

08 Staff, volunteers and students procedures

08.06 Staff code of conduct

Working for Little Doves Christian Pre-School

This code of conduct sets out the pre-school's standards and principles. It is not a complete list of what employees can and cannot do, but the aim is to enable staff to understand:

- the ground rules that all staff must observe
- the expectations the pre-school has of its staff.

This code is binding on all pre-school staff. Breaches of the code and the standards it expresses may result in disciplinary action. All staff are expected to operate within the law. Unlawful or criminal behaviour, even away from work, could result in disciplinary action.

The breaking of some rules is considered serious enough that employees could be dismissed for a first offence without notice. It is each employee's responsibility to read this code and to work in accordance with it and all other employment related policies and codes. Should an employee be unsure about any aspect of this code they should check with the pre-school manager/deputy/senior room leader.

Applying for a job with Little Doves Christian Pre-School

The pre-school is committed to a fair and open approach to staff recruitment. All appointments should be made without bias, on the basis of the candidate's ability and suitability for the job.

Candidates must declare any matter which might draw into question their suitability for the job by ensuring that they:

- are open and honest at any interview and on any application form
- disclose any criminal offence* of which they have been convicted
- disclose any criminal charges they face, which (if convicted) would make them unfit for their job
- do not seek undue favour from staff.

** Unless it is "spent" under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*

Working standards

All employees must adhere to the organisation's policies on bullying and harassment and equal opportunities. See 08.11 Prevention of bullying and harassment policy and 05 Promoting inclusion equality and valuing diversity policy.

Employees must not discriminate against or harass people met in the course of their work, particularly on the grounds of:

- race
- age
- gender
- religious beliefs

- ethnic or national origin
- disability
- sexuality
- marital status
- HIV status.

Employees must never demean, distress or offend the decency of others, for example, by:

- using inappropriate physical contact
- using pin-ups or downloading pornographic material from the internet
- displaying racist material
- making sexually aggressive or inappropriate remarks
- making sexual gestures
- intrusive questions about a person's private life or a person discussing their own sex life
- using foul language and expletives
- using social media, blogs or another online platform inappropriately
- sexual posts or contact on social media
- spreading sexual rumours about a person
- sending sexually explicit emails or texts
- unwelcome touching, hugging or massing or kissing.

Employees must not:

- consume significant levels of alcohol prior to or during working hours sufficient to affect their work performance, conduct or contact with the client group and colleagues
- drink enough alcohol to affect their work, and should not drink at all, before or during work, as this could affect safety, their work performance, conduct or contact with the client group and colleagues
- be found under the influence of or found to be in the possession of or distributing illegal drugs or drugs known to induce a legal high; this will be subject to disciplinary action, potentially resulting in dismissal.

Employees must ensure that they:

- comply with the policy in place on smoking at work including e-cigarettes
- never disclose or misuse confidential information
- disclose any matter which it is their duty to report
- never steal, take or damage other employees' or organisational belongings. All lost property must be handed to line managers.

Employees must ensure that they:

- demonstrate a committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults

- adhere to the pre-school's policies and procedures, statutory, regulatory or legal requirements, as they apply to their role and area of work
- carry out any other duties which may reasonably be required of them in accordance with the needs of the pre-school
- work in collaboration with colleagues to ensure the delivery of high-quality education and care
- ensure they uphold the privacy, dignity and rights of children and families that use the setting's services
- are flexible and adaptable with respect to their role.

Employee relations

All employees are expected to work co-operatively with each other and support the manager and trustees. A climate of mutual confidence, trust and respect between the manager and employees is essential to achieving work targets and providing a high-quality service.

All employees are expected to:

- co-operate with managers and trustees and not deceive, abuse or undermine management
- carry out proper instructions
- communicate in an open and effective way to support best practice
- carry out proper instructions
- fill in accurately and honestly any document, form or record requested by the manager/deputy/senior room leader for work
- never destroy, damage, alter or falsify any such document or record.

Managing employees

The pre-school expects the manager/deputy/senior room leader to provide staff with direction, positive motivation and an appraisal meeting in line with the current policy.

The manager/deputy and trustees must ensure that they:

- lead by example
- manage within their budget
- set standards of work, give feedback and advice to staff on how improvements can be made and ensure standards are met
- ensure that staff carry out their work properly
- deal with staff fairly and consistently, especially when applying the pre-school's policies and procedures
- provide for employees a working environment which is safe and free from any form of unfair discrimination, bullying or harassment.

The manager/deputy/senior room leader is required to undertake induction, probation and supervision meetings in line with the pre-school's policies and procedures. Any material deviation from these policies and procedures will normally result in disciplinary action being taken. If the manager is unable to follow

these policies and procedures then they must immediately contact the trustees.

Working practice

The pre-school aims to promote good health and safe working among the staff. All employees have a responsibility to contribute to safe working practices. Failure to do so could place individuals, service users and other staff at risk.

Employees must:

- promote and follow policies that support safety, wellbeing and safeguarding
- follow safety codes
- wear any safety clothing the organisation provides for work
- report any accidents or incidents
- attend a work-related medical examination if required
- never risk injury or danger to themselves or others
- take care of the own wellbeing and support the wellbeing of colleagues
- never do anything that negatively affects their performance or judgement at work
- follow the organisation's procedures for reporting any absence for sickness.

Employees must ensure when taking sick leave that they:

- never claim sick leave when they are not actually sick
- act sensibly to speed their recovery and return to work
- do nothing which is inconsistent with their illness or injury, or which might delay their recovery or worsen the problem.

During an outbreak of serious illness or disease (such as Covid-19) employees must ensure that they adhere to all Government guidelines concerning keeping themselves and others safe. Following these guidelines will protect them and in turn protect their colleagues and any children in their care.

Failure to adhere to Government guidelines will be deemed a breach in sections Working honestly, working with integrity and working within the Law of this Code of conduct and may result in formal disciplinary action as breaches may be deemed gross misconduct.

Hours and attendance

Reliable time-keeping, attendance and sickness reporting are all important to the success of the pre-school. Poor attendance and bad time-keeping increase costs, reduce service levels and undermine the reputation of individuals and the organisation.

Employees must ensure that they:

- attend work on time
- agree in advance with the manager/deputy any leave or time off that is required
- tell the manager/deputy if they are not able to attend work for any reason.

Working honestly

The pre-school expects employees to use the organisation's money and resources with absolute honesty, which can be demonstrated at all times. Employees must also ensure that they declare any relevant information that calls into question their suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults. Employees must also always disclose action that helps to keep children and other service users safe.

Employees must ensure that they:

- declare any information that calls into question their suitability to occupy their role e.g. any incident which lead to a social services investigation or police investigation, arrest, caution or criminal charge which is related or relevant to their employment (e.g. child related offences, violence, theft, fraud)
- avoid corruption and the suspicion of it. For example, asking for or offering bribes of any sort
- comply with the financial regulations
- declare any potential conflict of interest
- avoid fraud and report any suspicions or evidence of fraud taking place
- do not falsify documents to claim pay, sick pay or annual leave
- give due care to the pre-school's property and equipment - taking care not to lose or damage it
- never do private work when they should be at work for the pre-school or are on sick leave
- employees must have permission from the manager before they undertake any private work, even out of work time, to ensure that there is not a conflict of interest or concerns regarding health and safety
- never abuse their position to benefit themselves, their family, friends or any outside organisation
- only use the pre-school's telephone to make essential personal phone calls as agreed by the management and pay for all personal phone calls, unless authorised by their manager.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Whilst employed by the pre-school, employees are not permitted to have any business or undertaking or engage in any other activities that might interfere with the performance of their duties or cause a conflict of interest or otherwise. If they have or wish to commence any outside business interest or undertaking, whether financial or otherwise, they must first seek written permission, which will not be unreasonably withheld. If in doubt, advice of the manager must be sought before engaging in any activities or business or outside interests which might in any way interfere with the performance of their duties or cause a conflict of interest.

The pre-school expects staff to learn from and use policies, procedures and intellectual property (i.e. Trademarks and Copyright) in a way to help the pre-school achieve its aims and objectives. Use of and sharing of the policies and procedures shall be for work related purposes only. Staff are not permitted to share the pre-school's policies, procedures and any other form of actual or potential intellectual property with any external party unless authorised in writing to do so. Failure to act in accordance with this procedure will potentially lead to disciplinary action.

Working with integrity

The relationships that the organisation has with partners, contractors, consultants, community groups, service users, suppliers and others, must be managed so that there can be no suspicion of corruption, or dishonesty with the charity's money.

Employees must ensure that they:

- do nothing outside work which could damage external confidence in the pre-school or make them unsuitable for the work they do
- are fair and impartial in dealing with customers, suppliers and partners
- do not accept gifts that will place them under obligation
- do not disclose confidential information useful to any of the pre-school's competitors
- get permission in advance to use pre-school's equipment for personal use.
- never misuse the setting's resources

To protect themselves from bribery, employees must ensure that they:

- comply with the pre-school's 08.22 Anti-bribery policy
- comply with all applicable bribery and corruption laws
- do not accept gifts that will place them under obligation
- do not offer, promise, give, request, agree to receive, or accept any bribes, in the course of their employment, when conducting pre-school business or when representing the pre-school in any capacity
- report any suspicious conduct that may amount to a bribe being offered, promised, given, requested or accepted (either involving them or another employee or person acting for, or on behalf of, the pre-school) immediately to manager/deputy or trustees.

Personal relationships at work

Any employee who is involved in a close personal relationship with a colleague, contractor, client, customer or supplier must not allow that relationship to influence their conduct while at work.

Any employee who embarks on or is in a close personal relationship with a client, customer, contractor or supplier, or a colleague working in the same area, must declare the relationship to the manager. This also applies if the relationship is between a manager and an employee whom they supervise; the relationship should be declared to the trustees. The information declared will be recorded on the personal files of both employees and treated in strict confidence.

Working with sensitive information

The organisation expects all staff to adhere to the organisational policy on data protection and confidentiality and all relevant legal and statutory requirements.

Working within the law

Unlawful or criminal behaviour at, or even outside of, work might result in loss of trust and confidence in an employee or the organisation.

Therefore, staff must ensure that they:

- uphold the law at work
- never break a law away from work which could damage confidence in them or the pre-school or which makes them unsuitable for the work they do. This includes, for example:
 - i submitting false or fraudulent claims to public bodies
 - ii crimes of dishonesty which render the employee unfit to hold a position of trust
 - iii crimes involving the taking, possession, buying, selling or production of unlawful (i.e. un-prescribed) or not over the counter drugs
- advise their manager of any incident which leads to a social services investigation, police investigation, caution or criminal charge which is related to their employment (e.g. a child related offence, theft, fraud or disqualification. This is not an exhaustive list). If uncertain as to whether to report a police investigation, caution or criminal charge guidance must be sought from the manager.

Working with volunteers

Employees must ensure that they do not:

- canvass volunteers on employment related matters for which there are approved organisational procedures (for example, in matters of recruitment, discipline, unsatisfactory performance, terms and conditions of employment)

Managing contact with the media

Early Years Alliance and Little Doves Christian Pre-School expect staff to promote the policies and reputation of the pre-school. Contact with the press and media should always be made in consultation with the trustees. This protects individual employees from unwanted media attention and allows the pre-school to properly manage its reputation. Staff should not discuss organisational business with the press or media without seeking guidance from the trustees.

Employees must ensure that they:

- do not bring Early Years Alliance and Little Doves Christian Pre-School name into disrepute in any way
- refer enquiries from the press to the manager/trustees in the first instance
- report any irregularities, malpractice or illegal or fraudulent activity immediately
- never abuse this process by raising unfounded allegations maliciously. This will be viewed as a disciplinary matter

Gross misconduct

The pre-school will apply this Code of conduct consistently and fairly. Any breaches of this code could result in disciplinary action. Breaches known as gross misconduct would be serious enough to justify the pre-school dismissing staff for a first offence and without notice. Examples of gross misconduct are given below:

- serious failure to comply with the setting's safeguarding policies
- concealment of any serious matter which should be reported
- disclosure of any confidential information
- obtaining a job by lies or deception
- stealing from the organisation, members of staff, clients or service users
- falsification of expense claims or self-certification forms, whether or not for personal gain
- committing serious acts of discrimination, bullying or harassment
- threatening, fighting with or assaulting anyone
- seriously demeaning or offending the decency of others
- failing to declare any information that calls into question their suitability for the role they occupy
- risking injury or danger to themselves or others
- deliberate damage to or misuse of the organisation's property
- doing private work without permission which conflicts with the work of the pre-school or whilst on sick leave
- using, possessing or distributing illegal drugs
- breaching financial regulations and/or the pre-school's financial related policies and procedures
- breaking a law away from work which reflects badly on the organisation or which makes an employee unsuitable for the work they do
- obtaining money by fraud, for example, by falsifying timesheets
- submitting false or fraudulent claims to external bodies
- offering, promising, giving, requesting and agreeing to receive or accept any bribes, gifts or favours which will place individuals under an obligation
- failing to follow the organisations policies and procedures and/or regulatory requirements which results in people being placed at significant risk, significant wrong doing or malpractice
- sharing the pre-schools policies, procedures and any other form of actual or potential intellectual property with an external party
- gross negligence
- conduct that brings the pre-school's name into disrepute
- failing to comply with Government guidelines concerning a pandemic whether in or out of work.
- victimisation – subjecting a person to detriment because they have been involved (including reported or given evidence) with a discrimination, sexual harassment or other harassment complaint.

This is not a complete list as the circumstances of each case will be different.