

SaferSpace was created in 2024 to provide a secure, confidential platform for staff to report workplace concerns. The app allows anonymous or named submissions, with reports routed to designated safeguarding or HR staff for triage and follow-up. A built-in chatbot, based on the UK Equality Act, helps users check whether their experience may constitute harassment or discrimination. All reports are securely logged and auditable, with oversight dashboards for governance teams.

Recent years have seen repeated failures across sectors. McDonald's UK has received more than 1,000 reports of workplace harassment, including allegations of "sex for shifts", resulting in a legal agreement with the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Harrods is currently facing over 250 misconduct claims, while more than 100 members of the armed forces have been dismissed for harassment-related misconduct.

Sparkes said that while stronger laws were welcome, cultural change would only come if employers backed them with credible action.

"We keep asking people to speak up, but we've done far less to make sure they're heard. That has to change. Policies are not protection if they exist only on paper," she said.

SaferSpace is currently being piloted in healthcare, education, retail and logistics organisations. More information is available at www.safer.space.