Barnett Wood Pre-School

Staff Behaviour Policy

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Last Updated: 10th October 2016

Introduction

This policy sets out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all staff at Barnett Wood Pre-School. The principles underlying the guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.

School staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for children in their care. Therefore, staff must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all children within the setting.

Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the Pre-School, both inside and outside working hours and work setting.
This policy applies to all staff and volunteers in the school regardless of their position, role or responsibility. References to ‘staff’ throughout the policy relate to all of the following groups:

- All members of staff including teaching and support staff
- Volunteers, including governors
- Casual workers
- Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly
- Student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices.

Barnett Wood Pre-School requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with this policy.

Breach or failure to observe this policy will result in action being taken under the school disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.

This code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the pupils/students and the school.

This policy is updated annually and members of staff are expected to re-read the policy once it has been updated.

Parents/carers of children at the Pre-School are made aware that all the Pre-School’s policies are available for them to read on the Pre-School’s website and that a hard copy is also available at the setting. Parents/carers are informed via the Pre-School newsletter when policies have been updated.

Policy

Professional Behaviour and Conduct

Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. Barnett Wood Pre-School expects staff to treat each other, children, parents/carers and the wider community with dignity and respect at all times.

Staff must act in accordance with their duty of care to pupils and ensure that the safety and welfare of pupils are accorded the highest priority.

Staff should show fairness in their treatment of children and avoid behaviours such as embarrassing or humiliating children, making jokes at the expense of children, discriminating against or favouring children and sarcasm.
Staff must have regard for the ethos and values of the school and must not do or say anything which may bring the school or governing body into disrepute. Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school. Staff should act in accordance with the school’s policies and procedures at all times.

**Dress and Appearance**

Barnett Wood Pre-School recognise that dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, all staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and that promotes a professional image.

Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and in a manner that is absent from political or contentious slogans.

Staff should dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Tattoos and body art should be covered while staff are in school. Discreet earrings are acceptable but all other body piercings should be removed while on school premises.

**Smoking, alcohol and other substances**

Barnett Wood Pre-School is a non-smoking site. Staff must not smoke on school premises or outside school gates. Any member of staff wishing to smoke must leave the school grounds.

Staff must not smoke whilst working with or supervising children offsite.

Staff must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs or other illegal substances on or near the Pre-School premises.

**Relationships with Children**

Staff must maintain professional boundaries with children appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.

Staff should be mindful of section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2001.

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Section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003 provides that it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over (e.g. teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. A situation where a person is in a position of trust could arise where the child is in full-time education and the person looks after children under 18 in the same establishment as the child, even if s/he does not teach the child.
Staff must not make sexual remarks to children, discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, children.

Staff should also refrain from following the Twitter or other similar social media accounts of children’s parents. Staff must read the school’s e-safety policy carefully and follow all advice and guidance contained within it.

**Gifts/Hospitality**

Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift/offer of hospitality that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. However, there may be occasions where pupils/students or parents wish to give a small token of appreciation to staff, for example at religious festivities or at the end of the year.

It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or to suggest to pupils/students that gifts are appropriate or desired. Money must not be accepted as a gift. If staff are unsure whether to accept a gift they should contact the manager.

Personal gifts must not be given by staff to children.

**Physical Contact with Children**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A ‘no touch’ approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with children it should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Where feasible, staff should seek the child’s permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child’s reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Staff should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.

Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. Staff should never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent. Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Staff must not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with children.
Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a child exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Physical contact must never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or represent a misuse of authority.

If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and/or the manager, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.

Staff should refer to Barnett Wood Pre-School's Intimate Care Policy.

**Child in distress**

There may be occasions when a child is in distress and in need of comfort as a reassurance. This may include age appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

**One to one situations**

Staff working individually with children should be aware of the potential vulnerability of children and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the children and to themselves.

Individual work with children should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

**E-Safety**

Staff should follow Barnett Wood Pre-School's E-Safety policy at all times

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute. Staff should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have.

Staff should remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups.

Staff should not make contact with children's family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow children's family member's account on any social media platform.
However, Barnett Wood Pre-School acknowledges that staff who are also parents may wish to make contact with other parents, who are friends, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with children’s family members via social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.

Mobile phones and personally-owned devices may not be used during session times (with the exception of the management/admin staff needing access codes to certain websites ie. Free Entitlement Portal). Mobile phones and devices should be kept in the lockers provided. Members of staff are permitted to access/use their mobile phones during designated breaks in the kitchen area (or other areas where children are not present). Should a member of staff need to have access to their mobile phone during the session (due to family circumstances), they must request permission from the manager/session leader and the phone must be kept in the Pre-School office, and accessed there.

Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. Barnett Wood Pre-School accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

Photography, video and images of children

Photographs/stills or video footage of pupils/students should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be stored securely and only on school equipment.

Confidentiality

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about children, their parents/carers or their siblings. Staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil/student on a need to know basis.

Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a child or her/his family for their own, or others’ advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil/student.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a child is bullied by another child, this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate Pre-School procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the child’s parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except by a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.

Staff have a statutory obligation to share with Barnett Wood Pre-School’s Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a child or that might suggest a child is in need or at risk
of significant harm. Staff should pass on information without delay in accordance with Barnett Wood Pre-School's safeguarding policy and procedures and this should be recorded. Staff must never promise a child that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told by the child.

Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the senior leadership team and only approved staff and Directors should communicate to the media about the Pre-School.

Further information is provided in the setting’s Confidentiality Policy

**Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, without fear of repercussion.

All school staff have a duty to report any behaviour by a colleague which raises concern. Staff should refer to Barnett Wood Pre-School's whistleblowing policy for further guidance. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Further information is provided in the setting’s Whistleblowing Policy.
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Signed on behalf of the Pre-School:

Director __________________________ Date ________________
**Members of Staff who have read and understood this policy:**

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