

Staff Conduct Policy

Plume Avenue Nursery believes that it is essential for standards of conduct at work to be maintained to ensure delivery of quality services and also to protect the well being of all its staff and children. The following policy will make sure that all staff are aware of the standards set by Plume Avenue Nursery.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish, and encourage all staff to achieve, high standards of conduct at work and to help provide a fair and consistent way of dealing with alleged failures to observe them.

- All staff in the Nursery are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public. Staff should conduct themselves with integrity, impartiality and honesty. Breaches of conduct and personal behaviour will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.
- All Staff in the Nursery have an absolute duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in the Nursery, and to take appropriate action where they consider that a child may be at risk of suffering harm.

Scope

The policy applies to all Staff and temporary/casual workers of the Nursery including volunteers.

Equal Opportunities

All Staff are entitled to fair treatment by others and to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they are expected to treat others in this way.

Other Supporting Policies

To assist the Nursery the following policies exist in conjunction with the Code of Conduct Policy:

- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Staffing and Employment Policy

Confidentiality

- Refer to our Confidentiality Policy

Disclosure of personal information relating to staff/children/public

Staff have access to personal information relating to other staff, pupils and other members of the public. All Staff must treat this information in a discreet and confidential manner (the Data Protection Act 1998) and adhere to the following guidelines.

- Written records and correspondence should be kept securely at all times.
- Information relating to staff/children/public must not be disclosed either orally or in writing to unauthorised persons.
- Information relating to staff/children/public must not be given over the telephone unless the caller has given details of their right to ask for such information. Staff should check on the caller's right to information by obtaining their telephone number and calling back to check their identity or by asking for a written request for information.
- Confidential matters relating to staff/children/public should not be discussed in areas where they may be heard by passers-by, i.e. corridors, reception, lifts, etc.
- Any breach of confidentiality may be regarded as misconduct and be subject to disciplinary action, see the disciplinary policy.

As a general rule staff should not make statements or write letters to the media.

If in doubt they should refer such matters to the Proprietor or Nursery Manager.



Signed : *Steve Catley*

Date : Reviewed June 2024

- Page 1 of 5 -

Staff Conduct Policy
© Plume Avenue Nursery

Policy ID : 1.2.7

Relationships

Staff should always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within the community. Staff are not to provide babysitting or child minding services to families of children who are in the setting out of hours without specific authorisation from either the proprietor or manager of the setting.

Appointment and Management of Staff

See Staffing and Employment Policy

Whistle Blowing

See Whistleblowing Policy

Personal behaviour

The Nursery believes in treating all staff with respect and trust in a mature, respectful and considerate manner and expects the same approach from staff. The Nursery expects employees to respect the Nursery / Church's property, other staff and their property, suppliers and the public at all times.

Staff should also demonstrate the characteristics they are trying to inspire in the children. Failure to observe the standards of behaviour expected breaks the bond of trust that is fundamental to the Nursery/staff relationship and may lead to disciplinary action.

If a member of staff is found to be in breach of the Staffing and Employment Policy due to gross misconduct, he or she may face dismissal.

Absence from work

Our staff take their holiday breaks when the setting is closed, Where staff may need to take time off for any reason other than sick leave or training, this is agreed with the manager with sufficient notice. Failure to notify absence is unauthorised absence.

Timekeeping & responsibilities

Plume Avenue Nursery expect that all staff arrive and depart from the setting at the agreed times, ensuring that all necessary jobs are complete before they leave and not expecting others to complete them - tidying up at the end of the day is everyone's responsibility.

Staff must inform the Manager/Deputy of their whereabouts and expected time of return when they are out of the Nursery.

Communication and Language

Staff must ensure that they use language which is appropriate in a professional Nursery setting and are expected to set a good example to all our children in the way they speak.

We expect staff to be sensitive to the children in our care and to speak to them in a way which is respectful and nurturing. Shouting and screaming at children is not acceptable. Any written communication with parents/carers needs to be checked for errors by the management team before being sent out.

Negligence

Negligence arises from failure by the staff to exercise reasonable care in his or her work. Staff must not cause loss or damage through carelessness, negligence, a reckless act or breach of instructions. It is only a disciplinary offence if the individual is considered to be personally responsible.

Refusal to obey a reasonable instruction

It is the responsibility of all staff to carry out reasonable instructions. In those circumstances where a member of staff refuses to obey a reasonable instruction, it will be necessary to investigate the situation and, depending on the outcome of an investigation, it may result in disciplinary action.



Signed : *Steve Catley*

Date : Reviewed June 2024

- Page 2 of 5-

Staff Conduct Policy
Plume Avenue Nursery

Policy ID : 1.2.7

Social behaviour

Staff should be aware of the following expected standards of behaviour when attending work related events in and outside of work time where attendance could be seen as representing the Nursery:

- The Staff Code of Conduct, Staffing and employment policies will still apply e.g. regarding drug/alcohol abuse, harassment and discrimination.
- Consideration and respect for others.
- Those in a position of management/supervision should not behave in any way that could undermine their position.
- The Nursery should always be seen in a favourable way by the public.

Social Media:

When using social media that staff, family or friends behave respectfully and appropriately not to bring the nursery, their colleagues or themselves into disrepute with inappropriate images, language or comments.

Alcohol/drugs

Staff must ensure that they are not unfit for duty as a result of the effects of alcohol or drugs. Staff should be aware of the lasting effects of alcohol and drugs, both prescription and illegal, and ensure that any consumption of these substances does not impair their ability to discharge their duties.

If a member of staff is deemed to be under the influence by management they will be requested to leave the setting and will receive a written warning.

Any prescription medication needs to be stored securely and safely out of reach of children.

Smoking

See No Smoking Policy

Health and Safety

Employees have a duty to familiarise themselves with all the safety regulations that apply to their job and the area in which they work. Refer to Health and Safety Policy.

Fraud and Corruption

A member of staff who commits a fraudulent act is liable to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal and possible criminal prosecution, even for a first offence. Fraud is defined as any manipulation of an accounting system or supply system to enable public money or material to be misappropriated.

Staff involved in the investigation of alleged fraud may be required to sign an additional code of conduct relating to their specific duties.

Reporting of Arrests, Prosecutions, etc.

Staff must report to their manager details of any arrest or criminal conviction or caution made against them by the Police (except for minor traffic offences, i.e. where they do not mean imprisonment or suspension of his or her driving licence), where the offence is also a breach of discipline and/or may have a direct impact on the employee's job, or where it calls into question their suitability to work with children.

Discrimination

It is the Nursery's policy that all current and prospective members of staff will have equal opportunity for employment, promotion and training on the basis of relevant ability, qualifications and merit.

Staff must ensure that they do not unfairly discriminate on the grounds of gender, race colour, marital status, national or ethnic origin, nationality, disability, sexuality, age or religion.

All job applicants and workers are treated equally and the Nursery are willing to make reasonable adjustments where appropriate for disabled applicants and workers.



Signed : *Steve Catley*

Date : Reviewed June 2024

- Page 3 of 5 -

Staff Conduct Policy
Plume Avenue Nursery

Policy ID : 1.2.7

Harassment/bullying

The Nursery seeks to provide an environment for all members of staff, contractors and temporary workers free from harassment, bullying intimidation and victimisation.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who is found to have committed a deliberate or unlawful act of discrimination, sexual or racial harassment or bullying. See the Equality and Diversity Policy.

Dress and Appearance

Staff should ensure they are dressed appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Suitable footwear must be worn at all times. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate may be asked to leave the setting and change.

Alcohol and Drugs Misuse

The early identification of an alcohol or drug problem and taking appropriate action, will minimise the effect of the problem on the Nursery and other members of staff and may also help reduce any stress experience by the individual.

It may be very difficult for people to admit they have a problem. There may well be a feeling of shame or fear of reprisals, particularly if they are taking illegal drugs.

There is no single symptom of an alcohol or drug problem. The presence of any or some of the following may indicate one (unless the member of staff is suffering from an undisclosed illness/disability):

- **Absenteeism**
 - Excessive sick leave, frequent and unexplained absences and lateness.
 - Frequent Monday and/or Friday absences
 - Excessive lateness, especially on Monday
 - Leaving work early
 - Frequent visits to the toilet.
 - Unexplained absence from post
- **High rate of accidents**
 - Frequent accidents at work resulting in injury and/or damage to equipment.
 - Accidents away from work
- **Poor work performance**
 - Difficulty in concentrating
 - Taking longer than usual to do tasks
 - Having an erratic work pattern
 - Difficulty in recalling conversations, instructions or details
 - Sticking to routine tasks and avoiding complex ones.
 - Frequent mistakes
 - Improbable excuses for poor work
 - Telling lies about performance
 - Bad decision making
 - Reluctance to accept responsibility
- **Change in personality and behaviour**
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Irritability
 - Lethargy
 - Mood swings
 - A tendency to blame others
 - Over-sensitivity to criticism
 - Problems relating to colleagues
 - Avoiding company
 - Changes in attitude to authority
 - Smelling of alcohol or other substances (cannabis / weed) at work
 - Intoxicated at work (slurred speech, unsteadiness)



Signed : *Steve Catley*

Date : Reviewed June 2024

- Page 4 of 5-

Staff Conduct Policy
© Plume Avenue Nursery

Policy ID : 1.2.7

- Bloodshot eyes
- Shaky hands
- Poor personal hygiene and unkempt appearance
- Frequent borrowing of money
- Loss of driving licence through drink driving

The above list is only a guideline. The management team must investigate and not make assumptions as similar symptoms may occur in some illnesses. When in doubt the management team will contact the Essex Early Years Education Partners for advice.

The management team will encourage employees to seek help as soon as a problem is identified. Consideration will need to be made about the most appropriate action. To help bring any issues into the open a confidential meeting should be arranged with the individual (he/she may be accompanied by either a friend or representative).

The meeting will need to be handled sensitively and focus on the wish to improve the employee's performance. The purpose should be to encourage the member of staff to admit there is a problem and explore the cause or reason for the problem.

It is important to establish whether any aspect of the job or stress has made the member of staff turn to drugs or alcohol.

It should be emphasised that the member of staff should be encouraged to seek help from a GP or a specialist agency.

Members of staff with a drink or drugs problem should have the same rights to confidentiality and support as they would if they had any other medical condition.

The consequences of continual poor performance need to be underlined if an employee is not ready to admit or refuses to recognise there is a problem.

It is important to try and be supportive for as long as possible, however, where there are risks relating to health and safety action, suspending the employee may be necessary in the short term.

Where an employee continually fails to reach adequate performance levels and fails to accept help and/or improve then it may result in dismissal.



Signed : *Steve Catley*

Date : Reviewed June 2024

- Page 5 of 5 -

Staff Conduct Policy
® Plume Avenue Nursery

Policy ID : 1.2.7