



# Staff Code of Conduct Policy

## 1.0 Introduction

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- 1.1 This Policy describes the standards of conduct and behaviour expected from our staff, students, volunteers, visitors who undertake work and spend time in The Lenches Pre-school.

It is intended to help you by describing the standards expected of all persons caring for, educating and safeguarding all children at attend The Lenches Pre-school.

Please take time to read this policy and ensure your conduct meets these requirements. If you are at all, uncertain about what is expected, please seek further clarification from your manager or Chairperson so that you do not unwittingly contravene this Code or otherwise act against The Lenches Pre-school policies.

- 1.2 Contravening or failing to act within the spirit of the Code or behaving in a manner which could bring the good name of The Lenches Pre-school into disrepute, whether or not within the workplace or working time, might be seen as a breach of discipline and could lead to action being taken against you under the appropriate procedure.
- 1.3 While workers who are not employees of the Pre-school are expected to comply with the spirit of the Code, any action that may be taken in response to a breach will depend on the precise nature of their working relationship with the Provision.
- 1.4 This code relates to all staff, employees, Committee members and volunteers working for or at The Lenches Pre-school and therefore must be aware of and adhere to this policy.

## 2.0 Guiding Principles

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- 2.1 As a Pre-school employee, you should put the well-being, development and progress of children first. You should recognise that you are in a position to influence children through your slightest actions, comments or behaviour. As an Early Years practitioner, you are a Person of Trust and have a duty for the care, feelings, nurture, support, education and safeguarding of every child within the setting.

- 2.2 To the public you are a representative of the Pre-school. You are expected to maintain the highest standards of professional competence, knowledge, integrity, confidentiality, financial propriety and personal conduct. Contact with all members of the Pre-school, the committee, including parents and outside visitors, should be courteous, professional, confidential, polite, efficient and impartial to all groups and individuals. You must also familiarise yourself with and adhere to any rules or codes of conduct or policies relating to the Early Years Provision and role and you should comply with all reasonable requirements or instructions from the Manager and or the Chairperson. Early Years specific requirements are detailed below in the Policy.
- 2.3 It is not appropriate for you when working within your role as an employee to oppose the stated aims, objectives and policies of The Lenches Pre-school or to undermine the performance of its duties and responsibilities. It is important for all employees to present a unified image to the public.
- 2.4 You should ensure that your relationships with your fellow employees and children are always conducted in a professional and courteous manner; you should not censure other colleagues or criticise their work in the hearing of other colleagues or parents. It is not acceptable to use sarcasm or make jokes at the expense of staff and children or embarrass or humiliate others, or discriminate against or favour children.

As an Early Years Practitioner working with children, we would expect calm voices, eye level communications, children's level of engagement and a friendly and welcoming manner, leading children with care, demonstrating good role modelling of how we treat each other (This links to promoting British Values in the Workplace and Ofsted Teaching Requirements).

We would also expect effective and consistent strategies for children's expectations, boundaries and attention rather than adults raising unacceptable levels of tones and words.

- 2.5 It is not acceptable for you to publicly criticise or blame The Lenches Pre-school, colleagues or the Committee through any medium including internet 'blogs', websites or social networking tools such as Facebook or Twitter and you must be aware that the laws governing defamation, breach of copyright, etc. apply equally to on-line as to other forms of communications. Offensive, defamatory, discriminatory or otherwise inappropriate comments will not be tolerated and may constitute a disciplinary and/or criminal offence, as could the disclosure/publication of **any** confidential or personal information about the Pre-school, its staff, pupils or other members of the school community.
- 2.6 It is incumbent on you to ensure that you are aware of and comply with any relevant rules and instructions which pertain to your particular job, including the *Early Years Foundation Stage, Early Years Statutory Requirements, Keeping Children Safe in Education, working together to Safeguard Children, Positive Behavioural Management, Confidentiality, Whistleblowing, Inclusion etc.* The Code cannot cover every situation but will be subject to reasonable interpretation. Any disagreement involving the interpretation or application of the Code as it

applies to you should be discussed with your manager in the first instance. However, if you feel the Code is being applied unreasonably you may be able to seek redress through the Pre-school's Grievance Procedure.

### 3.0 Staff/Family Relationships

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- 3.1 You are expected to treat all children and families with dignity and fairness, building relationships rooted in mutual respect and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a person in a position of trust. You should comply with safe working practices, outlined in the guidance document "Safe Working Practice for Staff Working in Education Settings (September 2015)".
- 3.2 You must not communicate personally with Families via email, mobile phone or internet other than on Pre-school-related matters in line with The Pre-school communication platforms.
- 3.3 You must not discuss any Pre-school matters outside of our set communications with Families, this may result in breach of Confidentiality and Safeguarding Policy.

### 4.0 Personal Interests

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- 4.1 The interests of The Lenches Pre-school or the way you do your job must not be influenced by personal interests or those of relatives, friends or membership of external organisations or societies. There should be no grounds for suspicion that you are using your position with or knowledge of The Lenches Pre-school for personal gain or that you could be influenced by improper motives. If you belong to outside organisations, including voluntary organisations, there must be no conflict with your job or The Lenches Pre-school interests. You should advise your manager in writing about anything, which could give this impression.

### 5.0 Private work

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- 5.1 The Lenches Pre-school premises, equipment, working time or other resources must not be used to undertake private work.
- 5.2 The Lenches Pre-school needs to be aware if its employees undertaking private work or voluntary activities in their own time to ensure that there is no conflict of interests with the Pre-school and to meet its obligations under Health and Safety legislation. Therefore, to protect yourself and The Lenches Pre-school from potential criticism you should not put yourself in a position where there is an actual or perceived conflict of interest. You should be aware that outside work or activity, whether or not you receive payment, could reduce your

ability to safely and effectively carry out your employment with The Lenches Pre-school e.g. through tiredness, and would be considered unacceptable.

- 5.3 You must advise your Line Manager before engaging in any other work especially if it could reasonably be seen to conflict with your employment with the Pre-school or lead to misunderstanding or criticism. We ask employee to be open and honest so we can support and protect both parties from any concerns that may affect your suitability to work.
- 5.4 You must not undertake private work when on sick leave without the express knowledge and prior written approval of the manager and subject to appropriate medical advice, this includes the babysitting policy set in place.

## 6.0 Expressing concern about irregularities and tackling malpractice

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- 6.1 If you feel there is something seriously wrong at work, please tell an appropriate person as a 'voice of concern'. It might be, for example, the conduct of another employee, the way a contractor is behaving, a work practice, something that is endangering the safety of children or staff. You might be the first to notice it and your intervention could stop things getting worse. Employees are expected to adhere to the Whistleblowing Policy in any situation of concern
- 6.2 No matter how reticent you may feel, you should raise any serious concern e.g. a suspicion of fraud or corruption or reasonable belief that a child or adult's health, safety or well-being are in danger with your manager so that potentially serious problems or malpractice can be addressed without undue delay. If this is not appropriate, then you should contact either the Chairperson of the Committee. If you do raise a genuine concern in good faith all reasonable steps will be taken to respect your confidence and protect you from possible reprisals (see Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy).
- 6.3 The Lenches Pre-school take this issue very seriously and will investigate and address any problems genuinely raised. However, any frivolous, malicious or mischievous use of the Confidential Reporting Policy will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

## 7.0 Copyright

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- 7.1 You should be aware that 'intellectual property' such as software, ideas, documents, etc. created during your employment belongs to Lenches Pre-School. All files, materials, the media upon which they are located and all software programmes or packages which are utilised or developed solely for or in connection with your job remain the property of the school.

## 8.0 Confidentiality

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- 8.1 The Lenches Pre committed to open government and, in law, certain information must be made available to employees, committee, service users and the public. However, you must make sure you know whether information is 'public' or confidential and treat it accordingly.
- 8.2 You may sometimes acquire information at work which has not been made public or is confidential. Examples include information about a child or family, a colleague, information on tenders or costs, the proceedings of confidential meetings.
- 8.3 You must ensure that sensitive and/or confidential information is properly secured and safeguarded at all times especially if being transported in paper or electronic formats. Particular care must be taken with information stored on portable electronic media such as laptops and memory devices, which are often targeted for theft due to their high intrinsic value.
- 8.4 Confidential information which comes into your possession must not be used for personal benefit or divulged to other parties except in the proper course of duty, for example to other professionals working with the same child. If you have any doubt whether or not disclosure is appropriate, you must check with your Manager, DSL or Chair Person before releasing confidential information.
- 8.5 Some information can be extremely valuable in business and commerce and its publication loss or misuse could seriously disadvantage the Lenches Pre-school and its employees. Therefore, it is important that you do not, deliberately or inadvertently, pass on information, including software, during or after your employment with the Pre-school, to anyone who has no right to receive it. You must not discuss, disclose, publicise or use such information for your own or anyone else's personal interest or advantage.
- 8.6 You must decline any approaches or offers made asking for information, which could be detrimental to, or help others to gain a contract, grant or any other advantage from the Lenches Pre-school and/or its employees, e.g. a potential contractor could offer a financial reward for information leading to the award of a major contract. Approaches or offers of this kind must be declared to your Manager without delay.
- 8.7 **You must not criticise the Lenches Pre-school, its policies or staff in open media such as internet 'blogs', websites, social networking sites, etc. where it may be seen by parents, children, committee members or others in the community.**

## 9.0 Contact with the media

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- 9.1 Unless you are properly authorised to speak with, write or give interviews to the media you should refer any enquiries from the media on work related matters to your Chairperson.

## 10.0 Information Technology, Social Media and Data Protection

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- 10.1 Everyone using computing equipment has a duty of care to use it according to prescribed arrangements, e.g. to avoid introducing computer viruses, to comply with the Data Protection Act, General Data Protection Regulations and to safeguard and ensure the security of information.
- 10.2 You must familiarise yourself with the Lenches Pre-school ICT policies, including use of the internet. In particular, all use of the internet and email facilities must be authorised, legal, appropriate and in accordance with the provisions of our policies. Personal use of any devices such as mobile phones, laptops or Apple Watches is prohibited within working hours. The Chair person will have a laptop for business use and the manager for business use.
- Mobile devices must be kept locked in bags and employee may use in their allocated breaks, away from the children.
- Please refer to the Safeguarding Policy and use of personal devices.
- The Lenches has a work mobile which is used for Parent communications and external calls, imaging of children's observations, along with 2 setting iPad for Tapestry use.
- Failure to comply with the policies in force or any unauthorised use of such facilities will be dealt with in accordance with relevant disciplinary procedure.
- 10.5 We would discourage social media friendship with families from the setting. If you are a 'friend' of a parent of a child, you should be particularly careful not to share information about children, staff or working practices. You should ensure that full privacy settings are applied to all your social media accounts. You must remain professional at all times and also ensure your activities/posts do not conflict the interest and trust of your position as an Person Of Trust.

## 11.0 Use of Pre-school resources and equipment

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- 11.1 Facilities, equipment, vehicles, materials and other resources provided by the Lenches Pre-school for use in your work must not be used for any other purpose without permission or appropriate payment, e.g. photocopying, private telephone calls. Mobile telephones are provided exclusively for business use and must not be used to make private calls. In this context a call 'home' to advise that you have been unavoidably delayed because of work would not be considered a private call.

## 12.0 Transporting Pupils

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- 12. Transportation of children should not be required, unless in an emergency situation, hospital etc. However, there may be planned events where children will need transportation. A discussion with the manager and Chairperson will be required for risk assessment and planning, ensuring that the driver is legal and insured for business use. Part of the risk assessment will involve a journey planner and written permission by Parents or Carers. .
- 12.1 Any legal requirements must be adhered to, such as ensuring the vehicle is roadworthy, business insurance is in place, seat belts are worn, car seats are used for younger children and the maximum capacity is not exceeded.
- 12.2 Wherever possible, there should always be at least one adult additional to the driver as an escort and children should be seated in the back of the vehicle.

## 13.0 Equality

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- 13.1 All members of the community, including pupils, families and other employees have a right to be treated fairly and with dignity. You must make yourself aware of and comply with Pre-school's Equality and Diversity Policies and procedures.

## 14.0 Political neutrality/extremism

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- 14.1 All staff have a responsibility to ensure that they act appropriately in terms of their behaviour, the views they express (in particular political views) and the use of Pre-school resources at all times.
- 14.2 You must follow the Early Years guidance and must not allow your own personal / political opinions to influence your work. In particular, you must not behave or act in any way that undermines fundamental British Values as defined within the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 as democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty; mutual respect; tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
- 14.3 You must not express radical or extremist views; promote or permit the voicing of views or incitement of any action in support of extremism, terrorism, radicalisation or any prohibited organisations.

## 15.0 Standards of appearance

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- 15.1 Staff are expected to present a reasonable and professional appearance and to dress appropriately to the circumstances within their working environment, bearing in mind that you are working with children. Logo Polo tops, and fleeces will be allocated along with a name badge. We ask that staff wear comfortable trousers/ leggings and comfortable safe shoes / trainers – no open toe.

Dress should not be offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and should not display political or other contentious slogans.

- 15.2 Where uniform or protective clothing is issued it must be worn as required when at work or representing the Pre-school. PPE should be worn when carrying out nappy changes, body fluid clean ups.

Handling of Foods require effective hand washing procedures and the appropriate equipment.

You must maintain appropriate standards of conduct whether or not on duty, e.g. when travelling to and from work.

## 16.0 Relatives and close personal relationships in the workplace

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- 16.1 In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias you should endeavour not be directly involved in the appointment, promotion, discipline or other employment decision relating to another employee to whom you are related or with whom you have a close personal relationship.

These decisions will be handed to the Chairperson. The Lenches Pre-school fully expect that standards delivered by all staff to a high level and managed accordingly whether colleagues have a close relationship / or relative.

- 16.2 If you work in close proximity with other employees or children to whom you are related or have a close personal connection you must maintain a strictly professional relationship at work. You should also be aware that if any relationship leads to disruption in the workplace, unacceptable conduct or performance or situations involving undue favouritism or detriment, action will be taken under the appropriate procedure which could lead to you being redeployed or your contract terminated.

## 17.0 Smoke free environment

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- 17.1 The Lenches Pre-school workplaces and vehicles are smoke free areas. Since July 2007, it has been against the law to smoke in workplaces; failure to comply is a criminal offence.



## 18.0 Drugs and alcohol

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- 18.1 Employees must not take drugs, alcohol or any other substance before work, during a break or at lunchtime that is capable of causing their behaviour, judgement or performance at work to be affected. This is particularly important for employees who drive, operate machinery, have responsibility for vulnerable adults or children, and who come into contact with members of the public and/or visitors. (N.B. It is equally inappropriate for those working in close proximity to children and vulnerable adults to have alcohol on their breath even though this may not amount to drunkenness.)

## 19.0 Health and Safety

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- 19.1 Unsafe working can endanger you, your colleagues, pupils and members of the public. You must familiarise yourself with the Health and Safety Policy and guidelines for your particular work. Please speak to your manager for further information. You must follow the rules, codes and safe practices they describe including reporting any accidents, incidents or near misses you have at work.

## 20.0 Essential Training

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- 20.1 You are expected to make every effort to comply with reasonable requests to attend training which is a statutory requirement or essential for your role as well as staff meetings. Employees will be required to undertake mandatory training to be able to safely work in ratio, Safeguarding, First Aid, and will be required to take additional training and support to continue their professional Development. Practitioners are also responsible to ensure they upskill themselves and request help and support as and when they need.

## 21.0 Criminal Charges, Cautions and Convictions

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- 21.1 You must advise your manager immediately if you are charged with or cautioned or convicted of any criminal offence whilst you are an employee of the Lenches Pre-school. While such proceedings will not necessarily affect your employment, the Pre-school need to be sure there are no implications for the provision, its reputation, the safety of children or in relation to the role you undertake.

21.2 You must also advise your manager immediately if you have been arrested or appeared in court and released on bail in circumstances where bail conditions have been applied which could have consequences for your work, e.g. you are constrained from having contact with children. If you are in any doubt about whether you should report bail conditions, especially where safeguarding could be an issue, you must discuss it with your manager so that any concerns can be addressed from the outset. Failure to report such conditions would be considered as serious misconduct and could potentially lead to breach of bail.

## 22.0 Conduct and Performance

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Employees will face investigation which may lead to disciplinary action if: (Suspension and advice from the LADO/and or Police may be required in any allegation)

(a) any form of unjustifiable discrimination, harassment, threatening or bullying behaviour, e.g. on the grounds of race, sex/gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or belief; whether or not the subject of current legislation;

(b) any physical, emotional or sexual abuse of a child or other person

(c) possession, displaying, viewing or downloading of offensive or extremist materials, playing or downloading games, accessing 'unacceptable' websites, e.g. websites of a sexual nature, gambling, betting or gaming, in the workplace or via any portable device, e.g. laptop, mass storage, which is the property of The Lenches Pre-school and has been provided in connection with the postholder's work;

(d) undertaking private activities during working hours;

(e) unpunctuality, misuse of time and time recording, unauthorised absence from work;

(f) refusing to comply with reasonable orders and instructions;

(g) deliberately causing damage to property;

(h) harming or endangering other persons or property, e.g. by contravening safety rules;

(i) neglect of duty/lack of due care or diligence, disruptive behaviour, poor attitude, this includes where an employee is causing negative atmosphere within the setting, speaking ill of others and causing injury to feelings

(j) fighting, threatening or actual violence towards, physical assault or abuse of another person whilst at work (NOTE: this does not include reasonable physical restraint necessarily carried out in the course of duty);

(k) theft, unauthorised removal, misappropriation, improper or unauthorised use of the Lenches Pre-school property, systems (including telephones, IT, email and internet), vehicles, equipment, name or other resources. This may include loss by failing to properly secure or safeguard;

(l) failure to report criminal convictions, particularly those which may be relevant to the type of work undertaken, e.g. driving convictions where the work necessitates driving on business, indecent assault when working with children.

(m) fraudulent or misleading practices and/or omissions in connection with official duties, e.g. deliberately falsifying documents or reports etc.

(n) fraudulent or false claims for payment of salary, expenses and/or allowances, etc. or seeking financial gain by deception;

(o) acts involving bribery or corruption;

(p) any action for which it would be appropriate for Lenches Pre-school as an employer to take legal proceedings (irrespective of whether such proceedings are taken);

(q) sexual misconduct at work;

(r) wilfully breaching any Pre-school Policies and Procedures

(s) drunkenness, being unable to carry out duties through the influence of any substances including drugs, whether or not prescribed, and alcohol, or for any other avoidable reason. (N.B. It is equally inappropriate for those hosting visitors or working in close proximity to service users such as children staff and families to have alcohol on their breath even though this may not amount to drunkenness.);

(t) possession, buying or selling of weapons, illegal substances or materials at work;

(u) any breach of trust or security in respect of information or procedures;

(v) obtaining or attempting to obtain access to any information (including information held or stored by electronic means) to which the employee is not entitled;


(w) any action which may bring the good name of the Lenches Pre-school into disrepute;

(x) as an employee, public opposition to the stated aims and policies of Pre-school, criticism or blame of colleagues, through any medium including on-line, such as internet 'blogs', websites, social networking sites, etc.;

(y) any action unconnected with work which brings in to question your suitability as an employee of the Pre-school;

(z) failing to report serious misconduct, aiding or inciting another employee to undertake any of the above actions or other act of wrongdoing.

Note: Under the Bribery Act 2010 it is a criminal offence if a person fails to prevent bribery, bribes another person with the intention of obtaining or retaining a business or a business advantage, or receives a bribe, whether or not unwittingly.

This safeguarding policy and all procedures contained within it was adopted at a meeting of	The Lenches Pre-school Group
Held	June 24
Reviewed and amended	June 24 by Manager and Chairperson
Signed on behalf of the management committee	 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
Name of signatory	Millie Benbow
Role of signatory and date signed	Chairperson