



Ladybirds Preschool code of conduct for staff and volunteer's policy

Introduction:

This code of conduct applies to you if you are an employee of Ladybirds Preschool, whether employed on a permanent, temporary, or voluntary basis. All employees must follow this code; deliberate breaches of the code may be treated as a disciplinary offence. The code of conduct outlines the general obligations, safeguarding and staff / family/ child relationships. As with all pre-school policies and procedures, we ask that staff use their common sense and act reasonably within the conditions provided in this document.

All actions concerning children, young people as well as staff and parents must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration.

Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the children and young people in their charge as well as staff and parents must be above reproach.

This code of conduct is not intended to detract from, the enhancing experience children gain from positive relationships with staff. More importantly, it is intended to assist staff by offering guidance on conduct.

The purpose of this code of conduct for Ladybirds preschool and volunteers:

- To identify boundaries and responsibilities
- To agree communication and accountability
- To explain what is expected of you as an employee.
- To ensure staff demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our children to do the same.
- To ensure that staff avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- To help staff understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

This policy/ code of conduct should also be read in conjunction with.

- Your job description
- Your contract of employment
- The setting grievance procedure, disciplinary procedures, and complaint procedures
- All setting policies and procedures



Acceptable use of technologies, communications, and social media

Staff must not use any Ladybird provided ICT services for copying, storing, sending, or retrieving unacceptable material. "Unacceptable material" includes any documents, messages, information, graphics, or other electronic data that:

- Breach UK legislation
- Contravene the setting's Equality Policy.
- Contain offensive, pornographic, or obscene language or material.
- Plan, promote, incite, or facilitate any illegal or terrorist activities.
- Contain defamatory or slanderous language or material.
- Denigrate, insult, or ridicule another person.
- Adversely comment on integrity, personality, honesty, character, intelligence, methods, or motives of another person unless it is factual response to a formal reference request.
- Provide or facilitate the use of computer hacking tools or virus toolkits.
- Unauthorised data, including photographs of the setting, its children, staff or parents.

Staff must not use the internet, external electronic mail, external telephone, fax or other form of electronic communication to transmit sensitive, subversive information, including.

- Opinions that do not reflect the policies of the preschool.
- Information that could damage the Preschool's reputation and standing in the community.

(see mobile phone policy and social media policy)

Social networking sites

Staff must be extremely careful with their social media use. This covers not only Facebook type applications but also messaging platforms etc. Except for close family (which should be notified to the manager) staff must not use social media to contact any families at Ladybirds nor respond to any requests from families at Ladybirds to do so. Under no circumstances, must staff use social media to discuss any aspect of the pre-school setting / terms and conditions and staff must never upload any photos, comments or information about the setting, or any persons linked with it.



Social contact

All staff are expected to uphold professional boundaries. Staff have a duty to approve any planned social contact with children and their families with their manager. Confidentiality of employment must be adhered to and respected during social contact. In summary staff should:

- Ensure all contact with existing children or their parents is of a professional and non-pre-school related nature.
- Consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work.

Policies and procedures.

The pre-school has a range of policies and procedures which apply to all staff. These are available from the office and online via the Ladybirds website. All staff must read the policies and comply with their terms. The failure of any staff member to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken against them.

Attendance, timekeeping, and appointments

Staff are required to comply with the rules relating to notification of absence set out in their contract of employment. Staff are required to arrive at work promptly and be ready to start work at their contracted starting times. Staff are required to remain at work until their contracted finishing times.

All staff must obtain management authorisation if for any reason, they wish to arrive later or leave earlier than their agreed normal start and finish times. Persistent poor timekeeping will result in disciplinary action. When can employees attend appointments? We appreciate that it is sometimes difficult to make appointments such as doctors or dentists at a time that is convenient for both the employees and the setting. In most cases, Ladybirds requires you to make appointments in your own time, however, in cases where this is not possible, appointments must be scheduled at the beginning or the end of a shift and agreed with your manager.

Professional development

Ladybirds' pre-school is fully committed to your development and we will advise on other training courses that might be relevant. Training is also provided at staff meetings and other in-house sessions.

It is expected that a childcare practitioner will continually update their knowledge and skills through a life-long learning approach or continuous professional development and maintain appropriate records.

At all times, a childcare practitioner should not undertake an activity in which they do not feel competent or is outside their areas of practice and knowledge. Ladybirds acknowledges the strengths and limitations of a childcare practitioner's expertise and will ensure there is regular appraisal and assessment.



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There is mandatory training that all staff should undertake **details to be confirmed** Staff need to identify what is expected and ensure they attend these sessions. This will be discussed during your induction and as a continuous process while you are employed by the setting.

Alcohol, drug abuse, smoking and E-cigarettes.

The consumption of alcohol on the premises is strictly forbidden unless it is part of an agreed event authorised by management.

Any employee who is found consuming alcohol on the premises or is found to be intoxicated at work will face disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure.

Please be aware that even if you are not found to be intoxicated, coming into work suffering from the immediate aftereffects of alcohol may also impair your ability to perform your role to the required standards. A breach of this procedure is considered an act of gross misconduct.

The possession use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on the premises site is strictly forbidden. Any member of staff who is found to be under the influence of such drugs at work will face disciplinary action under the disciplinary procedure. A breach of this procedure is considered an act of gross misconduct.

Smoking is forbidden (including E-cigarettes) on the premises or in sight of the pre-school grounds. Any member of staff who is found smoking on the premises will face disciplinary action under the setting's disciplinary procedure.

If staff members do smoke hands must be washed, teeth cleaned, and clothes changed before attending to the care of any child.

Members of staff who wish to smoke before their shift commences or at break times, must ensure that they are not identifiable in their uniforms and are a reasonable distance from the building. Hands must be washed, teeth cleaned, and clothes changed before attending to the care of any child. Staff have a duty to ensure they do not smell of smoke at any time during working hours. Cigarettes matches and lighters must be kept securely away from children, Electronic cigarettes – although generally thought to be less harmful than smoking real cigarettes, electronic cigarettes still containing the additive chemical nicotine as well as other toxic substances. Consequently, for the purposes of this code of conduct, the smoking of substitute cigarettes is deemed to be the same as smoking the real thing. Therefore, please observe our no smoking rules.



Medication, health, safety, and hygiene

Staff must not be under the influence of any medication which may affect their ability to care for children. If a member of staff is prescribed medication by their doctor that may affect their ability to perform work, then this should be discussed with the setting manager.

Medication should be kept in the first aid safe and not left in bags or coats.

Ladybirds will act positively to minimise the incidence of all workplace risks as required by the Health and Safety Act 1974 and other associated legislation.

Through continuous improvement of standards, and comprehensive use of risk assessments we aim to systematically remove the causes of accidents / incidents and ill health. Staff must work as a team to minimise risk and use common sense methods to remove any potential risk.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff, contractors, and volunteers to share this commitment.

Staff will be provided with a health and safety induction when joining the preschool as well as on-going training as required.

All activities should be carried out with the highest regard for the health and safety of all staff, children, and visitors. Staff have a responsibility to carry out tasks in accordance with training received e.g., manual handling and to wear protective clothing provided where appropriate. (See health and safety policy).

Staff should be a role model to the children in terms of their own health and hygiene. Leading by example is the best way to teach good behaviours to children for example:

- Have a clean, neat and tidy appearance.
- Encourage children's awareness of physical development (exercise, diet, rest, challenges and risks)
- Show the importance of hydration (drink plenty of water)
- Use 'good manners' and clear purposeful language / communication.
- Show how keeping fit is important to the development of mind and body.
- Show children how to take positive risks safely.



Mobile phones and cameras

Members of staff must keep personal mobile phones in the school office. Personal mobile phones are not permitted in any spaces that are accessed by children. It is recognised that in certain situations it may be necessary for staff to have a mobile phone for the use of the setting e.g., on an outing. The use of a mobile phone must never detract from the quality of supervision and care of children.

Personal mobile phones or similar devices must not be used to take photographs of children or other adults. Members of staff must only use camera /1-pads provided by the setting to take photographs of children. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

Staff have a duty to ensure parents do not use their mobile phones to take photos in the setting.

- Advise management of any social contact they have with a child or parent with whom they work, which may give rise to concern.
- Understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified (parents becoming dependant)
- Staff must not engage in conduct outside of work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the pre-school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the pre-school.
- Criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct may be regarded as unacceptable.
- Be cautious when undertaking work outside pre-school, either paid or voluntary, such that it does not conflict with the interests of the pre-school or affect an individual's work performance. Management should be approached to discuss any potential conflicts and to seek appropriate agreement or approval. (Which will not be unreasonably withheld)

Confidentiality

Staff must guard against breaches of confidentiality by always protecting information from improper disclosure and follow all appropriate policies (please refer to confidentiality policy). Staff must only disclose information outside the immediate team if:

- It can be justified as being in the public interest (usually where disclosure is essential to protect the child or someone else from risk or significant harm). This is required to do so by law or by order of the court.
- There is an issue of safeguarding, and s/he must then always act in accordance with national and local procedures.
- In any case, management must be notified immediately of any such disclosure.



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Most staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential, this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate setting procedure. Incidents must not be discussed outside the preschool, including with the child's parent or carer.

Staff who intend to share information about a child's care, learning and development with an outside agency (i.e., additional childcare services used by the family / Health visitors) must seek prior permission from the child's parent and the setting manager.

Dress code and appearance

The Pre-school will provide appropriately branded T-shirts. Staff should wear sensible flat shoes. Staff should wear clothing which is.

- Comfortable
- Allows free movement and is appropriate to their role.
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment, or give rise to misunderstanding.
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans.
- Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive.

Staff should ensure hands and nails are kept clean and long hair is tied back. Jewellery must be kept to a minimum to avoid safety implications.

Accountability

Staff are accountable to the Pre-school for undertaking those activities that are associated with their job/role (please refer to your job description/ specifications). A member of staff must inform their immediate manager if they do not feel competent to undertake any activities and must request reasonable/ appropriate training. Staff have a duty to report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concerns (please see the whistle blowing policy).

A childcare practitioner has a duty to respect families by:

- Valuing their cultural diversity, opinions, and choices
- Being non-judgmental
- Planning contacts / appointments with the parent
- By listening and responding appropriately.
- By acknowledging her/ his own limitations
- Maintaining appropriate behaviour and activities between family and her / himself



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Staff have a responsibility to challenge any discriminatory remarks or behaviour against other staff members, visitors, children, and their families (please refer to the equalities and diversity policy).

Staff have a duty to notify the Preschool of any changes of personal details, change of address, telephone number, and relevant health issues. Staff must avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

Disclosure and barring service (DBS)

All staff have a duty to notify the Preschool of any circumstances which may affect their suitability to work with children. The Preschool Manager is responsible for ensuring all staff, including contractors, bank staff, students, and volunteers, are suitable to work with children.

Checks are carried out via enhanced Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) (CAPITA) clearance checks as well as other sources, such as employer references, identity checks and qualification checks, amongst others.

Where possible new staff will have the checks completed prior to starting employment. However, if there are delays in checks coming through, as a last resort, candidates may work in the pre-school before these checks are completed if they are supervised by registered and DBS checked staff at all times. Staff awaiting these checks will never:

- Be left unsupervised whilst caring for children.
- Take children for toilet visits unless supervised by registered staff.
- Change nappies.
- Be left alone in a room or outside with children.
- Administer medication.
- Take photographs of any children.
- Look at a child's learning and development log.
- Have access to children's personal details and records.

The Preschool requires each member of staff to subscribe to the government's DBS update service within 19 days of receiving their initial DBS certificate. If a member of staff does not subscribe to the update service, within the given timeframe, they will be responsible for the whole cost of a new DBS certificate (currently £68).



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Team and Partnership working

Staff are required to work co-operatively within teams and respect the skills, expertise, and contribution of colleagues. They are expected to treat others fairly and without discrimination. Staff must communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing. As required, they must share their knowledge, skills, and expertise with other team members in order to improve practice.

Staff must work with other members of the team to promote a care and learning environment that is conducive to safe and ethical practice. If the care environment deteriorates, the practitioner must report this to their line manager.

Babysitting

Staff and parents/carers are to make private arrangements regarding babysitting a child that attends Ladybirds Pre-School following the babysitting policy.

Outside commitments

Additional employment must not conflict with the setting's interests or impair employee's ability to carry out their role at this setting. Please bear in mind if you do have additional employment elsewhere, then you will need to declare which employer is the primary source of your income. This is necessary to avoid confusion over tax codes. The employee is responsible for managing their own tax affairs when they have multiple employments.

Vulnerable situations

As a key person, you must discuss intimate care routines with a child's parents. The settings safeguarding children and child protection policy must be always followed.

Employees should always encourage children to undertake self-care tasks independently, where developmentally appropriate.

Ensure employees understand the extent and limitations of their role in applying basic care and hygiene tasks for minor abrasions and understand where an injury might require more experienced intervention. Employees need to be vigilant of neglect or abuse caused outside the pre-school and to report any signs to the setting Manager.



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Employees must not be placed in situations which render them vulnerable. Where this is unavoidable, full, and appropriate risk assessments are conducted and agreed for lone working situations.

Employees must be prepared to report any actions of another individual they deem inappropriate to the setting management.

When one to one situation is unavoidable, employees must take precautions to reduce the vulnerability of both the child and the adult, for example, informing colleagues of the situation and leaving room doors open.

Whistleblowing

Whilst we expect all our colleagues, both internal and external, to be always professional and hold the welfare and safety of every child and colleague as their paramount objective, there may be occasions where this may not be happening. It is vital that all team members talk through any concerns they have with their line manager at the earliest opportunity to enable any problems to be ironed out as soon as they arise. If, in the course of your employment, you become aware of information which you reasonably believe tends to show one or more of the following, you **MUST** use the pre-school's disclosure procedure.

- That a criminal offence has been committed or is being committed or is likely to be committed.
- That a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which they are subject (e.g., The EYFS).
- That the health or safety of any individual has been, is being, or is likely to be, endangered.
- That the environment, has been, is being, or is likely to be, damaged.
- That information tending to show any of the above, is being, or is likely to be deliberately concealed.
- That you challenge discriminatory behaviour and report any incidents.

Where you reasonably believe one or more of the above circumstances listed above has occurred you should disclose this to your manager so that any appropriate action can be taken. If it is inappropriate to make such a disclosure to your manager (i.e., because it relates to your manager) you should speak to the trustees: Katy Atkins, Michelle Merryweather, Vikki Hart and Gerard O'Neill. Employees will suffer no detriment of any sort for making such a disclosure in accordance with this procedure, unless proved to be made with malicious intent. For further guidance in the use of the disclosure procedure, employees should speak in confidence to the pre-school manager. (Please see the whistleblowing policy).



Declarations and changes of circumstances

Employees are expected to declare all convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, and warnings that affect suitability. Employees are expected to declare, to the best of their knowledge, that nobody in their household (including family, lodgers, house-sharers, household employees) is disqualified from working with children.

A childcare practitioner has a duty to notify the pre-school manager of any changes of circumstance which may affect their suitability to work with children. A 6 monthly check will be performed by the pre-school for all staff.

Parents and carers

- Staff must always maintain a professional relationship with parents and carers.
- Each member of staff must recognise that parents and carers need feedback regarding their children and that this must be given in an open, honest and friendly manner. The relationship with parents and carers must not become overly familiar such that it clouds the impartiality of your judgement and action.
- Whilst there is always the possibility of a member of staff having a close relationship with a parent or carer outside the setting, we must avoid any conflict of interest or undue favouring to a child. Where such a relationship arises the member of staff should immediately inform the manager to discuss any actions to be taken.
- Where a member of staff finds that they have a prior close relationship to a child in the setting through such means as a family relationship or close friendship then the manager must be made aware of this immediately and may require the member of staff to change key person group to avoid any conflict of interest or risk undue favouring of the child.

OFSTED

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Summary

It is important that staff understand the setting policies, procedures, and protocols.

To enable staff to practise you must be appropriately trained and work in partnership with others.

Staff must maintain client confidentiality, and act accordingly with communications.

Staff have a duty of care to all parties associated with the setting.

Failure to comply with this code of conduct may lead to disciplinary action.

The setting will act with integrity, sensitivity and in a manner that will be deemed as reasonable in all its dealings with staff.

The code of conduct is deemed to have been accepted as soon as a member of staff commences employment.

Thank you for your co-operation and welcome any feedback from staff that will help us improve this code of conduct.

This policy was adopted by Ladybirds Pre School *(name of provider)*

On 18th March 2021 *(date)*

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory Gerard O'Neill

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) Trustee