



Staff Behaviour Policy

Code of conduct

Version Control

Version	Nature of Update	Author	Date
1.0	Original Issue	Penelope White	13/06/2021
1.1	Reviewed	Penelope White	01/09/2023

This policy aims to give all staff, volunteers and committee members strict guidelines in which to work for the benefit of other staff and the children at The Phoenix Kindergarten CIC.

Purpose, Scope and Principles

This code of conduct applies to all staff employed by the kindergarten, all volunteers, all staff, and committee members.

The Phoenix Kindergarten CIC can only be successful in providing children with an outstanding Steiner-Waldorf inspired education through the behaviour of its staff, volunteers and committee members, whether this behaviour is with children, colleagues or external agencies. Just as we want the children to be themselves, to follow their own path and act with integrity, we also want our colleagues to do the same. This is central to any Steiner-Waldorf setting. The work that teachers and other employees carry out must be done out of freedom and trust. Our actions must not only be derived from obligation, but also as free acts born from personal integrity and a commitment to the children. However, no organisation or culture can function without some basic agreed principles in place. This document aims to set out employees' legal obligations, together with some agreed minimum standards. It is hoped that all staff will find this useful.

Staff are role models and are therefore in a unique position of influence in terms of setting a good example to all children. As a member of our Kindergarten community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the setting. In some circumstances, this applies outside working hours and outside the Kindergarten premises.

Collegiate and Cooperative Working

Staff are expected to foster trust and professional working relationships by working collaboratively with each other. This includes active attendance and participation in meetings and, where full responsibility teachers are concerned, curriculum development and relevant mandate work.

Where decisions do not fall within the remit of one person, issues will need to be debated in an appropriate forum. Staff need to and should be able to express their positive and negative views during the decision-making process. However, no community can function and develop without its members making some personal sacrifices for the greater good of the Kindergarten and the principle of collegiate working. In this way, once a decision is reached, all staff therefore need to remain loyal

to and adhere to that decision, even if they represented the minority that opposed it.

It is important that wherever possible, we all use the right channels of communication, both to challenge each other and support each other. Policies must be agreed, and decisions reached in the appropriate meetings. Staff are expected to uphold policies and procedures, and raise any concerns about the life or running of the kindergarten in a responsible and appropriate way. To challenge colleagues' decisions, the right channel to use is the forum in which the policy or decision was originally agreed or the person who made the decision or wrote the policy. Telling parents or pupils that you do not support a school policy/decision and/or actively not adhering to agreed policies/decisions are both instances of actions which are unacceptable in that they may undermine colleagues or even bring the Kindergarten into disrepute.

There may be times when other commitments prevent us from supporting each other, but by and large staff are expected to support each other wherever possible by being flexible, covering colleagues' lessons/duties when they are off sick and taking on occasional additional work.

Where there are disagreements or difficult relationships between people at work, staff are expected to talk to each other informally and professionally to try to resolve the differences, using a colleague as mediator if appropriate. Whilst this is not always possible (e.g., where serious allegations are made or in instances of bullying), it is anticipated that the staff grievance procedure will be used once informal steps have failed to help matters.

Setting an Example

Kindergarten staff and volunteers set examples of behaviour which can be copied by children. Imitation features heavily within Steiner-Waldorf education. All Phoenix Kindergarten staff are therefore expected to use appropriate language and behaviour which they would want to be imitated.

Conduct Outside Work

As a Kindergarten that is proud of its ethos and standing in the community, we take pride in our reputation and expect staff to avoid any actions that may damage the reputation of the Kindergarten, employees' own reputations or the reputation of other members of the Kindergarten community. Criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and acts of gross misconduct.

Staff should exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Inappropriate use of social network sites may bring staff and the community into disrepute.

Staff may undertake work outside Kindergarten, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the Kindergarten nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

Safeguarding the Children (Pupils)

All staff have a duty to safeguard children from: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.

This duty includes reporting concerns about a pupil to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection as highlighted in the Safeguarding policy. Staff are obliged to read the Kindergarten's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Policy and must be familiar with these documents. Staff are expected to take utmost reasonable care of children under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

If a staff member is concerned that a correct safeguarding procedure is not followed then any person can make a referral; please see Safeguarding policy for further information.

Working alone with a child should be avoided if possible. However, it is recognised that this is not always possible. In these instances, you should be seated near an open door, within the line of sight of those walking past the door. It is essential that the environment helps the pupil feel safe and that the potential for allegations is minimised.

Confidentiality

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the child. All issues discussed at staff meetings are confidential and should not be discussed with others.

Safeguarding investigations should be carried out by one person and staff should only discuss these issues with pupils with permission from the Designated Person or Investigator.

Staff have an obligation to share with the Kindergarten's Designated Person any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a child. Staff must never promise a child that they will not act on information that they are told by the child.

As a Steiner-Waldorf inspired setting, we strive to establish a strong community with strong moral values among our staff and pupils. Respect for people from all walks of life is therefore essential, regardless of their age, race, sexuality, gender, marital status, religion, beliefs, or transgender status. We also aim to help children to understand that we live in a multi-cultural society. Staff must support and comply with policies relating to equal opportunity, British values, inclusion, access, and bullying, and must help create a fair and inclusive Kindergarten environment. See also our Anti-Radicalisation policy.

Substance Abuse, Medication on Site and Prescriptive Medication

All staff must understand that whilst caring for the children at the Kindergarten that they must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substances. If a member of staff is given prescriptive medication, they must ask the GP or person dispensing the medication to ensure that this medication does not impair their ability to look after the children in their care.

If impairment would be the case, then the manager of the Kindergarten (Chair of Trustees) must duly be informed. Failure to do so is considered gross negligence.

Staff must understand that any medication brought into Kindergarten must be securely locked away from the reach of children.

Touch, Behaviour and Physical Contact with Pupils

Staff recognise the value that appropriate touch has for the children in our care and we will provide physical comfort or consolation to a child who expresses a need for such.

We will not touch a child in a potentially sexually sensitive area unless the child has incurred injury that necessitates immediate medical attention and contact in that way. In such circumstances, we will, as adults, make every effort to ensure that another adult as witness is present to protect ourselves and the child.

We will not touch a child who in any way expresses that they do not wish to be touched, unless in the extreme case of needing to restrain a child who is in danger to themselves or others.

Any form of physical punishment is unlawful in Kindergarten. This also applies to any form of physical response to misbehavior, with the exception noted in the Physical Restraint policy (with Behaviour policy).

The Use of Any Device That Can Take a Photo

The Phoenix Kindergarten CIC aims to keep all children within its care safe. This includes raising awareness of potential danger through the taking of, and /or distributing of, photographs or moving images.

At no point can a mobile phone be taken into the early years setting. Phones must be securely locked away. They must not be taken out and used in the setting.

Any visitors to the setting must also observe the same policy. This includes parents, prospective parents and contractors. Any staff member who sees a person using a phone must immediately ask them to stop and leave the setting.

To clarify, the following rules do apply:

- If a member of staff needs to make a private call, they will inform the other member of staff present and an appropriate space will be found to make the call.
- They will not be used at any other time unless an emergency occurs.
- No images of children will be taken on personal image recording devices at any time. This is to ensure safeguarding of children and staff.
- Camera phones/tablets/laptops/cameras are not allowed into the Kindergarten under any circumstances.
- No mobile camera phones to be used near children under any circumstances.
- The Kindergarten has a camera. All pictures taken on this will be removed by office staff and the memory card wiped clean. Any photo used is subject to consent given by parents; a consent form to this purpose will be signed by each family.

First Aid and Caring For Pupils with Particular Problems

Staff who must administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that other children or another adult are present if they are in any doubt as to whether necessary physical contact could be misconstrued.

Wherever possible, staff who must help children with toileting difficulties should be accompanied by another adult, and pupils should, wherever possible, be encouraged to change themselves. It is accepted that there will be some situations where pupils will present problems for staff and the emphasis must therefore be on what is reasonable in all the circumstances.

In situations where regular physical assistance is necessary it is advisable that parents and staff formally acknowledge this in writing.

Discussions with Pupils / Comments by Teachers

Systematic use of insensitive, disparaging, or sarcastic comments is also unacceptable.

Relationships and Attitudes

All staff should understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with children. Intimate relationships between a member of staff and a pupil are regarded in law as a breach of trust. It is a criminal offence for a teacher or other persons who work with children to breach this trust, punishable on conviction by a fine and/or a term of imprisonment of currently up to 5 years. This legislation includes all children under the age of 18.

Reporting Incidents

Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued he/she should discuss the matter with one of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

DSL for the school is Penelope White

Reminder: All concerns over the well-being of a pupil or concerning any child protection type issue should be addressed in confidence to the DSL as soon as possible. See the Safeguarding Policy for details of procedures to be followed.

Health and Safety

All staff, council members and volunteers are obliged to familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety policy and adhere to it.

Disciplinary Action, Misconduct, and Convictions

All staff need to recognise that failure to meet the standards of behaviour and conduct within the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

As with all environments where children or vulnerable adults are present, all staff, volunteers and committee members of The Phoenix Kindergarten CIC are obliged to notify the Kindergarten without delay if they are convicted of a criminal offence, if proceedings are brought against them or a formal accusation is made of a criminal offence.

It should also be noted that employers must notify the relevant authority when teachers are dismissed or cease employment for reasons of misconduct or incompetence, or where they resign in circumstances where dismissal was a possibility. Where employers judge misconduct to involve a risk of harm to children and young people, they are required to refer cases to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). Under the provisions of Home Office Circular 45/86, teaching is a 'notifiable' occupation. This means that the police report any conviction or caution of a teacher to the DBS. Offences involving a risk of harm to children, or to vulnerable adults, are considered by the ISA.