-one in senior management ever told him off. Sexual conversations between 16-year-old employees and adults were so normalised that no-one in management ever did anything about it.
2. If a 16-year-old asked me whether they should work at McDonald's I would tell them not to. The chances are that older male managers will take advantage of them.
3. Very little has changed at the store since the BBC report. Over the summer, a 16-year-old crew member was being touched inappropriately around the waist by a 22-year-old shift manager. She was too young and too shy to tell the senior management, so I complained to the business manager for her. He wasn't bothered about it. He just blamed it on his autism. I think this is not right. If he is not capable of understanding that touching someone inappropriately is not ok, then he shouldn't be a shift manager. This same manager has also been asking 16-year-olds in the store for nude pictures. One of the girls went and complained to the Business Manager about it.
4. Posters have been put up in the crew room and on the back of the toilet doors telling us to email the franchise area manager if we have any problems. But why would we talk to him when he is mates with the shift manager who is doing the harassing? McDonald's isn't changing. They promote people they know are problems. It goes so high up. You've got no-one to turn to.

Written evidence from Whistleblower E (E1 Parent and E2 Young Person)

Whistleblower E1 Parent

- a) As parents we like to think we have raised our children to be strong independent individuals. They have been raised with good morals, values and with an attitude to treat others with respect and to stand up for right and wrong in all aspects of their lives.
- b) We were supportive our children joined McDonalds at 17yrs old whilst doing their educational studies, with this being their first encounter in working in the real world.
- c) If we only knew then what was to come, we would have prevented them wholeheartedly from working in such a toxic environment. We would have prevented them from having to experience such hurt and anguish in their first experience of work. To witness our children being spoken down to, demoralised and degraded in their everyday working environment and treated with so little respect as a human being was horrific to stand by and watch.
- d) Our eldest child was affected the most as they had progressed to a Manager at the store. They are usually someone who would try to change and challenge the workplace behaviour, but they were constantly belittled and told to stop interfering and moaning. They came home most days from their shifts to be told they were causing trouble and made the workplace environment worse! We watched them change from a bubbly confident person into a nervous, anxious person that questioned themselves and what they were doing wrong.
- e) Their self-confidence in their ability to manage disappeared almost overnight with the constant criticisms and lack of care and support in the workplace from Management.
- f) The stress that McDonalds has placed on our family is almost too hard to put into words. A parent should be able to protect their children, but we couldn't do this, and instead have had to attempt to support our children to the best of our ability and restore resilience and offer reassurance, that what they were experiencing was not 'typical' behaviour and 'normal' for any workplace.
- g) No parent should have to make allowances for such dreadful behaviour from grown adults and so-called professionals at the height of their careers, they should be setting an example and nurturing our young workers of the future.
- h) We as parents are both firm believers in raising concerns when they occur and dealing directly with the people involved. They chose to deal with the concerns herself in a professional, independent, and mature manner one of which we respect, although if we had known the full extent of the behaviours we would have intervened sooner. The unwillingness for Managers not to take them seriously led to them being forced to leave for their own physical and psychological wellbeing and with this in mind we have had no correspondence or apology from McDonalds since our final meeting with them, but we should have expected this.
- i) We requested a meeting to discuss our concerns and issues with regards to their treatment at work by the Store Manager, as we felt that her concerns had not been recognised by the Franchise in question.
- j) We requested a meeting and was met by three Senior Managers from McDonalds. A HR Manager, A Regional Peoples Support Manager and a Regional Area Supervisor.
- k) We attended the meeting prepared and had written down our concerns as follows:
 - i. The language used within the store, inappropriate and sexist behaviour especially to females.
 - ii. Whistleblowing – questioned the policy as no staff were in the knowledge of who to go to as all complaints went to the Store Manager who was fundamentally the root cause of

Written evidence from Whistleblower E (E1 Parent and E2 Young Person)

the disputes. The store predominantly made it challenging to raise concerns, and when raised they weren't actioned. None of the Senior Managers present at the meeting could confirm if staff knew where to find the 50-page policy on line, or if employees even had access.

- iii.* Mental Health of staff ignored and belittled as their own fault.
 - iv.* Equality not equitable for all staff dependent on race and sex.
 - v.* Attitude of Managers not to question but to adopt the 'do as I say' attitude even if wrong.
 - vi.* 6 Managers had left this one store alone over the past year, all had written letters advising of the culture and behaviours at McDonalds but surprisingly all the managers present advised they knew nothing about it and weren't in the post at the time. This was untrue.
- l) During the meeting, concerns were not listened to, with every aspect of our conversation met with "have you got proof?" "It's your word against there's". The reluctance not to take any responsibility for behaviours within the store was astonishing. We gave detailed names of individuals they could approach but no names were even written down or notes taken, and as far as we are aware they have not been approached.
 - m) We raised concerns however they did not appear interested or slightly concerned about the allegations made, they concentrated on physical proof rather than taking our concerns seriously. All we wanted was for the McDonald's Management to recognise our concerns and acknowledge / apologise for their behaviour. Any complaint should be taken seriously regardless of proof especially when questioning behaviours in the workplace. It is not acceptable.
 - n) During the meeting I watched once again the bullying culture of McDonald's Managers, pushing the blame on to the employees and deflecting from McDonald's cultures and behaviours. I had now witnessed firsthand the inability of McDonald's upper Management to show any compassion, empathy, or human regard for staff in their care. I was astounded. There was a lack of acknowledgement of any misgivings to McDonald's and they certainly did not want to listen to advice on how to move forward with making the environment better for young adults. Which is all we wanted.
 - o) I am appalled that so little has been done to prevent this type of bullying behaviour and why the McDonald's Corporation is allowing its franchises to function in this manner. Nobody should have to go to work to experience the cultures and behaviours that carry on today in McDonald's. We feel very strongly that Rishi Sunak and the UK government needs to take a stance and intervene to protect our young adults of the future being put in to such a toxic environment.

Written evidence from Whistleblower E (E1 Parent and E2 Young Person)

Whistleblower E2: Young Person

- a) I started working at McDonald's four years ago at the age of 17 and new to the whole working world, choosing McDonald's as its one known for its passion to be a place for families to come together, for it to be an environment enjoyed by all.
- b) So, for me to be writing this trying to get this very same company to listen to just how they are treating their employees is the last thing I would have expected.
- c) For as long as I can remember while working there, there has been a culture of sexism, racism, homophobia you name it, becoming so common it was almost second nature. I have never been one to happily stand by and listen to such comments go by and becoming a manager I could see first-hand how much it was affecting the crew within our store. Early on into my role as manager I did end up being the call for help for a large number of the team, which made me even more determined to do something to help.
- d) There were so many people who did not want to speak up for the common knowledge that things like this were just pushed aside and forgotten about, or worried about losing their job as you were guaranteed to be the one the blame was put on for bringing attention to a situation. You were either taking it the wrong way, being too sensitive or it simply 'did not happen'.
- e) If I were to sit here and name every incident during my time at McDonalds I would be here for days, but to offer an inside view into the company that is deemed to be so great, here are some experiences I have witnessed first-hand that have all come from members of the upper management.
- f) The situations stem from the continuous remarks made to myself about me as a person and belittling me for speaking out on bad behaviour. In another other workplace a disciplined approach would be taken to stop this, however at McDonalds you may as well be praised for such toxic behaviour.
- g) On a daily basis discussions would take place regarding senior managements interests such as football, where if you did not know anything of the sort you were not given the time of day. To the point in busier times, those not involved in said conversations would be told to get on with their work and stop talking. Which to anyone may seem not too extreme but when you are asking for help as the work is almost unbearable whilst these discussions are ongoing it heightens the stress for all. There were occasions when crew would have to leave the shop floor, many times in tears due to them not being able to cope. If that does not fit your criteria for unacceptable behaviour in the workplace, there could be vocally stating how a new crew member makes you feel uncomfortable as they are of a certain religion, and the reason being that 'their people are the ones who bomb us.' But this was all okay because it was not said to their face and that it was just a 'funny joke'.
- h) It may not sound disturbing on paper as it is hard to put across the extent of behaviour, what I want to get across is the fact that the behaviour was coming from senior managers who should have been setting an example and supporting crew members.
- i) I remember when McDonald's introduced the use of pronouns for name badges to allow people to feel more comfortable in the workplace, managers would then communicate how the whole naming 'thing' had gotten a bit out of hand now and is not really necessary. When people have gone to a manager in confidence that they would like to be known under a different name to their own and they/them pronouns, for them to become the next joke as they walked away from the conversation.
- j) Promotions offered to crew straight up with the reasoning of 'it will make us look good having

Written evidence from Whistleblower E (E1 Parent and E2 Young Person)

you as a manager for diversity' to one crew who used these same pronouns. So even with policies in place to help people that can't be done right, it just becomes new ground to bully on.

- k) This does all seem as though it was not me who experienced the bullying firsthand in this role, however when there is such little trust in the management team that people are only willing to speak to two members of the management, you take on these issues and all the pressure. That was 'our team' that is treating these as such which was not okay, so I spoke up and against these occurring, which you would hope to be met with agreement or some sort of wish to overcome this, but no. I was met with the opposite, from the instant I started calling out this behaviour even behind closed doors in one on one conversations with the people themselves I was told it was not important or that I was making an issue where there was not one.
- l) Over time it turned into a constant whisper behind my back or just close enough so I could hear, overheard managers stating 'how I make the place a horrible place to be' and 'wouldn't it be so much nicer without her here.' It was safe to say that it took its toll on my ability to manage how I wanted too, I was constantly being judged on how I worked due to me not agreeing with the disgusting behaviour and being completely drained trying to help not just everyone else feel better in the workplace but myself too.
- m) It finally got too much after I was called to the office and sat down and straight up asked 'what my problem was' by the Store Manager and why I just don't leave. With my reply being that I think it was time I did, I was just met with a sarcastic laughter and was told to do it.
- n) After this I requested a meeting with one of the more senior managers who I had previously complained twice to about those in our store and HR, so we did this, and another also attended who had held meetings with around eight crew members and myself discussing this exact topic two weeks before. The attitude I was met with at this meeting alongside my mum put into perspective exactly why I had dealt with these issues. If these are the people we have to support the people when there's an issue it is clear as day just why it occurs. I was completely shut down as I had no evidence of any of this, other than the multiple people interviewed who had written statements on the above events and more however – these statements somehow no longer existed. The conclusion was it was my decision to leave and there was no indication or any issues in the store, not from me or the six other managers who had left within the last two years due to not being able to take the bullying from the higher management anymore.
- o) To make it clear, this is putting what is happening on a piece of paper, simply telling how the experiences were. Being there and having issues of the sorts occurring everyday takes such a toll that I would not want anyone to have to live through this ordeal. The main thing I wanted to do in my role was to try to make a difference and fight against this behaviour, but it led to the constant belittling of myself, I was the issue for speaking out against the behaviour. I was not allowing the 'fun' to continue in the way it was wanted to by the senior management, no matter the cost of everyone else's mental well-being. This did not and still does not matter to them, and as far as I am concerned this is the culture the company wants to hold. I hope they are proud of their stance.
- p) You either comply with McDonald's backwards way of thinking or be completely engulfed until you can't take anymore. This is not a suitable workplace, and the fact that we promote something of such disgust to be of such a high standard astounds me, if you wish to continue letting this occur then that shows the true morals behind this, it's time for someone to take some responsibility and action.

Written evidence from Whistleblower F

1. I was working a close at McDonalds as a trainee manager. There was a boy at work flirting with me, but I was not interested in him. He was making comments towards me all night, calling me a '10', and I don't remember specifically what he was saying but I remember thinking it was weird.
2. At one point in the night, he wrapped his arms around me and dragged me over to the sink at the back of the kitchen, saying he was going to whip my bum with one of the cloths. I honestly thought he was joking, so I laughed and told him to get off me, then left the situation.
3. He didn't really say much else to me that night, but then around midnight when we closed the store, I was cleaning the grill. The grills are low down, so I was bending forward to clean the back of it. He walked past me to put some washing up away and smacked my bum on the way through.
4. I immediately reacted and turned around to him and said, "Did you just smack my bum?"
5. He shrugged and said, "It wasn't hard." And walked away.
6. Another member of staff saw what happened and went and told the boy he needed to come and apologise to me, as I was visibly upset and shocked at what had just happened. He did come and apologise to me and did not say anything else to me for the rest of the shift.
7. I was torn about whether or not to report it to my boss as he did come and apologise, but the staff member who comforted me afterwards told me he only apologised because he had told him to and encouraged me to report it.
8. When I got home, I spoke to my parents about it, who both said that I should report it. When I got ready for bed that night, I noticed that I had a handprint bruise where he had smacked me. I did have a picture but have since deleted it.
9. I went to work the following day, and everyone at work was talking about what happened to me. I remember a member of staff on chicken batch shouting to the people on front about it as I clocked in, saying, "Did you not hear what happened? [That member of staff] smacked her arse!"
10. It was either the next day at work, or the day after, where I went to the business manager of the restaurant and explained what had happened and that I wanted to file a formal complaint. We watched the incident happen on CCTV, where there was full view of him assaulting me, and he was very professional and assured me that this would be dealt with. I offered him the picture of the bruise for the investigation, but because the bruise was in a sensitive area, he told me that would not be necessary.
11. I remember not seeing the boy who assaulted me for maybe around 10 days, and then I came into work one day and the boy who assaulted me was on shift with me. I remember freezing and feeling extremely panicked and overwhelmed. I asked the business manager what happened with the investigation, to which he said he could not disclose that information to me. Although I knew the business manager did what he could, I feel as though McDonald's as a whole failed me at this point.
12. I could not comprehend how someone who had assaulted me on CCTV was allowed to be scheduled on shift with me. Although the investigation procedure was followed, the situation suggested that he had not been reprimanded at all, and that was shocking to me, and I felt as though McDonald's did not care about my safety on shift. It would have been preferable for him to at least not be scheduled the same shifts with me so that I did not have to work with him, which when I reported the situation, imagined that would have been the bare minimum in order to protect me. I felt as though he should have been fired or moved to another store within the

Written evidence from Whistleblower F

franchise, especially as there was video evidence of what happened, although if he was moved to another store, he could have done the same to someone else. I felt incredibly let down by the situation, as it was not only awkward to work with somebody who had assaulted me, but also to work with somebody who I had formally complained about.

13. There was one shift where I was put on the line, next to the boy who assaulted me. The other member of staff on the line swapped places with me so that I was not working in such close proximity to him. I felt sick and uneasy around him, and as I mentioned above, I was a trainee manager, so there were instances where he was on shift and I was having to manage him, which involved talking to him.
14. Some of the other managers would put the member of staff who assaulted me in window one, away from me whilst he was on shift, but realistically, he should not have been scheduled on shift with me at all. The incident was clearly visible on CCTV, the formal investigation process was followed, witnesses were spoken to, but still I was having to work with him as though nothing happened, and trying to keep being professional as a manager in front of the person who assaulted me was incredibly difficult.
15. I think the culture at McDonald's allows for this kind of thing to happen. It is great in the sense that when you leave school, and everyone who works there is your age, you can form close bonds with people, and it is a great way to make new friends. However, the fact that everyone there is so young, it makes it feel as though the staff there did not really leave high school and can lead to immaturity.
16. Employees often go on nights out together, enter into relationships together, sleep together. Rumours fly at McDonald's – you cannot do anything with another employee without anyone finding out about it and it being spread around. It is a stressful job, so people can be sometimes horrible, and nasty when they are stressed. There would be arguments and disagreements between employees – leading to quite tense situations sometimes. There will be cliquey groups of friends, who, a lot of the times, will all be crew trainers, or managers, and so can sometimes be difficult when working with a lot of the group at the same time.
17. McDonald's do provide sexual harassment training as part of their e-learning system. However, the training is not really taken seriously. There were a lot of instances where procedure was not followed by staff not completing their e-learning before working on the station they were meant to have been trained on, they were just put on there with a crew trainer, which encouraged full training not being required. In terms of the sexual harassment training, employees were sent to the staff room to complete this. Employees would typically either breeze through the e-learning or take a while to do it; they could get distracted by other employees in the staff room, or their phones, or get called back to the kitchen if it was busy, and so it is hard to tell how seriously it was taken.