

Staff Code of Conduct



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Introduction

This Code of Conduct applies to you if you are an employee of Wroughton Preschool, whether employed on a permanent, temporary or casual basis. 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.

1.2 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 Wroughton 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, grievance procedures, and disciplinary procedures, complaint procedures and all policies relevant to the Preschool.

1.3 Policies and Procedures

The Preschool has a range of policies and procedures which apply to all staff. These are available from the office and copies held in the session. 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.

1.4 Attendance, Timekeeping and Appointments

- Staff are required to comply with the rules relating to notification of absence set out in the Absence Policy.
- 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 such cases where this is not possible, appointments must be scheduled at the beginning or end of a session and agreed with your supervisor.

1.5 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. 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.

1.6 Alcohol, Drug Abuse, Smoking and E-Cigarettes

- The consumption of alcohol on the premises is strictly forbidden unless it is part of an agreed event authorised by management, such as a staff barbecue. 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 site 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 the session 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 the children.

- Electronic Cigarettes- Although they are generally thought to be less harmful than smoking real cigarettes, electronic still contain the addictive chemical nicotine as well as other toxic substances. Consequently, for the purposes of this code of conduct, the smoking of substitute cigarettes is deemed to be the same as smoking the real thing. Therefore please observe our no smoking rules.

1.7 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 Preschool Supervisor.
- Medication should be kept in the first aid box provided specifically for staff and not left in bags or coats.

1.8 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 improvements of standards, and comprehensive use of risk assessments we aim to systematically remove the causes of accidents/incidents and ill health.

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

WE ARE COMMITTED TO SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND EXPECT ALL STAFF, CONTRACTORS AND VOLUNTEERS TO SHARE THIS COMMITMENT.

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 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 be a role model to the children in terms of their 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

1.9 Mobile Phones and Cameras

- Members of staff must keep personal mobile phones switched off and in a secure place. Personal mobile phones are not permitted in any spaces that are accessed by children.

- It is recognised that in certain situations it may be necessary for staff to have a mobile phone for the use of the setting e.g. on an outing. The use of a phone must not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children.
- Personal mobile phones or similar devices must not be used to take photographs of children.
- Staff have a duty to ensure parents do not use their mobile phones to take photos in the setting.
- Members of staff must only use cameras provided by the setting to take photographs of children. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

(See Mobile Phone, Camera and Media Policy)

1.10 Information and Communication Technologies

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.

(See Mobile Phone Camera and Media Policy)

1.11 Social Networking Sites

- Staff must ensure that social networking sites are set as private so that only authorised persons can have access to them.
- Staff must not accept or invite any children or their families to use their private sites
- 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

(See Mobile Phone Camera and Media Policy)

1.12 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 Supervisor. Confidentiality of employment must be adhered to and respected during social contact.

In summary staff should:

- Ensure all contact with existing children or their parents is of a professional and Preschool related nature.
- Consider the appropriateness of the social contact to their role and nature of their work.
- Always approve any planned social contact with children or parents with senior colleagues.
- Advise senior management of any social contact they have with a child or parent with whom they work, which may give rise to concern.
- Understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified (parents becoming dependant)
- Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Preschool or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the Preschool.
- Criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.
- Be cautious when undertaking work outside Preschool, either paid or voluntary, such that it does not conflict with the interests of the Preschool nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

1.13 Dress Code and Appearance

The Preschool will provide appropriately branded T shirts and fleece. Staff should wear comfortable trousers.

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 long hair is tied back. Nail varnish remover should not be brought into the Preschool. Jewellery should be minimal to avoid safety implications. Any obviously visible tattoos or piercings should be discussed with the Preschool Chair as to their suitability with your role.

1.14 Accountability

Staff are accountable to the Preschool for undertaking those activities that are associated with the job/role. (Please refer to your job description/specification) 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 Whistle Blowing policy).

A childcare practitioner has 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.
- Listening and responding appropriately.
- 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 Diversity Policy)

Staff have 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.

1.15 Disclosure and Barring service (DBS)

All staff, students and volunteers are informed during their induction that, under the Childcare Act 2006, they are expected to provide up to date information relation to any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children, whether received before or during their employment at the setting.

There is also an expectation that the setting would be informed if staff relationships and associations, both within and outside the workplace (including online), may have implications for the safety of children in the setting.

The Supervisor/Chair are responsible for ensuring all staff, 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.

1.16 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.

1.17 Confidentiality

Staff must guard 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 he/she 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. For example, where a child is bullied by another child (or even by a member of staff), 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 Policy)

Staff who intend to share information about a child's care, learning and development with an outside agency must seek prior permission from the child's parents and the Preschool Supervisor.

1.18 Gifts and Rewards

Staff should not accept significant personal gifts from our customers (parents/carers), suppliers or other agencies with whom the Preschool has contact. All gifts with a perceived value of over £20 must be declared to the Preschool supervisor.

1.19 Outside Commitments

All employees should consult the Supervisor 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.

HMRC should be made aware of both employers.

1.20 Vulnerable Situations

As a key person you must discuss intimate care routines with the child's parents. The setting's Intimate Care Policy must be followed at all times.

- 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 outside the Preschool and to report any signs to the DSL.
- 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 senior management.
- 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.

1.21 Whistleblowing

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 line 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 Preschool's disclosure procedure:

- 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, National Minimum Standards, National Care Standards).
- That the health or safety of an 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 has occurred you should promptly disclose this to your manager 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 Chair.

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 Supervisor or Chair.
(Please see the Whistleblowing Policy)

1.22 Declarations and Changes of Circumstances

Employees (including volunteers and students) are expected to declare all convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that effect suitability.

All staff, volunteers and students are also required to self-declare that they are not disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006.

A childcare practitioner has a duty to notify the Preschool Supervisor of any changes of circumstance which may affect their suitability to work with children. There is also an expectation that all staff, volunteers and students will inform the Preschool where their relationships and associations both within and outside the workplace (including online) may have implications for the safety of children in the setting.

1.23 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 the Supervisor 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 Supervisor must be made aware of this immediately to avoid any conflict of interest or risk of undue favouring of a child.

1.24 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 Preschools 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 Preschool. At the moment 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 plan which is reported directly to Ofsted on an annual basis. The plan examines:

- What we are doing now?
- What we are aiming to do?

- How well are we doing by comparison to previous years?
- How well are we doing by comparison to other settings?
- What areas of quality practice need to be maintained?
- What areas of practice need to be improved?
- How do we plan to achieve our aims in the future?

1.25 Summary

It is important that staff understand the Preschool's policies, procedures and protocols.

To enable staff to practice you must be appropriately trained and work in partnership with others.

Staff must maintain client confidentiality, and act accordingly with communications.

Staff have a duty of care to all parties associated with the Preschool.

Failure to comply with this code 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.

Authorisation & Review

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Wroughton Preschool

Held on _____

Date to be reviewed Yearly at AGM

Signed on behalf of the management
committee _____

Name of signatory _____

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) Chairperson