

Fledglings Day Nursery

Staff Safeguarding Code of Conduct

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 and management 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 with their Line 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 it is claimed 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; or
- behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Safer working practice with children includes:

- 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;
- avoiding lone working or at least being within sight or hearing for 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 setting’s procedures when providing personal care or administering medicine;
- reporting if a child becomes infatuated with a member of staff and dealing with it sensitively and confidentially;
- being an appropriate role model for children and other staff;
- 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.

Unacceptable Behaviours with children include:

- inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children eg 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 outside of the setting, either face to face or through phones, social networks or gaming;
- staff giving children inappropriate personal details about themselves e.g. their home address or relationship issues;
- offering lifts to children outside of normal working duties;
- making suggestive or derogatory remarks;
- wearing clothing with offensive slogans/pictures or that is revealing or impractical for the work environment;
- assisting with personal care tasks that children can undertake themselves;
- staff posting inappropriate comments or photos on social media which call into question their suitability for working with children;
- allowing children access to personal social media;
- 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.

It is important to be aware that any behaviour outside the setting, which could lead any reasonable person to question individual staff member's suitability to work with children, could bring the setting into disrepute and possibly lead to that member of staff being disqualified from working with children.

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;
- 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 telling the 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.

Author

John Malyckyj

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