

## Code of conduct

### Working for Watcombe Childrens Centre Nursery

This Code of conduct sets out the setting'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 setting has of its staff

This code is binding on all setting 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 their line manager.

### Applying for a job with Watcombe Childrens Centre Nursery

The setting 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.

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
- using foul language and expletives
- using social media, blogs or other online platform inappropriately

Employees must not:

- consume any alcohol whilst at work
- consume significant levels of alcohol prior to working hours sufficient to affect their work performance, conduct or contact with the client group and colleagues
- be found under the influence of or found to be distributing illegal drugs or drugs known to induce a legal high; this will be subject to disciplinary action, potentially resulting in dismissal
- 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

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:

- adhere to the setting'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 setting
- are flexible and adaptable with respect to their role

## **Employee relations**

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

All employees are expected to:

- co-operate with managers, directors and not deceive, abuse or undermine management
- carry out proper instructions
- fill in accurately and honestly any document, form or record requested by a manager for work
- never destroy, damage, alter or falsify any such document or record

## **Managing employees**

The setting expects managers to provide staff with direction, positive motivation and an appraisal meeting in line with the current policy.

Managers must ensure that they:

- 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 setting's policies and procedures
- provide for employees a working environment which is safe and free from any form of unfair discrimination, bullying or harassment.

Managers are required to undertake induction, probation and supervision meetings in line with the setting's policies and procedures. Any material deviation from these policies and procedures will normally result in disciplinary action being taken. If managers are unable to follow these policies and procedures then they must immediately contact the [owners/trustees/directors].

### **Working practice**

The setting 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:

- follow safety codes
- wear any safety clothing the organisation provides for work
- report any accidents or incidents
- attend any medical examination as required
- never risk injury or danger to themselves or others
- 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

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 setting. 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 their line manager any leave or time off that is required
- tell their line manager if they are not able to attend work for any reason

### **Working honestly**

The setting 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 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
- 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 setting's property and equipment - taking care not to lose or damage it
- never do private work when they should be at work for the setting or are on sick leave. Employees must have permission from their 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 with the to benefit themselves, their family, friends or any outside organisation
- only use the setting's telephones to make essential personal phone calls as agreed by line management and pay for all personal phone calls, unless authorised by their manager.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Whilst employed by the setting, 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 setting expects staff to learn from and use policies, procedures and intellectual property (i.e. Trademarks and Copyright) in a way to help the setting 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 setting'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 setting 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 setting's competitors
- get permission in advance to use setting's equipment for personal use

Employees must ensure that they:

- 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 setting business or when representing the setting 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 setting) immediately to manager or [owner/trustees/directors].

## **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 his/her 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 his/her manager. This also applies if the relationship is between a manager and an employee whom he/she supervises; the relationship should be declared to the directors. 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 setting 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 line 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**

The charity expects staff to promote the policies and reputation of the setting. Contact with the press and media should always be made in consultation with the directors. This protects individual employees from unwanted media attention and allows the setting to properly manage its reputation. Staff should not discuss organisational business with the press or media without seeking guidance from the Directors.

Employees must ensure that they:

- do not bring the company into disrepute in any way
- refer enquiries from the press to the directors 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 setting 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 setting dismissing staff for a first offence and without notice. Examples of gross misconduct are given below:

- 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 setting or whilst on sick leave
- using, possessing or distributing illegal drugs
- breaching financial regulations and/or the setting'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 settings policies, procedures and any other form of actual or potential intellectual property with an external party
- gross negligence
- conduct that brings the setting's name into disrepute

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