



Staff Safeguarding Code of Conduct Policy

Aim

Adults who work with children have a “Duty of Care” which is a responsibility to keep children safe and protect them from abuse. This document reflects this duty and supports and underpins our safeguarding policies and procedures. In line with this, we expect staff, management and volunteers to:

- Be responsible for their own actions and behaviour, and maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- Work in an open and transparent way;
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions or lead to a “staff allegation”;
- Challenge or report unacceptable behaviour in other adults;
- Discuss any issues and resulting actions around safer working practice a Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted.

The term ‘allegation’ means where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children;
- Behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- Staff allegations will be dealt with under the procedure laid out in our Child Protection Policy.

A low-level concern is:

- an allegation that doesn’t meet the above harm threshold. This does not mean that it is insignificant and it is any concern, no matter how small, that:
 - is inconsistent with our Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.

Low-level concerns will be dealt with under our Low-Level Concerns Policy.



Safer Working Practices With Children Include:

- Operating within the policies and procedures of the setting, including Child Protection, Whistleblowing, Mobile Phone, Online Safety, Transporting Children (including use of personal vehicles) and Uniform;
- Wearing clothing that promotes a positive, professional image and is appropriate to the role;
- Avoiding lone working where possible, or at least being within sight or hearing of others;
- Treating all children with respect and honouring their right to privacy;
- Being careful when discussing sensitive issues with children, making sure any information is appropriate to their age and understanding;
- Supporting children to understand risks and develop strategies to keep themselves safe in the setting, in the community and online;
- Encouraging children to be comfortable and confident to point out attitudes or behaviour they don't like;
- Following the settings procedures when providing personal care or administering medicine;
- Reporting if a child or young person becomes infatuated with a member of staff and deal with it sensitively and confidentially;
- Supporting children to understand risks and develop strategies to keep themselves safe in the setting, in the community and online;
- Being an appropriate role model for children and other staff/volunteers;
- Informing the Manager of any pre-existing relationships with families who use the setting;
- Informing the Manager of any work outside the setting with children and families who use the setting e.g., babysitting;
- Giving guidance and support to new and inexperienced staff and volunteers;
- Challenging unacceptable behaviour in adults;
- Following the setting's Whistleblowing policy to report inappropriate or poor conduct that gives you cause for concern.



Unacceptable Behaviours When Working with Children Include:

- Having inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children and young people e.g., tickling, swearing (see separate section on Inappropriate Physical Contact);
- Encouraging secretiveness;
- Showing favouritism to any individual child or groups of children, through attention, praise, rewards or gifts;
- Communicating or socialising with children or young people you work with outside of the setting either face to face or through mobile phones, social networks or gaming;
- Giving children inappropriate personal details about yourself e.g., home address or relationship issues;
- Offering lifts to children and young people outside of your normal working duties;
- Being drawn into inappropriate behaviour/making suggestive, or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people;
- Wearing clothing with offensive slogans/pictures or that is revealing or impractical for the work environment;
- Assisting with a personal care task which the child or young person can undertake themselves;
- Posting inappropriate comments or photos on social media which call into question your suitability for working in the children's workforce;
- Allowing children to access your social media and if they do, report this immediately to the Manager;
- Using the setting's electronic devices for personal use. Any illegal use will be reported to the police;
- Smoking or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst at the setting;
- Actively seeking relationships with parents and children outside of the setting. This may be seen as a way of 'grooming' the adult and/or child and/or blurring professional boundaries;
- Ignoring inappropriate behaviour or poor conduct in other staff or volunteers;



- Ignoring any of your own actions that could be misinterpreted – discuss them with your line manager;
- Changing clothes in the same place as children;
- Place yourself in vulnerable situations with children and families outside of work
- Communicate with children or young people you work with outside of the setting either face to face or through mobile phones, social media or gaming.

Do be aware that any behaviour outside the setting which could lead any reasonable person to question your suitability to work with children, could lead to your disqualification. We ask all staff not to wear their uniform while out socialising.

Inappropriate Physical Contact with Children

All physical contact with children must be appropriate. Examples of inappropriate physical contact include:

- Tickling;
- Hitting;
- Touching anywhere normally covered by a bathing suit (unless medically necessary e.g., assisting them with toileting);
- Picking children up when not necessary or giving piggy backs;
- Staff having children stand between their open legs;
- Kissing;
- Cuddling for reasons other than to comfort a child;
- Taking a child to an area out of sight and hearing, without discussing it with a Manager.

Comforting Children

There may be times when children will need comforting and behaviours such as cuddling or sitting a child on an adult's lap may be an appropriate way of doing this. In these instances, the staff member should make sure that this is done in view of other staff and isn't against the wishes of the child. When sitting children on an adult's lap, this must be done appropriately. Depending on the age of the child, this would ideally be with the child on top of the adult's legs, facing forwards or sideways.

Sometimes children will actively engage in activity that might compromise a member of staff, e.g.:

- By demanding too much of a particular adult's attention;
- Trying to get closer than appropriate;
- Insisting on sitting on an adult's lap;
- Standing with their arms around the adult etc.



On occasions such as this the setting recommends that staff gently dissuade the child from that behaviour by encouraging the child to sit on a nearby chair instead of a lap, or finding another method of distracting the child such as by giving them a job or engaging them in an activity.