



Staff Code of Conduct

Date: May 2023

Review Date: May 2024 (or when required)

Manager – Nicola Setford

Deputy Manager – Julie O’Neill

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Julie O’Neill

Deputy Safeguarding Leads – Rachel French / Nicola Setford

Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) – Nicola Setford

Deputy SENCO – Rachel French

Data Controller – Nicola Setford

Statement:

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff, temporary staff, parent helpers, work placement students and volunteers to share this commitment.

Introduction

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees at Pippins Preschool (Leybourne Chase Pre-School Limited). Whether employed on a permanent or temporary basis including volunteers, work placement students and parent helpers. All employees must follow this Code; deliberate breaches of the Code may be treated as a disciplinary offence. As with all preschool policies and procedures, we ask that staff use their common sense and act reasonably within the conditions provided in this document.

Purpose

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the children and young people in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enhancing experiences children gain from positive relationships with staff. More importantly, it is intended to assist staff by offering guidance on prudent conduct. Consequently, the purpose of this code of conduct for Pippins Preschool staff is:

- To identify boundaries and responsibilities;
- To agree communication and accountability;
- To explain what is expected of you as an employee;
- To ensure staff demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our children to do the same;

- To ensure that staff avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct;
- To help staff understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

The Code of Conduct should also be read in conjunction with your job description, your contract of employment and all policies and procedures relevant to the preschool.

Policies and Procedures

The preschool has a range of policies and procedures which apply to all staff. These are available in the hall and on our website pippins-preschool.co.uk. All staff must read the policies and comply with their terms. The failure of any staff member to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken against them.

Attendance, Timekeeping and Appointments

- Staff are required to comply with the rules relating to notification of absence set out in their Contract of Employment;
- Staff are required to arrive at work promptly and be ready to start work at their contracted starting times. Staff are required to remain at work until their contracted finishing times. The preschool provides a signing in and out system for recording staff attendance at the preschool. The signing in and out sheets are used to calculate salary, monitor absences and overtime. It is important this is filled in correctly otherwise there may be implications for your pay;
- Staff must obtain management authorisation if for any reason they wish to arrive later or leave earlier than their agreed normal start and finish times;
- Persistent poor timekeeping may result in disciplinary action;
- When can employees attend appointments? We appreciate that it is sometimes difficult to make appointments such as with Doctors or Dentists at a time that is convenient for both the employee and the preschool. In most cases the preschool requires you to make appointments in your own time, however, in cases where this is not possible, appointments should be scheduled at the beginning or end of a shift if possible and agreed with your manager.

Professional Development

- It is expected that a childcare practitioner will continually update their knowledge and skills through a life-long learning approach;
- At all times, a childcare practitioner should not undertake an activity in which they do not feel competent, or is outside their area of practice and knowledge;
- The preschool at all times acknowledges the strengths and limitations of a childcare practitioner's expertise and will ensure there is regular appraisal and assessment;

- There is mandatory training that all staff should undertake. Staff need to identify what is expected and ensure they attend these sessions. This will be discussed during your induction and as a continuous process while you are employed by the preschool.

The preschool is fully committed to your development and we will advise on other training courses that might be relevant. Training is also provided at staff meetings and other in house sessions.

Alcohol Drug Abuse and Smoking

- The consumption of alcohol on the premises is strictly forbidden. Any employee who is found consuming alcohol on the premises or is found to be intoxicated at work will face disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure. Please be aware that even if you are not found to be intoxicated, coming into work suffering from the immediate after effects of alcohol may also impair your ability to perform your role to the required standards. A breach of this procedure is considered an act of gross misconduct;
- The possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on the premises sites is strictly forbidden. Any member of staff who is found to be intoxicated at work will face disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure. A breach of this procedure is considered an act of gross misconduct;
- Smoking is forbidden on the premises. Any member of staff who is found smoking on the premises where not permissible will face disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure;
- Members of staff who wish to smoke before their shift commences must ensure that they are a reasonable distance from the building. Staff have a duty to ensure they do not smell of smoke at any time during working hours. Staff are not permitted to leave the premises during the day. Staff are paid to remain on site during their lunch break.

Medication

- Staff must not be under the influence of any medication which may affect their ability to care for children. If a member of staff is prescribed medication by their doctor that may affect their ability to perform work, then this should be discussed with the Nursery Manager;
- Medication should be kept in the first aid box and not left in bags or coats.

Health, Safety and Hygiene

The preschool will act positively to minimise the incidence of all workplace risks as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other associated legislation. Through continuous improvement of standards, and comprehensive use of risk assessments we aim to systematically remove the causes of accidents/incidents and ill health.

Staff will be provided with a Health and Safety induction when joining the preschool as well as on-going training. All activities should be carried out with the highest regard for the health and safety of all staff, children and visitors. Staff have a responsibility to carry out tasks in accordance with training received e.g.

manual handling and to wear protective clothing provided where appropriate. (See Health and Safety Policy).

Staff should:

- Never use a chair to stand on to reach something;
- Use the step ladder provided when required;
- Not attempt to move or lift heavy objects;
- Not lift objects or children if they have pains or injuries;
- Use gloves provided when changing nappies, cleaning the bathroom and helping children in the toilet;
- Always put the wet floor sign down after mopping the floor or mopping up spillages;
- Put cleaning products away in their correct locations. Either in the locked cupboard in the hall, on the high shelf in the bathroom or at the back of the kitchen shelf;
- Ensure the daily health and safety check is completed;
- Ensure broken or damaged equipment is reported and safely removed;
- Report any hazards to the building or equipment to the manager;
- Inform management of any changes to their health;

Staff should be a role model to the children in terms of their own health and hygiene. Leading by example is the best way to teach good behaviours to children for example:

- Have clean, neat and tidy appearance;
- Encourage children's awareness of physical development (exercise, diet, rest, challenges and risks);
- Show the importance of hydration (drink plenty of water);
- Show how keeping fit is important to development of mind and body;
- Show how to take risks safely

Mobile Phones and Cameras

Please read in conjunction with our Image Use Policy, Mobile Technology and Social Media Policy, Acceptable Use of Technology Policy and E-Safety Policy

- Members of staff will ensure that use of personal phones and devices takes place in accordance with the law, as well as, relevant policy and procedures;

- Staff will be advised to:
 - Keep mobile phones and personal devices in a safe and secure place (**top draw in the kitchen**) during a preschool day whilst children are on site;
 - Not use personal devices during teaching periods, unless permission has been given by the manager such as in emergency circumstances;
 - Only use their mobile phones on lunch breaks, unless permission has been given by the manager such as in an emergency;
 - Ensure that any content bought onto site via mobile phones and personal devices are compatible with their professional role and expectations.
- Members of staff are not permitted to use their own personal phones or devices for contacting children or parents and carers. (Any pre-existing relationships which could undermine this, will be discussed with the Manager **Nicola Setford** and Safeguarding Lead **Julie O'Neill**;
- Staff will not use personal devices or mobile phones:
 - To take photos or videos of the children and will only use work-provided equipment for this purpose.
 - Directly with learners and will only use work-provided equipment during lessons/educational activities.
- If a member of staff breaches our policy, action will be taken in line with our staff disciplinary and grievances policy;
- If a member of staff is thought to have illegal content saved or stored on a mobile phone or personal device, or have committed a criminal offence using a personal device or mobile phone, the police will be contacted and the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) will be informed in line with our allegations policy.

Social Media

Please read in conjunction with our Mobile Technology and Social Media Policy and Acceptable Use of Technology Policy.

- All members of staff are advised that their online conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the setting;
- Civil, legal or disciplinary action may be taken if staff are found to bring the profession or institution into disrepute, or if something is felt to have undermined confidence in their professional abilities;
- All members of staff are advised to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media services. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Setting appropriate privacy levels on their personal accounts/sites;
 - Being aware of the implications of using location sharing services;
 - Opting out of public listings on social networking sites;
 - Logging out of accounts after use;
 - Using strong passwords.

- Staff must not accept or invite any children or their families to view their private sites or be friends with them on social media;
- Staff must never contact any children or their families using their private social networking sites.
- Staff must never upload any photos, comments or information about the setting or any persons linked with it;
- Members of staff are encouraged not to identify themselves as employees of Pippins Preschool on their personal social networking accounts; this is to prevent information being linked with the setting and to safeguard the privacy of staff members;
- Staff must never access social media from the settings devices;
- Staff must encouraged to keep information about themselves on social media kept at a private setting;
- All members of staff are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post online. Staff are expected to ensure that their social media use is compatible with their professional role and is in accordance our policies, and the wider professional and legal framework;
- If staff contribute to the setting's social media accounts (i.e. Pippins Preschool Facebook Group). They are to ensure their comments / contributions are responsible and appropriate;

Acceptable Use of Technology

Staff must not use any ICT services for copying, storing, sending or retrieving unacceptable material. "Unacceptable material" includes any documents, messages, information, graphics or other electronic data that:

- Breach UK legislation;
- Contravene the settings Equality Policy;
- Contain offensive, pornographic or obscene language or material;
- Plan, promote, incite or facilitate any illegal or terrorists activities;
- Contain defamatory or slanderous language or material;
- Denigrate, insult or ridicule another person;
- Intimidate, bully or harass another person;
- Adversely comment on integrity, personality, honesty, character, intelligence, methods or motives of another person unless it is factual response to a formal reference request;

- Provide or facilitate the use of computer hacking tools or virus toolkits Staff must not use the Internet, external electronic mail, external telephone, fax or any other form of electronic communication to transmit sensitive, subversive information, including:
 - Opinions that do not reflect the policies of the preschool.
 - Information that could damage the preschool's reputation and standing in the community
- Staff are required to read and sign our settings Acceptable Use of Technology Policy which includes, but is not limited to:
 - Use of the settings ICT equipment;
 - Use of personal ICT equipment in the setting.

Social Contact

All staff are expected to uphold professional boundaries. Staff have a duty to approve any planned social contact with children and their families with their manager. Confidentiality of employment must be adhered to and respected during social contact.

Dress Code and Appearance:

Staff should wear clothing which:

- Is comfortable, allows free movement and is appropriate to their role;
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative;
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding;
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans;
- Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive.

Staff should ensure hands and nails are kept clean and not too long and hair is kept tidy. Jewellery should be minimal to avoid safety implications.

Accountability:

Staff are accountable to the preschool for undertaking those activities that are associated with the job/role. (Please refer to your job description). A member of staff must inform their immediate manager if they do not feel competent to undertake any activities and must request reasonable/appropriate training.

Staff have a duty to report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern (please see the Whistleblowing Policy).

A childcare practitioner has a duty to respect families by:

- Valuing their cultural diversity, opinions and choices;

- Being non-judgmental;
- Planning contacts/appointments with the parent;
- Seeking clarification and not assuming;
- By listening and responding appropriately;
- By acknowledging her/his own limitations;
- Maintaining appropriate behaviour and activities between the family and her/himself

Staff have a responsibility to challenge any discriminatory remarks or behaviour against other staff members, visitors, children and their families. (Please refer to the Equalities and Inclusion Policy).

Staff have a duty to notify the preschool of changes to personal details, change of address, telephone number, and relevant health issues.

Staff must avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

Disclosing and Barring Service (DBS)

All staff have a duty to notify the preschool of any circumstance which may affect their suitability to work with children.

The manager is responsible for ensuring all staff, including contractors, bank staff, students and volunteers, are suitable to work with children. Checks are carried out via enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance checks as well as other sources, such as employer references, identity checks and qualification checks, amongst others.

Where possible new staff will have the checks completed prior to starting employment. However if there are delays in checks coming through, as a last resort, candidates may work in the preschool before these checks are completed as long as they are supervised by registered and DBS checked staff at all times. Staff awaiting these checks will never:

- Be left unsupervised whilst caring for children;
- Take children for toilet visits unless supervised by registered staff;
- Change nappies;
- Be left alone in a room or outside with children;
- Administer medication;
- Administer first aid;
- Take photographs of any children;

- Look at a child's learning and development log;
- Have access to children's personal details and records.

The preschool requires each member of staff to subscribe to the government's DBS Update Service within 19 DAYS of receiving their initial or revised DBS certificate. This service can be accessed online at <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure>.

Team and Partnership Working

Staff are required to work co-operatively within teams and respect the skills, expertise and contribution of colleagues. They are expected to treat others fairly and without discrimination. Staff must communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing. As required, they must share their knowledge, skills and expertise with other team members in order to improve practice. Staff must work with other members of the team to promote a care and learning environment that is conducive to safe and ethical practice. If the care environment deteriorates, the practitioner must report this to their line manager.

Staff will be required to work with other professionals outside of Pippins Preschool. For example, on training courses, at meetings and at collaboration meetings or if other professions visit the setting. Staff are expected to demonstrate high levels of professional conduct at all time and make visitors feel welcome.

Our staff will not casually share information or seek informal advice about any child or family unless permission has been sought or in the event of a Safeguarding Concern.

Confidentiality

Staff must safeguard against breaches of confidentiality by protecting information from improper disclosure at all times and follow all appropriate policies. (Please refer to the Confidentiality Policy)

Staff must only disclose information outside the immediate team if:

- It can be justified as being in the public interest (usually where disclosure is essential to protect the child or someone else from risk or significant harm);
- This is required to do so by law or by order of the court;
- There is an issue of safeguarding, and s/he must then act at all times in accordance with national and local procedures.

Most staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. This needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate preschool procedure. Until qualified by a manager, incidents must not be discussed outside the preschool, including with the child's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the preschool. (Please refer to the Safeguarding Children's Policy).

Staff who intend to share information about a child's care, learning and development with an outside agency (i.e. the Specialist Teacher and Learning Services, the Equality and Inclusion Team, or an additional childcare service used by the family) must seek prior permission from the child's parent and the preschool manager.

Babysitting

- We ask that staff do not baby sit children who attend our preschool;
- Any pre-existing relationships or exceptions which compromise this requirement will be discussed with the DSL and the manager.

Outside Commitments

All employees should consult the preschool managers before taking on additional employment. Additional employment must not conflict with the setting's interests or impair employee's ability to carry out their role at this setting.

Please bear in mind if you do have additional employment elsewhere, then you will need to declare which employer is the primary source of your income. This is necessary in order to avoid confusion over tax codes. You are only allowed one employer where your tax code can be used to take advantage of your personal tax free allowance.

Additional employers will have to adopt a secondary position and tax all of your earnings, usually on a BR (Base Rate) coding. Consequently, if we are not your main employer then we will need to tax you at the BR rate. Failure to declare a primary employer to the HMRC may result the levy of backdated tax and penalties.

Vulnerable Situations

As a key person you must discuss intimate care routines with the child's parents.

- Employees should always encourage the child to undertake self-care tasks independently, where developmentally appropriate;
- Ensure employees understand the extent and limitations of their role in applying basic care and hygiene tasks for minor abrasions and understand where an injury might require more experienced intervention;
- Employees need to be vigilant of neglect or abuse caused outside the preschool and to report any signs to the designated safeguarding leads;
- Employees must not be placed in situations which render them vulnerable. Where this is unavoidable, full and appropriate risk assessments are conducted and agreed for lone working situations;
- Employees must be prepared to report any actions of another individual they deem inappropriate to the designated safeguarding leads;
- When one to one situations are unavoidable, employees must take precautions to reduce the vulnerability of both the child and the adult, for example, informing colleagues of the situation, leaving room doors open.

Whistle Blowing

Whilst we expect all our colleagues, both internal and external, to be professional at all times and hold the welfare and safety of every child as their paramount objective, there may be occasions where this may not be happening. It is vital that all team members talk through any concerns they may have with their manager at the earliest opportunity to enable any problems to be ironed out as soon as they arise. If, in the course of your employment, you become aware of information which you reasonably believe tends to show one or more of the following, you MUST use the nursery's disclosure procedures:

- That a criminal offence has been committed or is being committed or is likely to be committed;
- That a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which they are subject (e.g. EYFS);
- That the health or safety of any individual has been, is being, or is likely to be, endangered;
- That the environment, has been, is being, or is likely to be, damaged;
- That information tending to show any of the above, is being, or is likely to be, deliberately concealed;
- That you challenge discriminatory behaviour and report any incidents.

Where you reasonably believe one or more of the above circumstances listed above has occurred you should promptly disclose this to your manager and designated safeguarding lead so that any appropriate action can be taken.

If it is inappropriate to make such a disclosure to your manager (i.e. because it relates to your manager) you should speak to the deputy manager or designated safeguarding leads.

Employees will suffer no detriment of any sort for making such a disclosure in accordance with this procedure. For further guidance in the use of the disclosure procedure, employees should speak in confidence to the manager. (Please see the Whistleblowing Policy)

Declarations and Changes of Circumstances

Employees are expected to declare all convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that affect suitability.

A childcare practitioner has a duty to notify the manager of any changes of circumstance which may affect their suitability to work with children.

Parents and Carers

- Staff must maintain a professional relationship with parents and carers at all times;
- Each member of staff must recognise that parents and carers need feedback regarding their children and that this must be given in an open, honest and friendly manner;

- The relationship with parents and carers must not become overly familiar such that it clouds the impartiality of your judgement and action;
- Whilst there is always the possibility of a member of staff having a close relationship with a parent or carer outside of the preschool, we must avoid any conflict of interest or undue favouring of a child. Where such a relationship arises the member of staff should immediately inform management to discuss any action to be taken;
- Where a member of staff finds that they have a prior close relationship to a child in the preschool through such means as a family relationship or close friendship then the manager must be made aware of this immediately.

Key Person

As a key person, you are required to:

- Attend settling in sessions and begin to build a relationship with your key child and their parents/carers;
- Ensure Unique Stories are completed and ensure you have gathered information about the child, for example:
 - Any health needs or requirements;
 - Their current progress and attainment levels;
 - Their interests;
 - Their current toileting requirements;
 - Their likes and dislikes;
 - Any allergies and/or intolerances.
- Settle children into the preschool and the routine;
- Take photos of your key children and upload these to Tapestry. These photos are to be used to gather evidence and observations to assist you in tracking their progress;
- Track and monitor children's progress by completing termly learning journals;
- Plan next steps to support children's future learning;
- Plan activities which will support children's next steps;
- Plan activities which will support children's interests;
- Ensure planning is written up on the wall;
- Ensure the settings British Values, Cultural Capital and the EYFS is embedded in your day to day practice and planning;
- Contribute to the group planning;
- Speak with the SENCo if you have concerns about a child's learning and development;

- Attend meetings with parents to discuss their progress;
- Attend LIFT meetings if required;
- Hand over to parents and let parents know about their child's day;
- Complete transition reports when a child leaves for school or a new setting;
- Work in partnership with the child's key person if the child attends a second setting by ensuring they receive copies of the children's progress trackers.

OFSTED

Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education Children's Services and Skills. It reports directly to Parliament and is independent and impartial. Ofsted inspects and regulates services which care for children and young people, and those providing education and skills for learners of all ages. All nurseries have to be registered and approved by Ofsted before they can begin to look after children. Having a well-respected Ofsted rating is really important to us, primarily because it is a very important consideration for a parent / carer when choosing a nursery.

Ofsted has 4 inspection ratings (1) outstanding (2) good (3) requires improvement (4) inadequate.

It is expected that all staff members share the preschool's belief and aspiration to uphold the highest standards at all times, such that when we are inspected by Ofsted, we can demonstrate outstanding practice. Consequently, staff are expected to understand and contribute towards our self-improvement plans.

Staff will be asked questions about how we safeguard the children at Pippins Preschool. All staff are expected to have read and understood all of the preschool's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and feel confident that they can answer questions by an Ofsted Inspector. If a staff member feels they cannot answer a specific question, they should state that they would speak with the DSL or check the correct safeguarding policy.

Summery

- It is important that staff understand all of the preschool policies, procedures and protocols;
- To enable staff to practice you must be appropriately trained and work in partnership with others;
- Staff must maintain client confidentially, and act accordingly with communications;
- Staff have a duty of care to all parties associated with the preschool;
- Failure to comply with this code of conduct may lead to disciplinary action;
- The preschool will act with integrity, sensitivity and in a manner that will be deemed as reasonable in all its dealings with staff;

- The Code of Conduct is deemed to have been accepted as soon as a member of staff commences employment.

We thank you for your co-operation and welcome any feedback from staff that will help us improve this code of conduct.