



Code of Conduct

Little Explorers Pre-School

Implemented September 2023

Objectives

The aim of this code of conduct is to give guidance to all staff (from this point onwards the term “Staff” includes students and volunteers) on the standards of behaviour expected from employees. This is to aid all staff to understand what behaviours are classed as acceptable and not acceptable, as well as understanding systems put in place by Little Explorers preschool.

We want all staff to feel valued and supported within their roles at all times, resulting in high morale and team efficiency. The principles set out within the code of conduct should encourage staff to achieve the highest standards of conduct and minimise the risk of misconduct.

Staff should be aware that failure to comply with the code of conduct could lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary policy, including dismissal.

This code of conduct is to be accepted alongside your job description and contract of employment.

Remember, the children attending the setting are our highest priority at all times and we work to the requirements set out in the statutory framework of the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage).

Aims for staff

- To enjoy coming to work to educate and nurture children.
- To be able to take responsibility for your own personal development in areas where further knowledge or training is required in order to meet the individual roles.
- To have equal access to the EYFS curriculum and training opportunities in order to meet the high expectations of quality learning and development at the setting.
- To work together as a team to create a meaningful and ambitious curriculum.
- To respect their peers and form positive work relationships
- To perform to the highest possible standard in accordance with the code of conduct policy.

Professional Behaviour

Staff are to consistently demonstrate the highest standards of personal and professional behaviour and act with honesty and integrity. We are to set an example for the children we care for, and therefore must treat each other, children and parents with respect and dignity at all times.

All staff must act in compliance with company policies and procedures, which they should be familiar with. This is to ensure that the safety and welfare of the children are the highest priority.

Staff should treat all children with fairness and kindness at all times.

Behaviours classed to be unacceptable:

- Embarrassing or humiliating children / making jokes at the expense of children
- Discriminating against or favouring certain children
- The use of inappropriate or offensive language
- Putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or inappropriate conduct

If any of these behaviours are observed this will result in disciplinary action at the discretion of the manager.

This includes displaying any of these types of behaviour online, on social media sites or in public away from the setting.

Healthy Eating

The health and safety of children that attend our setting is our highest priority at all times. Staff must model the behaviours that we expect children to follow and learn. This includes (but is not limited to) eating and drinking healthily around the children. Staff are expected to join the children at meal times to engage in meaningful conversations as set out in our "Food and Drink" Policy and must follow a balanced and healthy diet themselves. Sugary/fizzy drinks, sweets, cakes and biscuits should not be consumed in front of the children unless the children are eating the same. If staff bring in these items they must be kept out of sight and consumed during a break period in the staffroom/office.

Staff Performance

Staff are expected to:

- Attend regular training. Little Explorers is subscribed to the online learning platform "Noodle" and "Educare" and each member of staff has access to this. The Local Authority has training sessions regularly and staff can request training if they wish.
- Attend and contribute regularly to staff meetings.
- Attend committee meetings and take part in the organising and running of charity events organised by and/or on behalf of the Preschool.
- Arrive with enough time to prepare themselves so they are ready to start work promptly at the contracted start time.

Little Explorers has high expectations for staff performance and supports staff in any areas they feel need it. This can be through professional discussions, staff meetings and training either on or off site. Staff observations are made during each day and on an ongoing process. This means any areas that need addressing can be picked up promptly and supported.

If it is felt that any staff are below the expected standard as set out in the code of conduct, job description and contract of employment then a development plan will be drawn up in consultation with the member of staff and put into place. With support, this is expected to improve within an agreed timescale.

If a staff member continually fails to meet the expected standard, even with this support in place, then disciplinary action may be started at the discretion of the manager.

Safeguarding

Staff are responsible for following the safeguarding statement as set out in the safeguarding and child protection policy:

“We believe that:

- *All children have the right to protection from all types of abuse.*
- *Everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them.*

This means that we will:

- *Not tolerate the abuse of children. This includes never accepting and always challenging or raising concerns about words or actions which downplay, justify, or promote abuse. This applies to anyone who is part of, comes into or works with our setting.*
- *Be child centred and ensure that we consider the best interests of children in everything that we do.*
- *Ensure we provide a safe environment for children to learn, grow and develop and feel able to raise any concerns they may have for themselves or others.*
- *Look out for and respond promptly and appropriately to all identified concerns, incidents or allegations of abuse or neglect of a child.*
- *Ensure no child or group of children are treated less favourably by us than others.*
- *Be aware of and take extra positive actions that may be needed to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child(ren) who we know are more vulnerable to experiencing abuse or discrimination.*
- *Work in partnership with our children, their parents, carers, and other agencies.”*

This is in accordance with staff training.

This duty includes reporting any concerns to management. Staff can refer to the safeguarding and child protection policy or speak to the designated safeguard lead for further details regarding whistleblowing.

Staff are expected to proactively refresh their safeguarding knowledge continuously through research, staff meetings and activities. This is in addition to mandatory safeguarding training.

Staff are expected to be aware of the settings policies and procedures and to follow them.

In line with legal requirements each member of staff must hold an enhanced DBS certificate and be subscribed to the update service. It is up to the individual staff member to make sure their subscription to the update service is renewed each year. If this is missed and the update service subscription is cancelled then the member of staff must apply for a new enhanced DBS certificate and re subscribe to the update service at their own expense.

Relationships with children and parents

Staff must declare any existing relationships with children outside of pre-school, whether it be a social or family connection.

Relationships with children must remain professional at all times. Staff must not seek to establish social contact with children for the purpose of strengthening a relationship or securing a friendship.

Contact with children and parents in regards to their learning and development or health and safety must only be through the proper lines of communication through Little Explorers (phone, email, parent/staff meeting or discussions at drop off/pick up. We understand that due to the fact we are a small, rural preschool parents and staff often are either friends with or are familiar with each other outside of the setting. However, any communication with parents or children through mobile devices/social media or face to face in regards to any matters involving Little Explorers or the children that attend is prohibited. If a member of staff is contacted in this way they must advise the parent to contact Little Explorers directly, through the proper lines of communication, and report it to management immediately.

Any concerning behaviour such as seeking affection or being overly familiar should be reported.

Personal relationships at work between colleagues should also be declared to the manager, as this may impact on the quality of their work.

Staff must not accept any personal gift from a parent which may be construed as a bribe for preferential treatment of a child. Children may give a small token to staff to mark the end of a school year or during religious holidays such as Christmas. However, it is unacceptable to encourage children to give gifts. If you are unsure about receiving a gift, always check with the manager.

Equally, gifts must not be given to children as an act of preferential treatment.

Dress and Appearance

Staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role and promote a professional image.

Clothing beyond uniform should not be offensive, revealing, sexually provocative or display political or contentious slogans. Staff should dress with safety in mind and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Staff are provided with a uniform which should be kept clean, presentable and worn at all times.

Body piercings should be discreet for safety reasons and jewellery kept to a minimum where possible to avoid possible injury to children or staff.

Smoking, Alcohol and substances

The consumption of alcohol on the premises is strictly forbidden unless it is part of an agreed event authorised by management.

Any employee who is found consuming alcohol or other substances on the premises or is found to be intoxicated or suffering the after effects of alcohol at work (including smelling of alcohol) will be sent home immediately and will face disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure. A breach of this procedure is considered an act of gross misconduct.

Little Explorers pre-school is a non-smoking site. Smoking is forbidden (including e-cigarettes/vapes) on the premises or in sight of the pre-school grounds. Any member of staff who is found smoking on the premises will face disciplinary action under the setting's disciplinary procedure.

Members of staff who wish to smoke before their shift commences or at break times, must ensure that they are not identifiable by their uniforms and 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. Cigarettes, matches and lighters must be kept securely away from children.

The no smoking rules also apply to E-cigarettes/vapes.

Confidentiality

Staff must not reveal any confidential information they may have access to regarding a child, their parents, family or carers. This information can only be revealed to colleagues who have a professional role with the child, on a need to know basis.

Staff must never use confidential information about a child for their own advantage, or to embarrass or intimidate a child.

Staff may be witness to actions which need to be confidential such as meetings with parents, carers or outside agencies. It must never be discussed outside of the preschool, including with parents or colleagues, except with the manager and with the appropriate authority.

Staff have a legal obligation to share with the manager any information which would lead to concern regarding the safety or welfare of a child. Any such information must be passed on and recorded immediately.

Any communications with media about the pre-school can only be conducted by the manager or a person in a designated role.

Conduct outside of work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside of work which could damage the reputation of the pre-school or the employee's own reputation.

Criminal offences including violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are unacceptable and bring into question the suitability of the person involved to work with children.

Any such allegations against a staff member must be disclosed to the management whether it is true or not, as this can be damaging to the reputation of the nursery.

Uniform provided by the preschool or bearing the little explorers logo must not be worn in inappropriate settings or while behaving in a way that would be deemed unprofessional for your role.

All employees should consult the Manager 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 Little Explorers preschool.

Accountability

Staff are accountable to Little Explorers Preschool for undertaking those activities that are associated with their role. A member of staff must inform the manager if they do not feel competent to undertake any activities and must request appropriate training.

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

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

Photography, Videos and images of children

Images of children can only be taken with the permission of the parent, using pre-school equipment and securely stored. This can be to record the progress or achievements of a child for their own records or for learning activities.

Any images used publicly or for the promotion of the pre-school can only be used where consent has been given by the parent or carer and the intended use clearly stated.

Mobile Phones and smart watches

The use of a mobile phone during working hours is prohibited and must be stored securely in the office in line with the settings mobile phone policy. Phones are only to be checked during breaks or with the permission of the manager and only if the care towards children is not compromised (including ratios) if you leave the room.

Smart watches can be worn as long as they are not able to take photographs and are not used for communication.

Confirmation of Compliance

Little Explorers Preschool – Code of Conduct

Please sign below to confirm you have read and understood the code of conduct.

Name

Job Title.....

Signed

Date.....