

Seedling Nursery

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Seedling Nursery Policy for Code of Conduct

Policy Consultation & Review

This code of conduct has been drawn up in order to provide guidance and examples to staff working at Seedling Nursery.

Nursery are very proud of the team and its high levels of professionalism and trustworthiness. At all times, we urge staff to use their judgement and consider whether their behaviour will enhance the high standing of the school and centre, and their own individual professional reputation. We expect staff to behave at all times with a high level of courtesy, sensitivity, and to uphold the values of the school and centre. This policy is not an exhaustive list of what should or should not be done. Staff are encouraged to seek guidance or advice as appropriate.

It is important that all adults working with children understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it, place them in a position of trust. This policy provides clear guidance on appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children in paid or unpaid capacities.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of a colleague, volunteer or student, you must discuss your concerns with the manager or person deputising. Staff supervision sessions provide another opportunity for talking about and reflecting on how we are working together and difficult issues which might arise. Briefer guidance on conduct for students and volunteers is given in the quick induction pack.

The policy is provided to all staff at induction alongside our Safeguarding policy. In addition, all staff are provided with Part One of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', DfE (January 2021).



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2. PURPOSE

2.1 All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young persons 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 Seedling 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.

2.2 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 and procedures relevant to the Nursery.

3. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

3.1 The Nursery has a range of policies and procedures which apply to all staff. These are available from the office. 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.

4. ATTENDANCE, TIMEKEEPING AND APPOINTMENTS

4.1 Staff are required to comply with the rules relating to notification of absence set out in the Contract of Employment.

4.2 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 Nursery provides a signing in and out system for recording staff attendance at the Nursery. 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 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 Nursery. In most cases the Nursery requires you to make appointments in your own time, however, in cases where this is not possible, appointments must be scheduled at the beginning or end of a shift and agreed with your manager.



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5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 It is expected that a childcare practitioner will continually update their knowledge and skills through a life-long learning approach.

5.2 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

5.3 The Nursery at all times acknowledges the strengths and limitations of a childcare practitioner's expertise and will ensure there is regular appraisal and assessment.

5.4 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 Nursery. The Nursery 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.

6 ALCOHOL, DRUG ABUSE, SMOKING AND E-CIGARETTES

6.1 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.

6.2 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.

6.3 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.

6.4 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 the children.

6.5 Electronic Cigarettes - Although they are generally thought to be less harmful than smoking real cigarettes, electronic cigarettes 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.

7. MEDICATION

7.1 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.



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7.2 Children must only be given medicine by a trained paediatric First Aider, and the medication form must be filled in each time. All doses given must be recorded in the Medicines Log and observation must be made of any adverse reactions. Parents must sign the log on each occasion.

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

8 HEALTH, SAFETY AND HYGIENE

8.1 The Nursery 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.

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”. (Priscilla Conway)

8.2 Staff will be provided with a Health and Safety induction when joining the nursery 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).

8.3 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

9 MOBILE PHONES AND CAMERAS

9.1 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.

9.2 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 mobile 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 & Media Policy)

10 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

10.1 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



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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 Nursery.
 - Information that could damage the Nursery's reputation and standing in the community
- (See Mobile Phone and Media Policy)

11 SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

11.1 Staff must ensure that social networking sites are set as private so that only authorised persons can have access to them.

11.2 Staff must not accept or invite any children or their families to use their private sites.

11.3 Staff must never contact any children or their families using their private social networking sites.

11.4 Staff must never upload any photos, comments or information about the setting or any persons linked with it. (See Mobile Phone and Media Policy)

12 SOCIAL CONTACT

12.1 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.

In summary staff should:

- Ensure all contact with existing children or their parents is of a professional and nursery related nature.
- Consider the appropriateness of the social contact according 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 who 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 nursery or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the nursery.
- 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 nursery, either paid or voluntary, such that it does not conflict



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with the interests of the nursery nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

13 DRESS CODE AND APPEARANCE

13.1 Staff should wear comfortable trousers (not ripped jeans).

13.2 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.

13.3 Staff should ensure hands and nails are kept clean and long hair is tied back. Nail varnish remover should not be brought into the nursery unless it is kept in the office. Jewelry should be minimal to avoid safety implications. Any obviously visible tattoos or piercings should be discussed with the Nursery Manager as to their suitability commensurate with your role.

14 ACCOUNTABILITY

14.1 Staff are accountable to the Nursery 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 WhistleBlowing policy).

14.2 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

14.3 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)

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

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

15 DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS)

15.1 All staff have a duty to notify the Nursery of any circumstance which may affect their suitability to work with children. The Nursery Managers are responsible for ensuring all staff, including contractors, bank



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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.

15.2 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 nursery 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.

16 TEAM AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

16.1 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.

17 CONFIDENTIALITY

17.1 Staff must guard against breaches of confidentiality by protecting information from improper disclosure at all times and follow all appropriate policies. (Please refer to your 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.

17.2 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 nursery procedure. Until qualified by a Manager, incidents must not be discussed outside the nursery, including with the child's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the nursery.



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(Please refer to the Safeguarding Children's Policy)

17.3 Staff who intend to share information about a child's care, learning and development with an outside agency (i.e. MASH, Health Visitors, or an additional childcare service used by the family) must seek prior permission from the child's parent and the Nursery Managers.

18 GIFTS AND REWARDS

18.1 Staff should not accept significant personal gifts from our customers (parents/carers), suppliers or other agencies with whom the Nursery has contact. All gifts with a perceived value of over £20 must be declared to the Managers. All Cards and gifts must be opened in with two staff members present.

19 BABYSITTING

19.1 We do not allow any babysitting services at Seedling Nursery. It is not acceptable for a member of staff to transport a child by car directly to and from the nursery. The nursery accepts no liability for the child once off the premises.

20 OUTSIDE COMMITMENTS

20.1 All employees should consult the Nursery 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.

21 VULNERABLE SITUATIONS

21.1 As a key person you must discuss intimate care routines with the child's parents. The settings Intimate Care Policy (contained within the Safeguarding Children 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 caused outside the nursery and to report any signs to the Nursery Manager.
- 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.

22 WHISTLEBLOWING



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22.1 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.

22.2 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, National Minimum Standards, National Care Standards).
- 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.

21.2 Where you reasonably believe one or more of the above circumstances listed above 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 Company Director. Employees will suffer no detriment of any sort for making such a disclosure in accordance with this procedure.

21.3 For further guidance in the use of the disclosure procedure, employees should speak in confidence to the Nursery Manager. (Please see the Whistleblowing Policy)

22 DECLARATIONS AND CHANGES OF CIRCUMSTANCES

22.1 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 nursery manager of any changes of circumstance which may affect their suitability to work with children. An annual status check will be performed by the nursery for all staff.

23 PARENTS AND CARERS

23.1 Staff must maintain a professional relationship with parents and carers at all times.

23.2 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.

23.3 Whilst there is always the possibility of a member of staff having a close relationship with a parent or carer outside of the Nursery, 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 Managers to discuss any action to be taken.

23.4 Where a member of staff finds that they have a prior close relationship to a child in the Nursery through such means as a family relationship or close friendship then the Manager must be made aware of this immediately and will require the member of staff not to be Key Person to avoid any conflict of interest or risk of



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undue favouring of the child.

24 OFSTED

24.1 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.

24.2 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 nursery'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.

24.3 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?

25. Physical Contact

In the nursery there are times when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have physical contact with a child but it is essential to follow some simple guidelines so that such contact cannot be misconstrued. Staff should always:

- treat children with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body if possible
- understand that children with SEN may require more physical contact to assist in their Learning
- be familiar with the nursery guidance and protocols
- be aware of gender, cultural or religious issues requiring consideration before initiating physical contact
- conduct activities where they can be seen by others
- deter children from initiating inappropriate physical contact and report to the manager

Children In Distress

The welfare of the child is paramount and if an embrace helps to pacify then this should be given. We must never neglect children's basic needs for care and comfort.

b) Toileting and Intimate care

Children who are soiled must be cleaned and changed immediately. This may happen to any child and isolated occurrences should be reported to the parent. Where a pattern develops this needs to be recorded and monitored. Where children are on agreed toileting programmes parents should be provided with regular updates.



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Staff should use the nappy changing facilities or the toileting areas in the classrooms. All of these areas are open and overlooked by other staff and this is an essential safer working practice: glass or sightlines must never be obscured. If you help a child in a toilet cubicle please leave the door open. You must not use the public or adult toilets for changing children or helping them with their toileting.

Children should be encouraged to develop self-care skills as appropriate to their stage of development.

c) Changing clothes

Children who are very wet or messy must be cleaned and clothing changed. Staff should ensure clothing is changed with a degree of privacy, to maintain the dignity of the child, but where staff can be overlooked. Staff should report this to parents.

d) Curriculum Development

Because we encourage children to take risks in all aspects of the curriculum this will mean there are times when physical intervention by staff is needed e.g. high climbing, use of tools, cycling, swimming, to maintain safety.

e) First Aid

All staff must be familiar with the arrangements for First Aid as detailed in the Health & Safety Policy. All staff have a responsibility to provide basic care and hygiene and are trained to deal with minor injuries, and ALL head injuries must be referred to a FIRST AID AT WORK trained staff member.

f) Health Care Plans

If a child has a chronic health condition, any condition that requires medication or specialist care, or an allergy, then a health Care Plans must be drawn up by the SENCO in conjunction with a health professional. These are discussed at regular staff meetings about the Provision Map and all staff need to be aware of the implications these may have for the children in their care. If you are in any doubt about the healthcare needs of a child or have any concerns then you must speak to the SENCO.

26. Staff : Child Ratios in the Nursery

Appropriate staffing levels must be maintained at all times and staff shortages must be reported to the Manager.

For under 2 years olds 1:3

For 2 year olds 1 : 4

For 3 & 4 years old 1 : 13 (with teacher)

All staff are always responsible for monitoring wellbeing, safety and behaviour across the room or zone they are in and checking areas like toilets or dens regularly. You should always position yourself so that you can see around you, e.g. if you are working with a small group or just one child.

27. Outings and Transport

A risk assessment must be completed by the lead member of staff in advance of the outing and in accordance with nursery guidance. Parental consent must be obtained before taking children off-site. If a family chooses not to give consent to educational visits when the admission form is filled in, this should be reported to the Manager.



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Staff must complete an ongoing risk assessment throughout the outing. Staff must adhere to all nursery guidance and keep the nursery informed of any emergency / change of plan. If transport is necessary this should be:

- o Public transport (preferred option)
- o Hired bus/minibus


There may be occasions where a child in nursery requires emergency transport in a car and this must be recorded and reported to the Manager and parents.

25 SUMMARY

25.1 It is important that staff understand the Nurseries 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 Nursery. Failure to comply with this code of conduct may lead to disciplinary action.

25.2 The Nursery will act with integrity, sensitivity and in a manner that will be deemed as reasonable in all its dealings with staff.

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

This policy was last updated	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>January 2022</i>		<i>January 2023</i>